



Strategic Planning & Environment

Overview & Scrutiny

Agenda

TUESDAY 7 JULY 2015 AT 7.30 PM

DBC Bulbourne Room - Civic Centre

The Councillors listed below are requested to attend the above meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Membership

Councillor Adshead
Councillor Anderson (Chairman)
Councillor Ashbourn
Councillor Bateman
Councillor Collins
Councillor Hearn

Councillor Hicks
Councillor Howard
Councillor Matthews
Councillor Ransley
Councillor Riddick
Councillor Wyatt-Lowe (Vice-Chairman)

Substitute Members:

Councillors Birnie, Link, McLean, Ritchie, Sutton and Tindall

For further information, please contact Catriona Lawson or Member Support

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN
RELATION TO CALL-IN**

6. ECONOMIC WELLBEING REPORT INCLUDING DACORUM'S DEN (Pages 1 - 24)

7. TOURISM STRATEGY (Pages 25 - 58)

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing a resolution in the following terms:

That, under s.100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Part 1 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during the item in Part II of the Agenda for this meeting, because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relating to:



AGENDA ITEM: 6

SUMMARY

Report for:	Strategic Planning and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	7th July 2015
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Dacorum's Den Results and Economic Wellbeing update
Contact:	<p>Cllr Graham Sutton - Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers;</p> <p>Chris Taylor – Group Manager, Strategic Planning & Regeneration</p> <p>Lesley Crisp – Assistant Team Leader, Economic Wellbeing Team, Strategic Planning & Regeneration</p>
Purpose of report:	To inform members about the Dacorum's Den Initiative and its results and to update members on the work carried out to support and develop the Economic Wellbeing of the Borough
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this report is noted and the work already carried out during on Dacorum's Den be acknowledged 2. That the work undertaken to support Dacorum's business community be acknowledged.
Corporate objectives:	The project supports the Corporate Vision and in particular the priority of Building Community Capacity and Regeneration by promoting business growth
Implications:	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>None arising for this report – work is carried out from established budgets</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p>

	Through close partnership working with our business community DBC are able to utilise the flair and experience of commercial business to advise the direction and priorities for the EW team. The gradual move towards charging for some services supports the aim to self-finance the EW teams revenue work for the future, wherever possible.
Risk Implications	Risk Assessment included within the Project Initiation Document for this area of work and monitored through the Corvu system.
Equalities Implications	Equality Impact Assessment carried out as part of DLNF PID
Health And Safety Implications	None in this report
Consultees:	Maylands Partnership Dacorum business growth forum
Background papers:	DLNF Overview and Scrutiny Report March 2015 (annex 1).
Historical background (<i>please give a brief background to this report to enable it to be considered in the right context</i>).	Further to Cabinets' decision in December 2011 to provide additional funding to support economic development during tough times, a number of reports have been presented to update members on the initiatives undertaken to promote inward investment and economic growth in our borough. The last of these reports was presented in June 2014 (annex 1). This report updates members on work that happened for the Financial year 2014/5 to date and focusses on the Dacorum's Den initiative run through the Economic Wellbeing service.
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<i>ED = Economic Development</i> <i>FDI = Foreign Direct Investment</i> <i>JSA = Job Seeker's Allowance</i> <i>LEP = Local Enterprise Partnership</i> <i>MBC = Maylands Business Centre</i> <i>DLNF = Dacorum; Look No Further</i> <i>PPC = Pay per click</i>

	<p><i>PR = Public Relations</i></p> <p><i>HCCI = Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce</i></p>
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1. Dacorum's Den initiative

1.1. Dacorum's Den is an initiative started in summer 2012 to provide grants to small and start-up businesses. The grants are to help a business solve an issue which may be a barrier to their operation and growth. The grants are awarded through a 'Dragon's Den' style process, the ultimate part of which involves applicant's pitching their idea to a board made up of Mike Penning MP, a representative from DBC and representation from the Dacorum Business community.

1.2. The initial Den run in 2012 was funded by the Economic Wellbeing team and matched by a contribution from Maylands Partnership (MP). Since then the council has attracted funding to support the Den from the performance reward grant (specifically for social enterprises), Symbio Energy (private business) and enjoyed continued support from MP. Of the £40k grants issued to date, £25k has been external funded.

1.3. The process of the den is;

1.4. The application process is advertised

1.5. Potential applicants can meet the MBC business advisor during the process

1.6. Applications received against deadline and are sifted and scored by the Economic Wellbeing team members against set criteria

1.7. Finalists go through and present at the Den

1.8. Den panel decide on the grants to be awarded based on;

- quality of business idea
- specifics of how the money would be spent and the outcomes expected
- whether the idea demonstrated potential for business or employment growth
- what methods have been put in place to measure the value of the grant
- Whether suitable key customers have been identified.

