



AGENDA ITEM: 8

SUMMARY

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| Report for: | Cabinet |
| Date of meeting: | 29 th April 2014 |
| PART: | 1 |
| If Part II, reason: | |

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| Title of report: | Dacorum Look No Further Work and Enjoy Campaign update. |
| Contact: | Cllr Andrew Williams- Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration Author/Responsible Officers; Chris Taylor – Group Manager, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Rebecca Oblein – Team Leader, Economic Wellbeing Team, Strategic Planning & Regeneration |
| Purpose of report: | To demonstrate the value added from the additional investment into Economic Wellbeing and the Look No Further campaign, and to identify next steps for these areas. |
| Recommendation | That Cabinet: 1. Notes the report and acknowledges the work already carried out during 2013/14, and 2. Endorses the direction of the planned work for 2014/15 and into the future. |
| Corporate objectives: | The project supports the Corporate Vision and in particular the priority of Building Community Capacity and Regeneration. It has also allowed focus on raising the reputation of Dacorum as a great place to Live, Work and Enjoy. |
| Implications: | <u>Financial</u> The work within this report is contained within the additional budget allocated by Cabinet in December 2011 as a result of the economic downturn for piloting initiatives to raise Dacorum's reputation as a great place to Work, Live and Enjoy |

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| <p>'Value For Money Implications'</p> | <p>£300k was allocated over 2 years to support the economy and £200k was given to promote the reputation of Dacorum.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>The funding detailed above was given to pilot initiatives to help attract inward investment, and support our current business community through tough financial times. In addition the money was to raise the profile and reputation of Dacorum, and to maximise the tourism economy in the Borough.</p> |
| <p>Risk Implications</p> | <p>Risk Assessment included within the Project Initiation Document for this area of work and monitored through the Corvu system.</p> |
| <p>Equalities Implications</p> | <p>Equality Impact Assessment to be completed. The project aims to secure further inward investment in the Borough with a growth in jobs, thereby improving employment opportunities.</p> |
| <p>Health And Safety Implications</p> | <p>None in this report</p> |
| <p>Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p> | <p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>No further comments.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>No further comments.</p> |
| <p>Consultees:</p> | <p>James Doe, Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration</p> |
| <p>Background papers:</p> | <p>Cabinet Report October 2012 (annexed)</p> |
| <p>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</p> | <p><i>ED = Economic Development</i></p> <p><i>FDI = Foreign Direct Investment</i></p> <p><i>JSA = Job Seeker's Allowance</i></p> <p><i>LEP = Local Enterprise Partnership</i></p> <p><i>MBC = Maylands Business Centre</i></p> <p><i>DLNF = Dacorum; Look No Further</i></p> <p><i>PPC = Pay per click</i></p> <p><i>PR = Public Relations</i></p> <p><i>HCCI = Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce</i></p> |

BACKGROUND

1. “Dacorum Look No Further” – Work, Live and Enjoy.

- 1.1. In December 2011 a Cabinet decision was taken to allocate additional budget for piloting initiatives to raise Dacorum’s reputation as a place to Live, Work and Enjoy.
- 1.2. In October 2012 a report was presented at Cabinet to inform and update members of those activities already undertaken and those planned under this Dacorum- Look No Further initiative (DNLF), see appendix 1. This report laid out our focus areas around Inward investment and Marketing (Work strand), and raising the profile of Dacorum (Enjoy strand). Alongside this a new Economic Development Strategy 2013-16 was adopted by Cabinet.
- 1.3. Since October 2012 both areas have been amalgamated under the banner of DLNF and this report aims to demonstrate the added value gained to date through this additional funding.

2. **Dacorum Look No Further “Work” strand:** £300k committed over a 2 year period.

- 2.1. During the past two years the need to focus on the retention of our current business community, coupled with the need to secure potential inward investments has been a constant focus. There are a number of ways to seek investors but inevitably it is a unique combination of factors through which individual requests are converted into potential investments. Dacorum now has a full suite of marketing materials to attract inward investment and all of the Economic Wellbeing team are trained in “selling” Dacorum. The marketing literature is supported by the “Work” pages of the Dacorum Look No Further website (www.dacorumlooknofurther.co.uk), and includes an inward investment brochure with targeted additional information that can be inserted dependant on the investor’s needs.
- 2.2. A PR campaign has been running using a variety of different media channels to promote Dacorum as a great area to locate your business. We have used radio, digital, and printed media as well as increasing our presence at business shows and expo’s, raising awareness of the area to potential investors, see appendix 2.
- 2.3. To enhance our reputation as a borough for business have recently published the new Business Charter, which sets out what every business in Dacorum can expect from the Borough Council’s business facing teams, showcasing our “Open for Business” attitude. This will be distributed though business meetings and events, and also via our Business Rates team.
- 2.4. To further support our Open for Business approach, cross team working is now embedded between Economic Development, Asset Management, Spatial Planning and Development Management. From this there has been a shift in focus towards development within Dacorum which now presents the area as very much “Open for Business”. This has enhanced relationships with commercial agents and developers and our reputation as a “can do” council.

- 2.5. The Maylands Gateway Development Brief has been completed and adopted by the Council, and the land in DBC's ownership has attracted a great deal of interest from investors and developers. We are in the process of completing a feasibility study to guide the design of new road access to DBC's landholding in the Gateway at Green Lane, to open up the site for development. Members will note that this study work is being part-funded by Hertfordshire LEP. Currently the corner plot, fronting Breakspear Way is being reserved for high profile office users, and there is a great deal of interest in the remaining plots.
- 2.6. The Heart of Maylands development area, at the junction of Wood Lane End and Maylands Avenue is moving forwards and an application for development of the south-east quadrant is expected by early summer 2014. This will introduce a new vibrancy to the business park with mixed usage including residential, retail and office space. This area will also encompass an area of high quality public realm for the Business Park users, see appendix 4. Additionally, DBC has acquired the north-west quadrant, known as Wood House or the former Schroff Site, for housing development through the Housing Revenue Account. We have approach the LEP for funding for a business incubation centre to be provided as part of this development through its emerging Strategic Economic Plan. Additionally, a further bid has been made to the LEP to support the assembly of land at the south-western quadrant of the Heart.
- 2.7. The Maylands design guide and materials pallet for the urban realm improvements on the Maylands Business Park have been completed and a this work is planned to start in spring 2015 to make Maylands a more attractive place for current resident businesses and potential investors. We currently have approx. £1.5million (made up from DBC capital reserves, LSTF funding and S106 funds) to commence these works, and further funding will be sought for future phases through S106 contributions on the Gateway and other Maylands developments. The first phase of the improvements will focus on Maylands Avenue, consisting of hard landscape improvements, tree planting, hedge and railing improvements, high quality street furniture and upgrading of signage.
- 2.8. Inward investment in the area has shown a growth in jobs of 1300 since 2012 With businesses moving in ranging from large HQ;s (Gyron/Britvic expansion) down to smaller SMEs (Abbey Pinford, Angel Springs)
- 2.9. The Maylands Business Centre (growing our own inward investment) continues to operate at 100% capacity with a waiting list of small and start-up businesses. Several businesses have already outgrown the centre and been supported into larger premises. The most successful business grew from 2 employees to 10 employees during the space of 18 months aided by the holistic support offered at the MBC. In total the MBC has helped over 350 businesses since opening.
- 2.10. The Centre now employs full time reception cover as well as the Centre Manager and as a result offers additional services to our small business community such as the growing Virtual Office provision where we now have 25 businesses signed up. Business advice and guidance continues to be offered free to all Dacorum Businesses and start-ups, and regular training courses are held in the meeting room (see point 2.17)

