



## AGENDA ITEM: 8

### SUMMARY

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	21 <sup>st</sup> October 2014
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	<b>Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Strategy 2014-17 and Associated Action Plan</b>
Contact:	Cllr Andrew Williams, Portfolio Holder Planning and Regeneration.  Author/Responsible Officer: James Doe Assistant Director of Planning Development & Regeneration; Shelly Ford, Town Centre Manager Strategic Planning & Regeneration.
Purpose of report:	To consider and approve a new Strategy for the ongoing management and development of Hemel Hempstead Town Centre
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Strategy 2014-17, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report be approved</li> <li>2. That the Town Centre Action Plan based on the new Strategy, as set out at Appendix 2 to this report be approved.</li> </ol>
Corporate objectives:	Regeneration Clean and Safe Environment Dacorum Delivers Community Capacity
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> There are no additional implications as a result of this report  <u>Value for Money</u>

	<p>The strategy sets out how Town Centre Management working with the Town Centre Partnership could move towards a Business Improvement District (BID) which will ensure there is a mechanism for generating income for works and improvements within the town centre in a sustainable way for the future. Initial estimations are that a 1% BID levy could generate around £329,000 pa for new resources into the town centre. This money would not be to replace services already being delivered in the town but could be used to enhance service levels. It would also be assumed that the role of TC management and any other staff required by the businesses would be funded through the BID levy. Progress to this stage is likely to take around two years.</p>
Risk Implications	<p>Despite initial work there is a risk that the Businesses do not engage and 'buy-in'. There is an option to explore developing a partnership with voluntary contributions (Community Interest Company or CIC) but this is not a favoured option as it can create a split between those who pay in and those who do not.</p>
Equalities Implications	<p>None in this report</p>
Health And Safety Implications	<p>None in this report</p>
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b></p> <p>No further comments to add to this report.</p> <p><b>Deputy S.151 Officer</b></p> <p>There are no budgetary implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Town Centre Partnership and Town Centre Businesses at the Conference and others through a programme of visits</p>
Background papers:	<p>Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan 2013</p>
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p><i>HHTC Hemel Hempstead Town Centre</i></p> <p><i>BID – Business Improvement District</i></p> <p><i>CIC - Community Interest Company</i></p>

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The council agreed to the funding of a new Town Centre Team for a period of two years. The team consists of a Town Centre Manager and a Town Centre Co-ordinator. There is also currently and Economic

Development officer working with the team – seconded from the Economic Wellbeing team. The team posts have been in place since April this year.

- 1.2 The draft Town Centre Strategy (see Appendix 1) has been developed and details the planned journey for the Town Centre stakeholders until 2017. The strategy aims to take the Town Centre from a position of low business and partner engagement to a Business Improvement District (BID), whereby the businesses are more in control of the town centre and driving their future ambitions together. This BID will be led by a Board made up from business and partners and including the Council.
- 1.3 The new Strategy takes a holistic, comprehensive and dynamic approach to Town Centre Management. Whereas the creation of a BID is a key goal, the Strategy is based on eight key action areas as set out below:

## **2. The Proposals**

- 2.1 The Town Centre Strategy focuses on the partnership work needed by Town Centre businesses to complement the £30 million spend on the regeneration of the Town Centre, already committed by Dacorum Borough Council. Members are referred to the proposed nine action areas that make up the Strategy. This can be found on page 19 of the Strategy document at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Action Plan that works alongside the strategy (see Appendix 2) is a living document so is subject to change as circumstances and opportunities arise. It sets out the actions that the team will focus on in order to maximize the extensive regeneration work already being delivered by the Council. The action plan shows opportunities to maximise potential to maintain and grow the Town Centre economy by enabling opportunities to come forward. This will attract further new inward investment.
- 2.3 The Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan details initiatives that will be delivered to support retailers and other businesses in Hemel Hempstead town centre enabling them to add maximum value to the town's economy. Helping them survive and grow in the current economic climate and during the period of the improvement works and beyond. This is to make Hemel Hempstead town centre a destination of choice and develop and build up market share.
- 2.4 Positive and targeted actions to meet the above project objective will be developed and delivered by the Town Centre Team and others utilising the skills and expertise of others from across the Council and external bodies.
- 2.5 The development of a Town Centre Management initiative with measurable outputs is a key priority and proactive steps will be taken by the Town Centre Team to ensure this project objective is met, maximising the reputation of DBC and making a tangible difference and creating an opportunity for the council to “step back” from long

term Town Centre management had enable responsibility and ownership to pass to the business community

- 2.6 It is recommended that the strategy be adopted and that its progress is monitored by the Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Should the strategy need to be updated or changed after this time, a further report will come back to Cabinet.