1.9. During the first 3 dens (2012-14) 26 businesses have benefitted from a total of £30700 in grants. Most have received £1000, with a small number receiving up to £2000 in special circumstances. From the 2012-14 winners, 92% are still trading.

1.10. Between these winning businesses, a total of 25 additional jobs have been created which is a 52% increase in employment.

1.11. Key successes such as;

1.12. Tea Tree Café and Cinnamon Travelling Café (Den winners in 2014) have become finalists in Best newcomer Category of the Hertfordshire Food Awards.

1.13. Quest Joinery (winners 2012) has grown from 2 employees, when they came to the Den, to currently employing 8 with an additional 12 subcontractors. Their turnover has grown from £350k to over £1.2million last year.

1.14. Skin Therapy (Den winner 2013), used the money to improve online presence. Turnover has increased from £13k in 2013 to £35k in 2014.

A summary of all the Den winners (2012-14) is attached (annex 2).

1.15. Dacorum's Den 2015 took place on Friday 12th June and there were 7 winners taking a total of £10k in grants (sponsored by Symbio Energy and Maylands Partnership). These came from a pool of 38 initial applications.

1.16. Business advice is offered to all Den applicants and winners and support continues through the businesses life, signposting them to other support opportunities, such as the Hertfordshire growth hub, as appropriate.

1.17. Funding to continue the Den into the future years will continue to be sought via business sponsorship where possible, however Maylands Partnership will no longer be able to offer financial assistance as their funding has now all been allocated. It is hoped that DBC can see the benefits created by this scheme and will be able to offer financial support to future rounds.

1. Economic Wellbeing activity

1.1. Purpose - Dacorum Borough Council is working to ensure the area is a place where business flourishes; where people will want to come to live and work, all in a safe environment. The Economic Wellbeing team works in partnership with our business community, landowners, commercial agents and developers to make this happen. Our areas of focus, as set out in the Economic Development Strategy 2013-16 can be demonstrated in the diagram below.



1.2. Update;

1.3. The Economic Wellbeing team continue to work closely with both the planning and asset management teams to meet with potential developers, inward investors and expanding businesses to help to work towards positive outcomes from planning applications which support economic growth.

1.4. The Hemel Hempstead Ambassadors programme is being launched (Autumn 2015) to help support Dacorum's Inward investment aims. The Ambassadors programme is aimed at place shaping and in raising the reputation of Hemel Hempstead as a location for business, and a place to live and visit.

1.5. The programme is headed up by a place board made up of senior business executives and has a programme of work to undertake to showcase Hemel Hempstead to the external market. This could include things such as hosting investor conferences and meetings, attending inward investment shows and external PR and marketing for the area. It also creates a network of ambassadors who speak highly of the area when meeting new business associates, so spreading the word and the "buzz" about Hemel Hempstead.

1.6. In addition to inward investment, the EW team continue to concentrate on supporting our current business base to thrive and grow through a variety of initiatives;

- 1.7. Networking events – creation of a new Linked in virtual network and now hosting bi-monthly events with member speakers at each event on targeted business issues. Approx. 40 people attend each event.
- 1.8. Bite sized courses – hosted at the MBC, day and half day courses on issues highlighted by our businesses as barriers to growth. These are set at affordable rates and self-sustain, requiring no financial support from DBC. Current courses running include customer service, time management, using social media to enhance marketing, Excel formulae, Health and Safety management for the SME, Developing Management Skills, Coaching and Mentoring a Team, Recruitment and Interview Skills, Business Planning and Appraisal skills.
- 1.9. The Maylands Business Centre continues to thrive and expanded its office accommodation during 2014/15 creating an additional 3 offices, all of which are fully occupied, and there remains a waiting list of 12 for offices and 16 for light industrial units.
- 1.10. Work has commenced on the project to expand the MBC light industrial stock. A tender for construction will be released in June to build 5 additional units on the Bungalow plot adjacent to the current site. It is envisaged that this development will complete in autumn 2016, which will allow additional businesses to be supported and will also raise additional revenue to be reinvested into the EW service, currently estimated at £35k per annum.
- 1.11. Business support, advice and guidance are now embedded in the MBC service provision. The centre offers personal business support supported by COBRA, a suite of information providing business intelligence, fact sheets and regular updates on current business legislation.
- 1.12. To re-enforce our small business support DBC has recently bought into Wenta's "My Incubator Service (MIV)", which offers online business support, available via live chat with expert business advisors. Additionally the small business forum, which allows micro businesses to network, share experience and self mentor, runs at the MBC monthly. It has a regular attendance of 20-25 businesses and speakers determined by the attendees. This forum is now self-funding through a small membership fee. In total for 2014/15 168 businesses were supported on a one to one basis at the centre.
- 1.13. Work has been underway to raise Dacorum's profile with the Hertfordshire LEP, promoting the proactive economic development and regeneration work we do and our future plans. Hemel Hempstead features as an area for investment in the LEP's Growth Plan. Work continues with the LEP and the team will seek to ensure Dacorum takes a role in accommodating employment growth for the county through the M1 growth Corridor. The M1 Growth Corridor group is planned to be formed in early summer which will lead to opportunities to secure funding for employment enabling projects within the borough.
- 1.14. In addition, DBC have representation on the LEP Skills and Employment Programme Board looking at the future skills needs of the county and how Hertfordshire can meet these, and also Business Support Board looking at the provision a consistent support offer for the Start-Up businesses in Hertfordshire, working with other support providers.