- 2.11. Two Dacorum business showcases have been held in the Borough which has led to 263 new business contacts being made. A third showcase "A taste of Dacorum" is planned for 11th July 14. The showcase allows current Dacorum businesses to meet, network and celebrate successes, and has been warmly welcomed by our business community.
- 2.12. Investment has been made into a partnership with Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI), part funding a business development post dedicated to working with Dacorum's businesses. This has led to increased networking opportunities in the borough which in turn promotes local supply chain opportunities. There has been 25% increase in Chamber membership through this newly funded position.
- 2.13. There have been two Dacorum's Den initiatives held, in 2012 and 2013, supporting 21 small and emerging businesses and social enterprises to expand. A third Dacorum's Den is currently being planned for 30 May 2014.
- 2.14. Work has been underway to raise Dacorum's profile with the Hertfordshire LEP promoting the proactive Economic Development and regeneration work we do and future plans. Hemel Hempstead features as an area for investment in the LEP's Growth Plan and twelve funding bids have been submitted to the LEP as it puts together its new Strategic Economic Plan of short to medium term actions, to support infrastructure and business growth plans worth £15.15million.
- 2.15. Replicating the success from the Maylands Partnership, a number of new business partnerships and forums have been developed; The business growth forum (10 members), the small business forum (30 members), the Old Town partnership (15 members), the Tourism partnership (38 members) all of which allow business to have a voice to help inform the direction of the economic development initiatives adopted in the future. Working together we are able to ensure we share business intelligence and are able to maximise opportunities available to us through open two way communication.
- 2.16. Dacorum's Economic Wellbeing team continues to offer a proactive care and retention programme to support our current business community. The second Dacorum Business Survey, carried out in Autumn 2013, asked our businesses to inform us of their barriers to growth, and as a result a number of initiatives have been planned to help business overcome these barriers (such as setting up the new business growth forum and the enterprise club in partnership with HCCI) and targeted training courses.
- 2.17. The MBC now offers a suite of affordable courses which address areas of concern raised by the survey seen as barriers to business growth. These courses are run at affordable prices set to allow the MBC to break even on the provision. In 2013 and 2014 to date, 160 delegates have attended the 18 courses held.
- 2.18. The new Business Growth Forum is in place to look in depth at barriers to growth and from this partnership and action plan to support businesses is being developed. This action plan looks at areas such as the development of an online Dacorum business directory, and social media plan for business communications and enhancements to the DLNF website around business support opportunities.

2.19. Promotion of apprenticeships and other routes into employment is ongoing in the Borough via our Learning and Skills Officer with a variety of events being held throughout the year. Unemployment figures are on the decrease with the JSA claimant rate currently standing at 1.8% (as compared to a national figure of 2.9%). In 2013 a small grant scheme, funded by DBC, was set up to support Dacorum businesses with taking on an apprentice. The scheme can support up to 40 placements. 22 of these grants are currently ring-fenced whilst we work with the employers to find the right apprentices and training framework.

3. Dacorum; Look No Further – Enjoy Strand £200k committed over a 2 year period.

3.1. During 2012 funding was committed by Dacorum Borough Council with the intent of raising the profile of Dacorum as a place rather than just an administrative area. This objective, coupled with the focus on inward investment and supporting our economy was subsequently combined to form the Dacorum; Look No Further initiative and the work was amalgamated into the Economic Wellbeing team.

3.2. In January 2013 a Tourism Officer was recruited for a 2 year post to help to raise awareness of the brand Dacorum and all it has to offer for visitors to the borough to enjoy, and additionally to look at ways to maximise the impact of the tourism economy on the area. The tourism partnership (a group of 38 tourism businesses) was formed to help advise and support on the direction of this work. From the partnership, sub working groups covering marketing, and also monitoring and measuring, have been formed who work closely with the Officer.

3.3. In summer 2013, a tourism survey was commissioned and sent out to the local tourism businesses from the Economic Wellbeing team. The survey results give us a benchmark to measure and monitor our impact on this economic sector in Dacorum. This survey will be carried out annually to allow us to monitor the results of our initiatives and identify trends. Work is currently underway to measure hotel room occupation and visitor attraction footfall at some of our key partner businesses

Attraction survey (appendix 5)

Hotel survey (appendix 5)

3.4. The Enjoy pages of the Dacorum Look No Further website have been populated with information about places to stay and things to do in Dacorum backed up by a suite of you tube clips. The website currently receives around 550 unique hits per month and a programme of Pay Per Click (PPC) is ongoing. Using PPC allows us to maximise the websites profile through google searching by placing our website at the top of the search list when certain search terms are used. This process has allowed the website content to be adapted to the type of searches going on. Our target continues to be 1000 unique hits per month and work will continue on the website to help move it up the google search rankings through continued PPC, on-page optimisation and fresh content.

3.5. Linked trips are now being organised between our tourism partners facilitated by the Tourism Officer, and work continues to expand this to all hotels. Example linked trips include the Apsley Paper Trail and Holiday Inn Express

linked trip, Pendley Manor and the Snowcentre, Shendish Manor Ski Break (17 breaks booked for a value of £4260). Uptake of these packages will continue to be measured.

- 3.6. A tourism brochure has been produced and circulated to local hotels to put into guest bedrooms. 2000 have currently been distributed locally, and work is ongoing to get them into neighbouring boroughs hotels.
- 3.7. A tourism map, showing all of the local hotels and attractions, has been printed and distributed to local hotels and attractions as well as the boroughs civic centres. 30,000 maps have been printed for distribution through the Smart leaflet distribution carousels commencing throughout the South East April to Sept 2014 (confirm this is right). Reporting by Smart will provide information on which areas are distributing most maps and the numbers involved which will be used to attract advertising revenue for future editions. £1800 was raised from tourism partnership members in sponsorship towards this first edition design and print of the map
- 3.8. A day trip to Dacorum is currently being advertised in the Group Leisure Readers Club magazine for 14th June 2014, inviting group leisure organisers to come and try an appetiser day in the area. This will include a visit to the Apsley Paper Mill, and canal barge trip, a visit to Berkhamsted and finishing up at the Ashridge Estate. This visit will show case some of our attractions and each visitor will be given an information pack on the area with the intention that they will then organise future group visits to Dacorum. Currently we are expecting 34 visitors on the day.
- 3.9. A recent event at the Alexandra Palace (Excursions 2014 show) in London saw the Dacorum Look No Further stand swamped with interest from the group travel sector with 83 contacts collected. These are being followed up for discussions about potential day trip or overnight visits which can be packaged to meet organiser's needs.
- 3.10. Through the formation of the Tourism partnership, new working relationships are developing between our tourism and attraction businesses outside of the linked trips area. Via the Partnership Scarenation, a Halloween scare event previously based in Watford, has linked up with the Apsley Paper Mill who subsequently hosted the event in October 2013. This event brought 4000 visitors to the site and created income for the Paper Mill of approx. £6k. This relationship will continue with Scarenation using the paper mill for storage and hosting of their 2014 event.
- 3.11. To help spread the Dacorum message sponsorship has been provided to a number of local clubs and events;
 - Spirit of Dacorum car event. In 2014 this event will route through the newly regenerated Old Town High Street.
 - The Pepper foundation music concert in Berkhamsted
 - The Tring Country Fair
 - Stags Rugby League club (perimeter advertising boards)
 - Hemel Hempstead Football club (perimeter advertising boards)

This sponsorship helps us get the Dacorum; Look No Further message out to our local community as well as visitors to the events, promoting Dacorum as a great place to Live and Enjoy. During 2014 we are also sponsoring

Chilfest, based in Tring, which will get our message and branding out to the 22000 expected visitors over the 3 festival days.

- 3.12. During the autumn of 2013, 12 promotional postcards featuring some of Dacorum's key tourist attractions were produced. These have been distributed through our tourism partnership to guests to the area. Additionally a competition, "wish you were here in Dacorum", was run for local residents to see how far they could spread the message about what Dacorum has to offer. There were 70 entries in the competition and spin off publicity from this has been in local and county press. We plan to host a travelling exhibition of the competition entries in late spring/summer 2014, as a reputational event for local residents.
- 3.13. Dacorum hotels are now cross referring clients at busy times for room bookings and even for wedding events. This helps to retain visitors in the borough.

4. **Work planned for 2014/15** (total of c£140k funding carried forward from prior years)
 - 4.1. The Tourism Officer will remain in place on a full time basis until 31st December 2014 when the reputational funding will come to an end.
 - 4.2. An advertising campaign using the bus network, which passes through Dacorum, is being looked into for the summer 2014. A number of different ads focussing on our attractions will be featured on particular routes to attract day visitors into the area.
 - 4.3. As mentioned previously, an exhibition for the postcard winners is being planned and will exhibit in Hemel Hempstead, then travel on to Berkhamsted and Tring. Venues and dates are currently being finalised.
 - 4.4. A stand has been organised at the Herts Country show on 24th and 25th May to showcase what Dacorum has to offer for visitors. Other shows will be attended as seen appropriate.
 - 4.5. Work is being planned with the local hotels to form our own hotel association/forum where hoteliers can meet up, share ideas, and work with Dacorum Borough Council around apprenticeships, training requirements, hospitality careers etc. Through a united voice they can help guide and inform us on actions which will help to increase room occupation.
 - 4.6. Work is being done to build closer links with other Hertfordshire Tourism officers particularly in St Albans and Watford, to look at joint promotions for the future.
 - 4.7. Work continues for PR around inward investment, with our PR agency tasked with placing traditional news stories into relevant local and national publications, an example being an article regarding the economic benefits of filming in the Borough is currently being written up for the Local Government News.
 - 4.8. Organisation for the 2014 business showcase is well underway. This year's event will have an added area promoting local food suppliers "a taste of

Dacorum”, with the intention of getting local hoteliers, restaurant owners, and food outlets to build local supply relationships. This event is set for July 11th 2014 and opens with a taste of Dacorum lunch, being hosted by the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce.

- 4.9. The Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce (HCCI/HCCI) will continue to work at a Dacorum level to help our businesses access networking opportunities, training, import/export advice and support, local supply chain opportunities and all of the other HCCI membership benefits. The Economic Wellbeing team will continue to work in partnership with HCCI to maximise the support that can be offered to business in Dacorum.
- 4.10. Use of Pay per Click will be implemented around the work section of the Dacorum Look No Further website to help us understand its users and what they are searching for. The website will then be fine-tuned to meet these requirements therefore optimising its chances through google searching.
- 4.11. Pages will be developed on the website to promote the regeneration works ongoing through the Hemel Evolution team, and also pages supporting and promoting the work of the newly formed Old Town Partnership.
- 4.12. An events calendar which integrates with the calendar currently in operation on the Dacorum Borough Council website is being investigated to avoid work duplication. More connection between the two sites is also being sought to help support the DLNF sites sustainability once the additional funding is finished. During 2014/15 work will be done alongside the DBC web team to look at how the DLNF site can be hosted/supported in the future most cost effectively. This decision will be dependent on budgetary and resourcing constraints.

5. After the funding

- 5.1. Much has been achieved with the injection of funding, which has helped to create growth and opportunities that will be able to continue into the future. The reputation and profile of Dacorum has been greatly increased through our promotional channels and this will leave a legacy which we need to build upon, and embrace, council wide, to sustain our profile.
- 5.2. The current funding ends in December 2015. Ongoing funding for the programme will be subject to the Council's budget setting process in due course, but if a reduced service is to be continued in the future, some likely costs are set out below.
- 5.3. In order to maintain the Tourism and reputational work we have been carrying out, albeit at a reduced level, the following costs are likely;
 - Part time (3 day per week) Tourism Officer - £21500
 - Tourism revenue budget* - £10000
 - DLNF website hosting and support - £4000Currently we are looking to fund this work through surplus income from the Maylands Business Centre; however this very much relies on the continued success of the centre. Note these costs do not allow for any external PR support, as we have had over the past 2 years. In order for external PR work to continue funding would need to be considered at a corporate level. Officers will keep costs and options for providing an ongoing service under review.

* revenue items include, entrance to travel shows, advertising work, hosting events for group travel organisers, promotions to maintain the areas profile.

- 5.4. It is envisaged that as the DLNF website continues to grow in popularity, advertising will become a viable option on the site, generating an additional sustainable income which can be used to support initiatives.
- 5.5. Currently the Officers are comfortable that additional funding is not required in order to maintain our level of work around caring for our business community and encouraging inward investment. We will look to move the annual Business showcase to a cost neutral position, as we are doing with our training course provision and the outsourcing of our networking events to the HCCI.
- 5.6. The HCCI support in Dacorum, which we are currently part sponsoring, is targeted to become self-funding through Dacorum membership therefore developing the positions sustainability once the DLNF pump priming has ended.
- 5.7. One of the current Economic Development Officers will be seconded into the newly formed Town Centre Management Team for 18 months, to work alongside the new Town Centre Manager and Town Centre Co-ordinator. This is aimed at replicating the success we have had with economic development in the retail sector. It will help the new Town Centre Manager in the engagement of business and move towards a self-funding business improvement district.
- 5.8. In summary this funding has allowed us to pump prime initiatives and invest in additional short term support which has built a strong base from which we can now move forward. Coupled with the apparent recovery of the UKs economy and the strong Economic Wellbeing team, we have in place in Dacorum, we will continue to build on this legacy to demonstrate that Dacorum is truly open for business.



AGENDA ITEM:

SUMMARY

Appendix 1 – Cabinet Report October
2012

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| Report for: | Cabinet |
| Date of meeting: | 23rd October 2012 |
| PART: | 1 |
| If Part II, reason: | |

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| Title of report: | Inward Investment and Dacorum Look No Further Campaign updates |
| Contact: | Cllr Terry Douris , Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration Author/Responsible Officer Chris Taylor – Group Manager Strategic Planning & Regeneration |
| Purpose of report: | To inform and update members of activities being undertaken to attract investment into Dacorum and information on the Dacorum Reputation project – a campaign to promote the Borough – under the branding of ‘ Dacorum – Look No Further ’ |
| Recommendation | That the approach to attract inward investment into the Borough and the promotion of the Borough more generally, as set out in the report, be endorsed. |
| Corporate objectives: | The project supports the Corporate Vision and in particular the priority of Regeneration. |
| Implications: | <u>Financial</u> The work within this report is contained within the additional budget allocated by Cabinet in December 2011. The Tourism post will be fixed term for a period of two years though with an aim to become self funding after that time through advertising revenue driven by the new Dacorum Look No Further website, as explained in the report. |
| ‘Value For Money Implications’ | <u>Value for Money</u> |

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| | The nature of this work in many areas is of a pilot nature. Monitoring and evaluation will enable assessment of which areas show the best returns for the investment and value for money. |
| Risk Implications | Risk Assessment included within the Project Initiation Document for this area of work |
| Equalities Implications | Equality Impact Assessment to be completed. The project aims to secure further inward investment in the Borough with a growth in jobs, thereby improving employment opportunities. |
| Health And Safety Implications | None in this report |
| Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments | <p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>*****</p> <p>S.151 Officer</p> <p>*****</p> |
| Consultees: | Maylands Partnership (11 October 2012) |
| Background papers: | <p>Report to Cabinet 29 November 2011 Maylands and the Economy</p> <p>Dacorum Borough Economic Development Strategy 2009-12</p> <p>Draft Dacorum Borough Economic Development Strategy 2012-15 (also on Cabinet agenda)</p> |
| Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report: | <p><i>ED = Economic Development</i></p> <p><i>FDI = Foreign Direct Investment</i></p> <p><i>LEP = Local Enterprise Partnership</i></p> |

BACKGROUND

1. Inward Investment and Marketing

1.1. Dacorum Borough Council is working to increase the opportunities for new business investment into the Dacorum area. Outlined in this report are the key areas of current and future work. It is important to prioritise development of a buoyant economy through attracting and retaining a diverse range of local employers. There are a number of “tools and methods” that can be used to help to secure investment, but inevitably it is a combination of interventions and circumstances that suit an individual request which result in success. This is underpinned by professional and responsive staff and by building a good reputation as an area that is open for business.