- 1.15. Between Nov 2014 and March 2015 the carried out consultancy work assisting Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in establishing an ED service. This work is being seen as a test case for services we could potentially sell to other boroughs in the future. This piece of work brought approx. £20k of income to offset against the cost of the ED service. Subsequent to this work the team have visited Letchworth Heritage Foundation to present on what ED could do for Letchworth and the foundation are planning on visiting the Maylands Business Centre in the future.
- 1.16. Promotion of apprenticeships and other routes into employment is ongoing in the borough via our Economic Development 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 1.3% (as compared to a national figure of 1.9%). 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. 14 grants have been paid to Dacorum Businesses; a further 3 are currently ring-fenced whilst we work with the employers to find the right apprentices and training framework.
- 1.17. For the second year running the Economic Development Officer is working with 7 Hertfordshire Local Authorities, the University of Hertfordshire and the LEP to attend and staff a stand at MIPIM UK, one of the largest property and development exhibitions in the UK, held at Olympia, from the 21-23 October 2015.
- 1.18. Quarterly partnership meetings are held with Dacorum's secondary school Careers Advisers, Youth Connexions and West Herts College. A 'not going to Uni' event is planned for the beginning of July.
- 1.19. Business needs are identified through quarterly surveys; topics to date have included Skills and Finance, the next one will be on Growth. Results are analysed and actions identified by the Growth Forum, a partnership of local businesses who direct the work of the Economic Development Officer.
- 1.20. The Economic Wellbeing team produce quarterly reports measuring achievements against key targets, and also detailing some of the non-measurable work we carry out. This report is circulated quarterly via member's news. The report for year 2014/15 is attached (annex 3).
- 1.21. The Dacorum Look No Further funding ceased at the end of March 2015, but the work continues into 2015/2016 with additional income being generated through the extensions to the MBC, the Small Business Forum, The Business Directory, workshops and consultancy work. This income can be used to further support the ED work in Dacorum. There is also potential to generate further funding for the business support work through the LEP and ERDF funding.
- 1.22. The reputation of Dacorum has been greatly increased through our promotional channels and this work will continue through both Dacorum's communications team and the new Hemel Hempstead Ambassadors scheme.
- 1.23. Through continual two-way communication with our business community the Economic Wellbeing team will remain both a pro-active and

flexible team who can adapt quickly to ensure we meet the needs of our customers and where ever possible exceed expectations.

Summary

In order to maintain our current level of work around care and retention for our business community support, we now charge for events that we hold to cover costs and we are looking at other ways to raises revenue which we can re-invest into economic development. An example of this is charging for our on-line business directory based on the DLNF website. This has currently brought in £1000+ which can be used for other ED activity. In addition, any profits from the workshops will also be reinvested in other ED work. The service is striving to self fund wherever possible.



AGENDA ITEM:

SUMMARY

Report for:	Strategic Planning and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	10th March 2015
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Dacorum Look No Further Work and Enjoy Campaign update.
Contact:	<p>Cllr Andrew Williams- Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers;</p> <p>Rebecca Oblein – Team Leader, Economic Wellbeing Team, Strategic Planning & Regeneration</p> <p>Sue Lea – Tourism Officer, Strategic Planning and Regeneration</p>
Purpose of report:	To demonstrate the value added from the additional investment into Economic Wellbeing and the Look No Further campaign.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this report be noted and the work already carried out during 2013/14 acknowledged. 2. That the committee 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:	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>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</p> <p>£300k was allocated over 2 years to support the economy and</p>