1.2. Attracting investment is, in part, a result of the operation of market forces. However, through pro-active and positive working, appropriate publicity and promotion, and a robust planning and development framework, Dacorum seeks to be able to “punch above its weight” and attract an enhanced level of investment and employment opportunities into the area.

- 1.3. Cabinet allocated additional resources of £150,000 per year, for two years (2012-14) in December 2011 to help to develop work that will bring economic benefit to Dacorum, and to give an opportunity to demonstrate what additional resources into this area can deliver particularly during tough economic times. The aim will be to deliver a high number of new local jobs, encourage business growth and to bring forward the ongoing regeneration of Maylands Business Park (as set out in the adopted Maylands Masterplan - in particular the Maylands Gateway), and Town Centre Regeneration sites for a range of high quality developments. This will result in delivery of construction jobs and provide long term employment opportunities and housing through private sector investment and regeneration.
- 1.4. By supporting new start up business at the Maylands Business Centre and helping grow other business through activities such as networking, stimulating the local supply chain or increasing opportunities for businesses to export will also deliver economic benefits locally.
- 1.5. This work will be delivered through the new Economic Development Strategy for the Borough, (the draft of which features on this meeting's agenda for agreement) and monitored across a wide range of performance indicators. These will set out to clearly demonstrate and measure success against the additional resources through robust monitoring and measuring to make sure precious resources can be targeted to the most beneficial areas.
- 1.6. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the outcomes and milestones as detailed in the project plan.
- 1.7. Shown below are the key examples of the interventions and tools being developed to increase and attract investment to the Borough.
- 1.8. It is essential to have high quality staff that are proactive in their response to direct investment enquiries. These are received on an ad-hoc basis from businesses and developers. A positive response from the Council, backed up with quality economic data and local information, will help to put Dacorum on the map as an area with a reputation for being open for business, and where investors will seriously investigate and ultimately select. Assistance with searching for premises, early discussions on planning and provision of additional local information along with the offer of accompanied visits to potential investors can help demonstrate the benefits of locating in Dacorum.
- 1.9. Relationships with local commercial agents and developers are very important, as they have the knowledge of businesses seeking to invest and a very good overview on current market trends sometime years in advance of potential investment. Over a number of years, Dacorum Borough Council has fostered relationships with a number of local agents through two-way communication and cross-referral. Links to the websites of the local agents are on the Council website. The council can often supplement the sales expertise of the commercial agent with the information that can help to secure the business (e.g. skills levels, future developments etc.).
- 1.10. High Quality Marketing and Publicity – marketing and publicity work can be expensive and difficult to quantify success from unless carefully focused. Using the additional resource, we will be able to pilot and expand current marketing through new high quality materials. Having good quality information and materials available to send in response to enquiries, helps to show professionalism and can get the positive marketing messages out to a

wider area Building an independent new business focused web site (see item 2 below) will also help to increase awareness of the business offer.

- 1.11. Dacorum Business Conference – On November 9th 2012 Dacorum Borough Council will be hosting the – Dacorum, Look No Further Business Showcase at Shendish Manor. It is an event that will celebrate business in Dacorum, offer information on future regeneration activity and business opportunity and encourage the local supply chain – The Dacorum business community is helping itself, by doing business together! Businesses from other areas will also be invited to attend through partner networks.
- 1.12. “Growing your own” - supporting start-up businesses and encouraging enterprise locally - also adds to the potential future success in the area. On-going support and helping business growth is vital because “home grown” businesses tend to remain loyal to an area as they grow and develop. Initiatives like the Maylands Business Centre where incubation space is provided, and the recent ‘Dacorum’s Den’ where the Council awarded grants and on-going support to embryonic businesses can secure future potential which stays local and employs local people.
- 1.13. Using local knowledge and familiarity with available land and sites - both owned by the Council and available to let within the private sector is helpful as often the first point of enquiry is for an available site or type of premises. Staffs within the Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration, Legal and Property services now work side by side with the aim of facilitating new developments to the benefit of the wider Borough and community. This joined up approach understands the wider aims of the Council. This has been enhanced greatly recently through the development of the “Open For Business” statement (detailed alongside the Economic Strategy). Many initial investment enquiries come through the planning service, so close working between economic development and planning staff is essential to present a joined up consistent approach to potential investment. In this respect, the work of the internal Corporate Regeneration Group is key where the above services come together to help the delivery of new developments.
- 1.14. Through Partnership with others: UKTI (UK Trade and Investment) are the national agency responsible for bringing in foreign direct investment (FDI) into the UK. This organisation acts as a conduit to foreign companies looking locate, relocate or to expand within the UK. They generate interest by attendance at trade and investment fairs all over the world by building and maintaining relationships with businesses at a global strategic level that may be looking to invest overseas. UKTI’s remit is to promote the UK and they refer through the Hertfordshire Local Economic Partnership (LEP) to individual areas. It is essential that Dacorum maintains a good relationship with the LEP Investment Officer to ensure locations within Dacorum are advanced and suggested when appropriate. This will include information about vacant commercial property or land but will also include information on house prices, skills, recruitment or similar businesses from within the area. Working with other district authorities is also valuable as sometimes they are not able to offer suitable opportunity and will refer to us – or vice versa, keeping any investment possibility within Hertfordshire.

- 1.15. Through on-going relationships and communications with businesses who are already located in the area, the best opportunity is offered to any Dacorum-based businesses seeking to downsize or upgrade into a new location locally or offer realistic local options when leases expire. Help can be given on property searches in our area and local information about future regeneration plans within the town and borough and are of interest to business when considering their options. Businesses are also great ambassadors to other businesses.
- 1.16. It is important to offer a pro-active retention programme to business to encourage businesses to stay in the area. This proved very successful after the Buncefield incident of 2005, and is an on-going part of the work carried out on a daily basis. This work includes communication with businesses and offering support and assistance with issues. Fostering a “community” for business to belong to, can enhance retention levels, where the business considers their location as a place to be part of the local community rather than just where they happen to be located.

4. “Dacorum Look No Further” – raising the profile and reputation of Dacorum

- 2.1 Nothing helps increase spending in an area whether through tourism, retail or business investment like a good reputation - developers talk to others – business talks to others, people talk to others – good reputations spread!
- 2.2 Getting a good reputation for either a place to do business or a place to live and visit needs consistent messages through editorial articles, good PR, hosting events, giving clear and positive presentations about the area’s strengths and opportunities, and contact with key decision makers and investors.
- 2.3 As part of the Dacorum Reputation project, and working in conjunction with the Destination Dacorum Board, a range of promotional initiatives is being brought forward, led by a user friendly, business-like website. This will also supported by a professional campaign to promote Dacorum using three main areas underneath the main heading - Live, Work and Enjoy - to clearly show everything that is available in Dacorum. Raising awareness and developing the Dacorum Brand.
- 2.4 The **Dacorum – Look No Further web site** is not a council website but a place website. Development of the new website, with the themes of Live, Work and Enjoy and links across all three areas, will aim to raise awareness of the whole of the “Dacorum offer”. The web site and supporting campaign will begin to increase the reputation of Dacorum by selling the positive messages. The campaign aims to change the culture and make sure successes are celebrated and publicised. It is an opportunity to “shout” about the qualities of the Borough and what it has to offer. With our ambitious regeneration programme, DBC is leading on a number of really exciting projects – so let’s tell everyone!
- 2.5 It is vital that the new website is supported by people who can respond and to deliver the follow up information, advice or signposting resulting from enquiries.
- 2.6 As part of the website development, a twelve month contract has been agreed to develop Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). This will make sure that web enquiry ‘traffic’ is driven to the site and that all such enquiries that

mention a list of key words – such as Business or homes in Hemel, Snow Centre, XC, Hemel Hempstead Masterplans, Tring Museum, Berkhamsted Castle – as some of the key examples -. are all directed to the new website. This will be closely monitored to assess the success and make changes as needed to those key words. It will also ensure that this site links to as many others as possible in a logical and accessible way.

2.7 The three main areas for the website will be:

2.8 **Work** - The Look No Further campaign under the work section detailed in section 1 of this report, will signpost to the Maylands and the Economy team. The Work area will be used as a key part of the inward investment site along with advice on commercial property, regeneration plans, information on the Maylands Business Centre and other support available. This will be the first area on the website to be populated, as most of this information is already available and already has the resource to react to enquiries and requests for support.

2.9 **Enjoy** - Tourism and increasing spend in Dacorum, through linked trips and visits, needs to be planned, developed and delivered in conjunction with the other work promoting the economy in a joined up way. The recruitment of a Tourism and Marketing officer to deliver a tourism action plan and maintain the website will be piloted for a period of two years. The long term aim would be to move the Dacorum Look No Further Website into a commercial business opportunity through advertising income which will self-fund this post after this first two years. This post should also develop and facilitate a new local Tourism Board including representation from hotels (Pendley Manor/Shendish), leisure (Snow Centre and XC) and other attractions, linking to retail through the Town Centre Partnership. This new Board would be able to promote and facilitate linked offers, which can give promotion to the wide range of things on offer and possible joint discounts and promotions.

2.10 **Live** – This area of the site will aim to provide information and links in connection with Living in Dacorum. Through information and signposting to areas such as new and affordable housing, links to the voluntary organisations and support bodies, culture, heritage, health care facilities, schools, regeneration plans etc. This will be the third area of the website to be populated. This will be overseen by an internal group including officers from Corporate Communications and Destination Dacorum supported.

2.11 The following provides a summary of the “Dacorum Look No Further” Marketing Campaign.

2.12 The website is the main tool in the campaign, but driving traffic to the website is key to its success.. Several areas are being piloted to drive this traffic through an umbrella campaign. Some of the current activity is outlined below. Each area will be monitored for value for money and adapted if necessary. Some proposals currently being delivered, and investigated (subject to cost and value for money) are as follows:

2.13 The Dacorum Open for Business Showcase is being held at Shendish Manor on 9 November 2012 and will include an exhibition of local businesses (63 stands) and seminars to provide information. The new web site, The Maylands Gateway Development Brief and Open for Business Statement will all be launched at the conference along with other information key to business

growth and success. The event is to celebrate local business and promote business to business activity in Dacorum.

- 2.14 A local Dacorum version of the Monopoly game has been commissioned and will be available from November. The game board details areas within Dacorum under the headings of Work Live and Enjoy alongside transport links on the fourth side of the Board. The game can both be sold to recoup the cost of production and used as a promotional tool. It demonstrates a wide picture of the Dacorum offer.
- 2.15 Sponsorship/Promotion opportunities for the new website could be provided on the back of Hemel STAGS Rugby team shirts and ground perimeter advertising boards. The team travels around the country for away matches and may promote the word Dacorum to those who are not familiar with it. Also using promotional materials such as bags, pens etc. can be used to promote the website, and therefore the area.
- 2.16 Rail station boards at Euston Station and other London stations and also at other local rail stations are being explored to understand the costs/benefits.
- 2.17 Local Radio campaigns will be investigated this was very successful when the Maylands Business Centre opened last year.
- 2.18 Publications of adverts and editorial in local Business publications and magazines can be explored such as The Hertfordshire Business Independent is being used to promote the conference.
- 2.19 Investigation work will be carried out into hosting an International Business Conference in 2013 to increase exporting opportunities to Dacorum Business and also attract Foreign owned business to consider Dacorum as a place to locate UK offices.
- 2.20 Investment in PR to get the messages out to a much wider audience by working with a professional PR agency which can make sure that success stories, events and information can be publicised to a much wider audience than local press and radio.
- 2.21 In summary, the Dacorum Look No Further campaign will highlight to a wide range of people the broad extent of the selling points that Dacorum can offer in business, tourism and as a resident. It will aim to be the first point of information and signposting to the right information and resource that can always deliver the right answer or support to anything that can help attract people to the area and enhance its economic wellbeing.

Appendix 2 – Examples of PR work carried out

Dacorum is a great place to enjoy with something on offer for everybody - whether you are interested in **adrenaline** and adventure, music and the performing arts, sport and leisure or **culture** and heritage.

- World class extreme sports facilities
- Areas of outstanding natural beauty
- Culture old and new

dacorumlooknofurther.co.uk

Dacorum Look no further



Ambitious for growth?

Global brands such as **Amazon, Next and Toshiba** as well as **innovative start ups** and forward thinking **entrepreneurs** have chosen Dacorum to base key operations and offices. **How about you?**

Dacorum is a thriving business and residential community in Hertfordshire to the north of London within easy reach of the rest of the UK and Europe. Dacorum Borough Council offers many services to help businesses looking to start up, invest or grow including:

- Help finding the right property for your business
- Face-to-face meetings with dedicated advisors to discuss your business goals
- Sustainable transport solutions to fast track your travel needs
- Support from an expert learning and skills officer to find the right people with the right skills

For **free business advice** and guidance on how to grow your business in Dacorum please visit us at:

dacorumlooknofurther.co.uk

Call: **01442 228000**

or email: **business@dacorum.gov.uk**

Dacorum 
Look no further



Live, Work, Enjoy

Dacorum 
Look no further

Dacorum is a thriving business and residential community in West Hertfordshire to the north of London within easy reach of the rest of the UK and Europe. It embraces the new town of Hemel Hempstead and the historic market towns of Berkhamsted and Tring, picturesque villages and rural locations and one of the largest and fastest growing business centres in the UK.

Dacorum's ambition is to be a place where business flourishes, where people want to come to live and work and where they can enjoy life to the full in a safe and attractive environment.

One of the central aspects of Dacorum Borough Council's new inward investment drive - Dacorum Look no further - is the regeneration of key employment areas such as Maylands Business Park and Hemel Hempstead Town Centre with the emphasis on delivering high standards of design and construction to create attractive places to work.

However, for potential inward investors looking to start up, invest or grow the decision is more than a matter of finding suitable premises in a convenient location. Equally important is the availability of a suitably skilled workforce, excellent travel

and transport options as well as an attractive environment for employees to live and enjoy.

The Maylands Partnership represents the combined interests of over 400 local businesses and has played a key consultative role in identifying and addressing the needs of businesses in Dacorum today.

Kodak UK markets a wide range of commercial imaging products and services and has its sales and marketing headquarters located in Hemel Hempstead.

Frances Stickle, Kodak representative on the Maylands Partnership, said: "One of the major reasons why Kodak has enjoyed such a long and successful association with Dacorum is being able to access a skilled workforce. With such a wide variety of businesses here it is vital that they can recruit people with the appropriate skills.