	<p>£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>
Risk Implications	Risk Assessment included within the Project Initiation Document for this area of work and monitored through the Corvu system.
Equalities Implications	Equality Impact Assessment carried out as part of DLNF PID
Health And Safety Implications	None in this report
Consultees:	<p>James Doe, Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration</p> <p>Chris Taylor – Group Manager, Strategic Planning and Regeneration</p>
Background papers:	Overview and Scrutiny Report June 2014 (annex 1).
<p>Historical background <i>(please give a brief background to this report to enable it to be considered in the right context).</i></p>	<p>1. “Dacorum Look No Further” – Work, Live and Enjoy.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</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>

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

1.1. Initially 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, and to look at ways to maximise the impact of the tourism economy on the area. Due to the successes achieved over the last 2 years in promoting tourism, this post has now been extended up to March 2017. During the next phase of this work the Tourism Officer will be seeking contributions from Dacorum tourism businesses to assist in funding this position further into the future.

1.2. The Tourism Partnership has continued to grow its network of tourism businesses and now has approximately 70 businesses. This network works together with DBC to ensure that we are promoting the best we have to offer at relevant Tourism events, help to populate our DLNF website with accurate information for our visitors, link together to encourage visitors to stay longer in the borough and provide us with intelligence about what is going on in the Tourism economy. From this group a main tourism steering board has been formed who works very closely with the Tourism Officer to direct the work we are undertaking to ensure it maximises effect on the economy.

1.3. The layout of the “Enjoy” section of the Dacorum Look no Further (DLNF) website has been changed to be more inviting and easier to navigate, to attract more visitors to the website and keep them there longer. A new structure has been built allowing visitors to quickly access relevant information e.g. children’s favourites’ page and a wedding venues page. This is continually being built upon to keep the website vibrant and up to date.

1.4. The DLNF website is now averaging 2095 unique hits per month up from 550 per month reported in June 2014. This increase comes through continued

promotion of the website via all possible advertising channels, for example an ad shell (bus stop) campaign ran in January 2015 with its call to action to visit the website, and we continually promote the site via the Dacorum Digest. The use of PPC (see point 1.5 below) also helps maintain a steady flow of visits to the site. As this traffic grows advertising on the site becomes more viable for our businesses, and we are looking to trial advertising space with our tourism partners during the first quarter 2015/16.

- 1.5. Pay Per Click (PPC) marketing continues to be used on the DLNF website to help increase traffic to the website and to provide intelligence about search engine optimisation. This campaign allows us to target different audiences at different times to drive traffic to the site. For example, during school holidays families will be targeted for the activities section of the site, and wedding venues are being optimised in the run up to Valentine's Day. PPC has also highlighted an increase of click through rates, which indicates that the website content is more now relevant to the target audience. This information helps us to ensure that the site stays focussed.
- 1.6. Linked trips continue to be organised between our tourism partners facilitated by the Tourism Officer. The Apsley paper trail has now seen £12000 in additional income through linking with Scarenation, a Halloween events company, and the ski break offered by Shendish has seen 43 bookings resulting in revenue for them of over £10000. Recent links include Shendish and the centre for horseback riding and Pendley Manor and Butterfly World.
- 1.7. A taster day trip to Dacorum for group travel organisers ran on 14th June 2014. This has resulted in 8 coach companies coming into the Borough following the taster. Apsley paper trail has reported that through visits to the museum, they received an additional 163 visitors bringing in revenue of £3200. The Tourism Officer continues to pursue the group travel market and has recently attended the Alexandra Palace (Excursions 2015 show) and will be attending the Best of Britain and Ireland show in early March 2015 to promote Dacorum.
- 1.8. A hotel occupancy survey is now being carried out with 10 of our local hotels. The response rate has been 60% and these have shown an increase in bed occupancy from 2012 to 2013 from 64% occupancy to 69%. The 2014 results are not yet known.
- 1.9. A new seasonal tourism newsletter has been produced, and two issues have now been sent out, autumn and winter. These have been sent to a database of over 50,000 email addresses which were purchased. These email addresses relate to families with young children who live within an hour's drive of Hemel Hempstead. The newsletter features information on local events and tourism partner offers.
- 1.10. The industry standard measure for Tourism is known as the value and volume survey. This measured the economic impact of tourism in Dacorum at £218,000,000 in 2013. This is a reduction by 2% in value over 2012, however for the same period Hertfordshire as a whole dropped 5% in value.
- 1.11. In September 2014 Dacorum hosted the stage six finish of the Friends Life Tour of Britain. In order to maximise its impact on the tourism economy for the borough, a dedicated page on the "Enjoy" section of the DLNF website was created. The section contained information about places to stay, things

to do, places to eat and drink, information about cycling in the Chilterns, how to get to Dacorum, a list of local cycling shops and a section called “special offers” which tourism businesses and cycle shops offered discount to encourage visitors to stay longer which would ultimately increase spend in the area for the weekend. In total ten businesses offered discount to feature on the DLNF website, six of those were local hotels offering discounted stay.