"A new Employment and Skills Partnership


has been established with representatives from local businesses, key stakeholders and the Council to ensure that young people in the area are trained and equipped with the skills and abilities that local businesses need both now and in the future."

Dacorum boasts a high proportion of small businesses and entrepreneurs as well as foreign-owned businesses offering a wide choice of employment opportunities for local people.

Maylands Business Centre is at the heart of the support available to help businesses get started within Dacorum. The centre provides virtual office facilities as well as offices and light industrial units to start up ventures and also to businesses looking to move into their first commercial premises. Expert business support and advice, including training seminars, is on hand to assist them whether they are based in the centre itself or elsewhere across Dacorum. Frequent networking opportunities and forums provide businesses with a local voice as well as up to date local market intelligence and opportunities.

Maylands Business Centre has been very successful in helping new businesses to flourish. Several have reported growth as a result of moving to the centre, one by as much as 80%, and many have now taken on their first employees.

Award-winning businesses based in Dacorum include digital imaging experts FFEI which employs over 200 people and has received many coveted industry awards.

Andy Cook, Managing Director, FFEI, said: "Location is extremely important to FFEI as 98% of our business is for export. Dacorum is an ideal location due to its proximity to Luton and Heathrow and the M1 and M25 motorway networks."  dacorumlooknofurther.co.uk

"Our business is high technology design and manufacture so it's essential that we can easily recruit smart, well educated people. Dacorum is ideally situated as it offers a good choice of commutable living areas and a wealth of talent to choose from." Andy Cook, Managing Director, FFEI




& breathe

Live, work, enjoy **just 26 minutes from London**

dacorumlooknofurther.co.uk

 @DacorumLNF

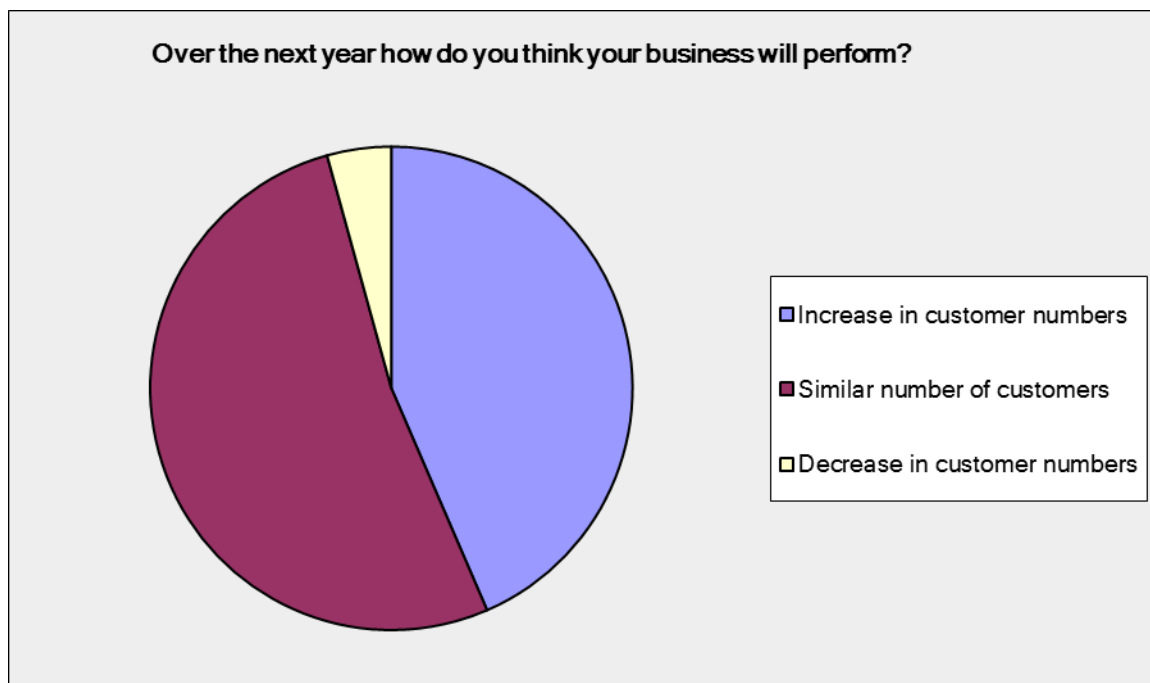
 Dacorum Borough Council

Dacorum 
Look no further

Appendix 5 – Tourism Survey summary

Dacorum Attraction Survey

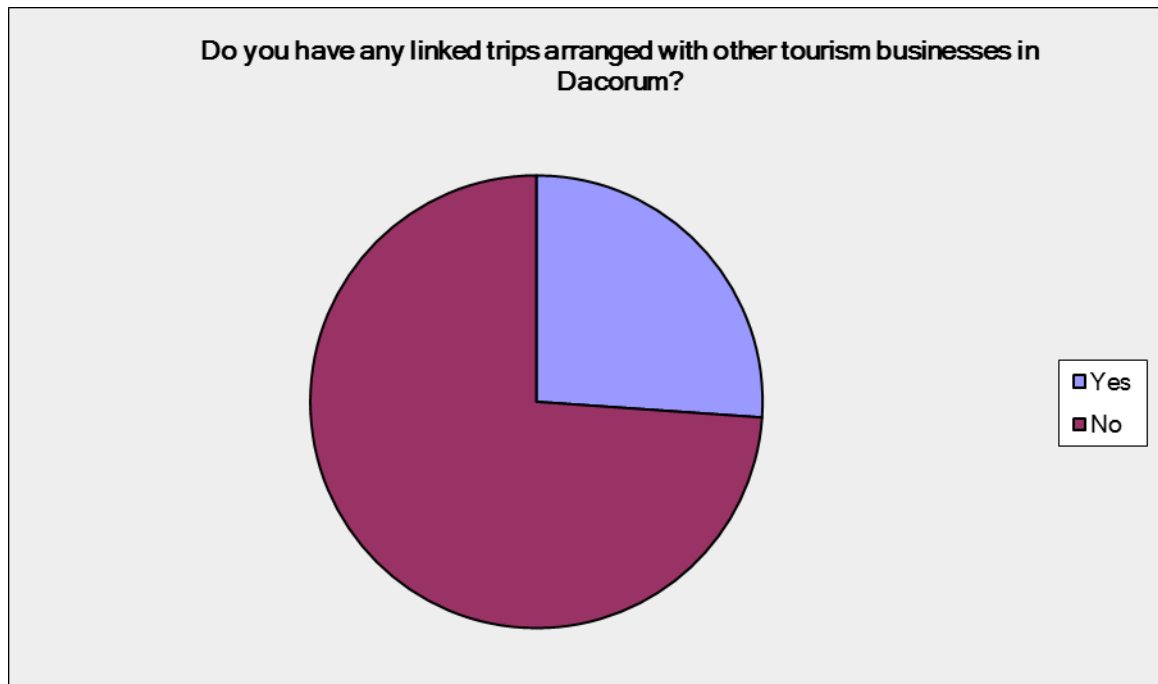
| Over the next year how do you think your business will perform? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Increase in customer numbers | 43.5% | 10 |
| Similar number of customers | 52.2% | 12 |
| Decrease in customer numbers | 4.3% | 1 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 23 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 6 |



With the support of the Tourism Officer we will work to increase the visitor numbers through a range of initiatives linked trips/coach tours/increase promotion.

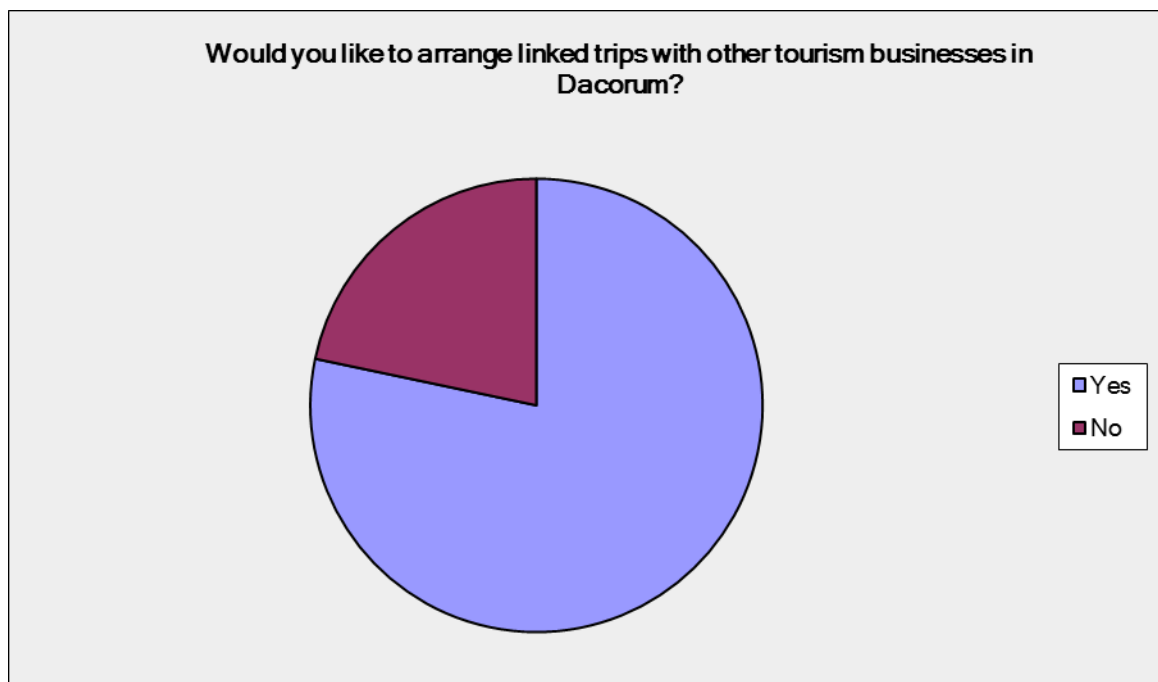
Dacorum Attraction Survey

| Do you have any linked trips arranged with other tourism businesses in Dacorum? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 26.1% | 6 |
| No | 73.9% | 17 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 23 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 6 |



This shows very few linked trips are currently in place in the borough. This is an area of focus for the Tourism Officer.

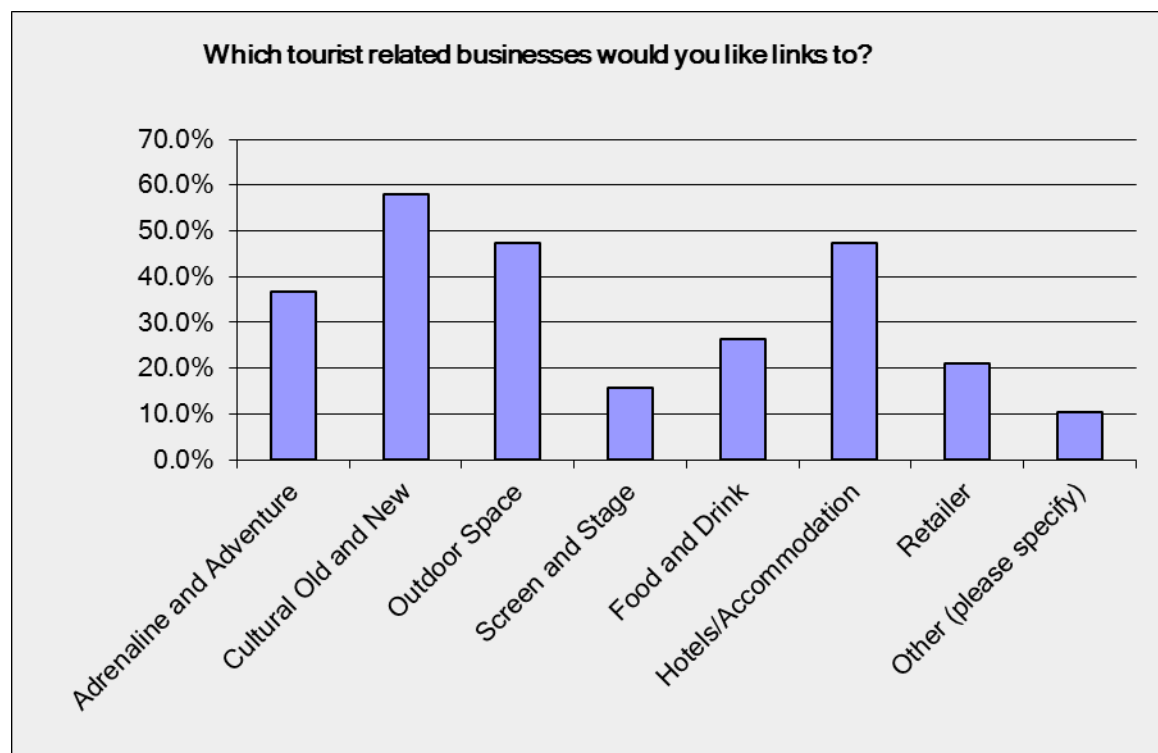
| Would you like to arrange linked trips with other tourism businesses in Dacorum? | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 78.3% | 18 |
| No | 21.7% | 5 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 23 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 6 |



This shows that there is great will within the tourism industry to increase linked trips with other local businesses.

| Which tourist related businesses would you like links to? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Adrenaline and Adventure | 36.8% | 7 |
| Cultural Old and New | 57.9% | 11 |
| Outdoor Space | 47.4% | 9 |
| Screen and Stage | 15.8% | 3 |
| Food and Drink | 26.3% | 5 |
| Hotels/Accommodation | 47.4% | 9 |
| Retailer | 21.1% | 4 |
| Other (please specify) | 10.5% | 2 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 19 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 10 |

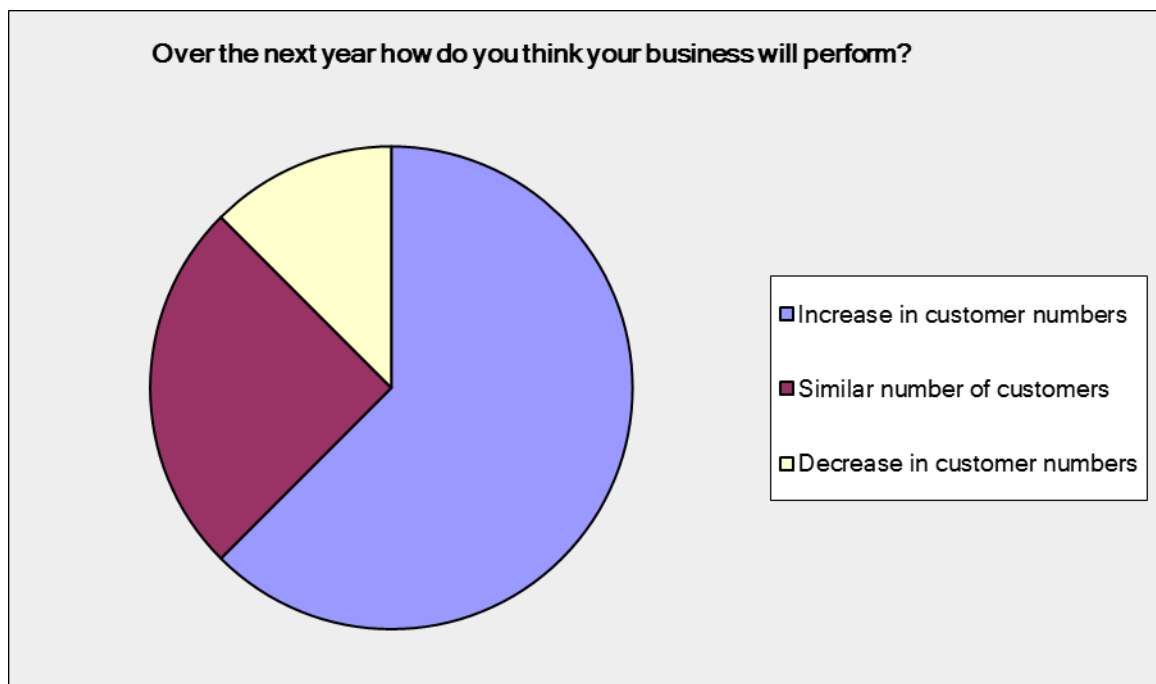
| Number | Response Date | Other (please specify) | Categories |
|--------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Jul 30, 2013 3:19 PM | Any associated businesses | |
| 2 | Jul 23, 2013 5:02 PM | Environmental, Educational, Community | |



This shows the linkage the businesses would like to make. Tourism Officer to facilitate these.

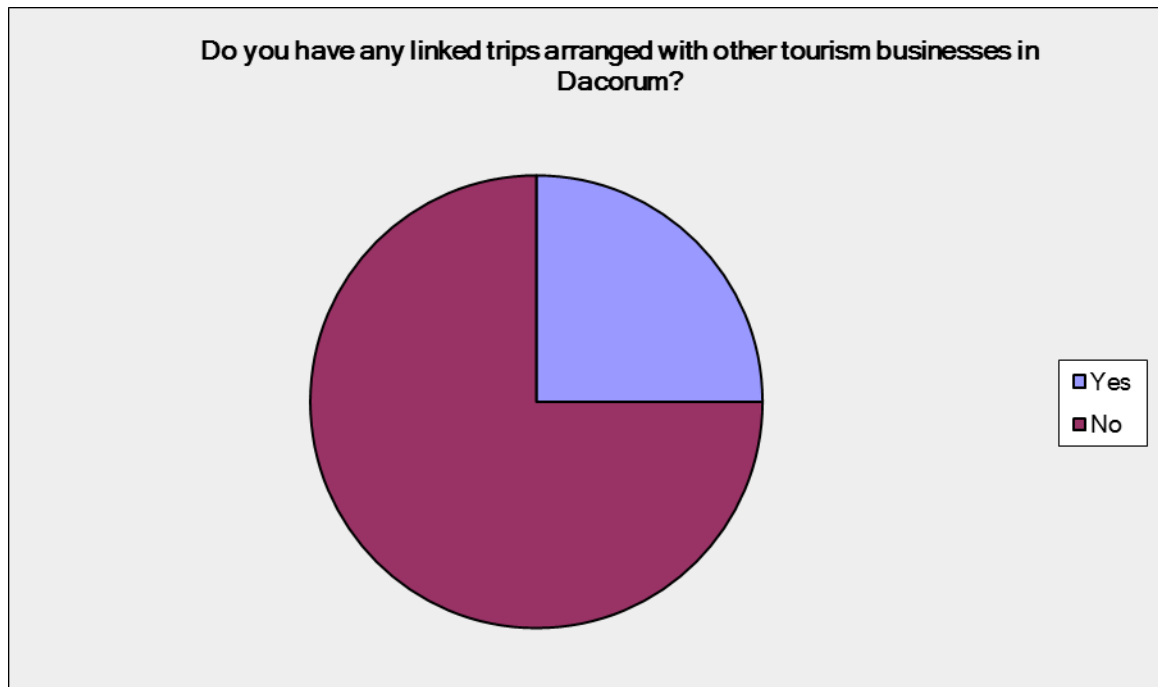
Dacorum Hotel Survey

| Over the next year how do you think your business will perform? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Increase in customer numbers | 62.5% | 5 |
| Similar number of customers | 25.0% | 2 |
| Decrease in customer numbers | 12.5% | 1 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 8 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 2 |

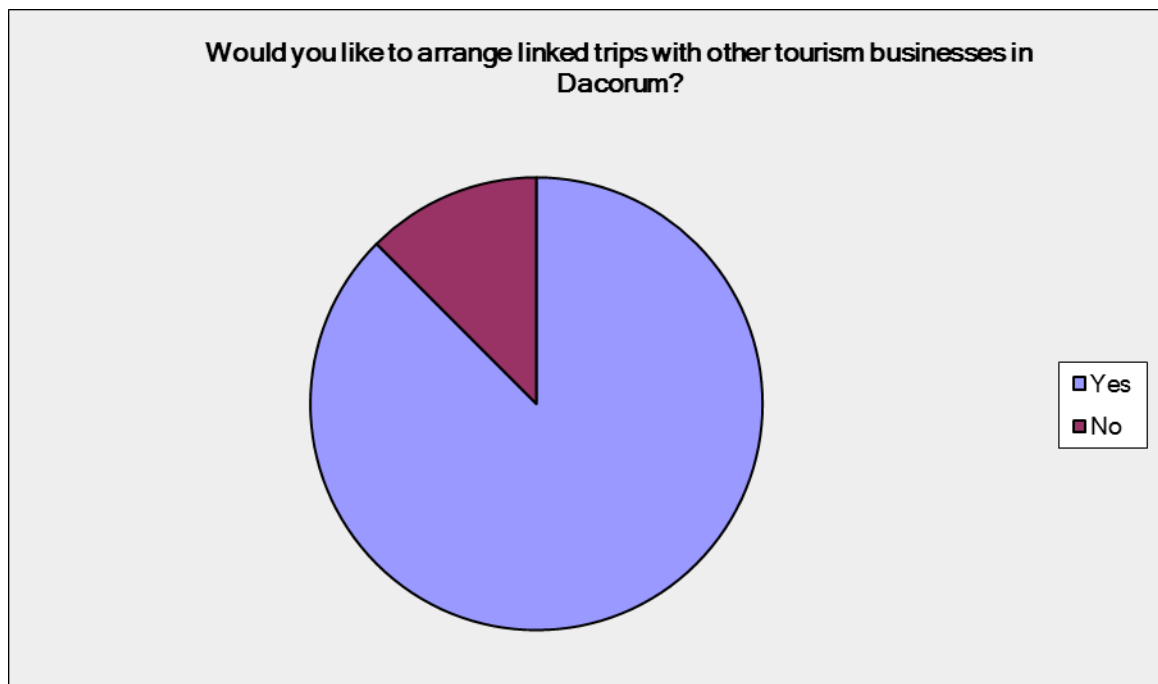


This shows that the local accommodation providers are positive that they will see an increase in customer numbers this year.

| Do you have any linked trips arranged with other tourism businesses in Dacorum? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 25.0% | 2 |
| No | 75.0% | 6 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 8 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 2 |



| Would you like to arrange linked trips with other tourism businesses in Dacorum? | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 87.5% | 7 |
| No | 12.5% | 1 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 8 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 2 |



The hotels are also looking for more linked trips with the attractions. This will be a focus for the Tourism Officer. Also for the hotels and attractions the introduction of coach trips to the area will bring in increased footfall.

| Which tourist related businesses would you like links to? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Adrenaline and Adventure | 71.4% | 5 |
| Cultural Old and New | 71.4% | 5 |
| Outdoor Space | 57.1% | 4 |
| Screen and Stage | 57.1% | 4 |
| Food and Drink | 14.3% | 1 |
| Retailer | 0.0% | 0 |
| Other (please specify) | 0.0% | 0 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 7 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 3 |