2. Future work plans for Tourism

- 2.1. The Tourism officer’s position has been extended for an additional 2 years and has an annual revenue budget of £20000 during that time.
- 2.2. A Tourism strategy is being formed to set out the vision, objectives and targets for the next two years including an engagement plan which will work towards building a sustainable tourism partnership providing the resources to fund the Tourism Officer beyond March 2017.
- 2.3. A Tourism consultant has been engaged to lead on this work, and a business workshop is set for 19th March to look at priorities as seen by our Tourism partnership. The draft strategy is expected by the end of April 2015. The specific objectives of this work are;
 - Identifying Dacorum’s tourism positioning now and where it should be in the future;
 - identifying the needs, wants and desires of the two market towns (Berkhamsted and Tring) as part of the strategy to bring the destination together;
 - Clarifying the key audience segments for the destination
 - Developing a detailed action plan to deliver the strategy and integral sub-plans for Tring and Berkhamsted.
 - Considering a workable model for shared delivery
 - Developing a viable and robust business model to financially support tourism delivery into the future.

3. Economic Wellbeing - Dacorum Look No Further - Work Strand: £300k committed over a 2 year period.

- 3.1. 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. In addition to the work reported in June 2015, Dacorum was instrumental in organising a Hertfordshire wide group made up of 7 Hertfordshire Local Authorities and the LEP to attend and staff a stand at UKs first MIPIM (an inward investment show). Over 4,000 plus participants attended, 575 investors and 35 cities were represented. The Hertfordshire stand captured the contact details of almost 100 professionals looking to close deals in the UK property market.
- 3.2. The Work pages on dacorumlooknofurther.co.uk have been revisited and refreshed and a suite of new pages added focussing on providing business support. These pages provide information on local support organisations, possible grants available and also a New Business Corner page giving hints and tips for start-ups. To increase the use of these a bus shelter campaign

has been run to raise awareness (see point 1.3) and we continue to promote through social media channels.

- 3.3. The PR campaign continues to run, with a mixture of advertising campaigns and editorial articles. In January, an ad shell (Bus Stop) campaign ran across the borough with one poster specifically focusing on business support we can offer to local businesses, and the other highlighting our local attractions. We are currently in the process of recording 3 radio advertisements to be played over the next year, on Dacorum Leisure Radio. These will be played hourly in Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted Sportspace and the XC. For examples of recent PR see annex 2.
- 3.4. The Economic Wellbeing team continue to work closely with both the planning and asset management teams to meet with potential developers, inward investors and expanding businesses to help to work towards positive outcomes from planning applications which support economic growth.
- 3.5. Outline planning permission has been granted on the Symbio Office site in Two Waters for a new mixed use development block which will provide 207 new flats and also 9000 sqft of office space. This same developer is looking to replicate this scheme in other areas of the borough therefore bring forward new office stock for our businesses. Recently, due to the new permitted development rules, Dacorum has lost a number of town centre Office blocks to conversions and so the market is starting to drive the need for speculative office development again. Developers are positive about Dacorum due to our economic development agenda and open for business planning approach.
- 3.6. 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 users, and there is a great deal of interest in the remaining plots.
- 3.7. The Heart of Maylands development area, at the junction of Wood Lane End and Maylands Avenue is moving forwards and an application for the first phase of development of the south-east quadrant was approved in December 2014. This will introduce a new vibrancy to the business park with a mix of uses including residential, retail and a range of other business supporting facilities. This area will also encompass an area of high quality public realm for the business park users. Additionally, DBC has acquired the north-west quadrant, known as Wood House (former Schroff Site), for housing development. The ground floor of the building will likely be used for further business incubation space with ongoing discussions between the SPAR and Strategic Housing teams.
- 3.8. The Maylands design guide and materials palette for the Maylands urban realm improvement scheme (MURI) on the Maylands Business Park have been completed and progress on the first phase of improvements for the Maylands have been underway with this work planned to start in

spring/summer 2015. The vision for this work is to make Maylands a more attractive place for current resident businesses and potential investors. The Council currently has approximately £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 from developments within Maylands. The first phase of the improvements will focus on the southern half of Maylands Avenue, consisting of hard landscape improvements, tree planting, hedge and railing improvements, high quality street furniture and upgrading of signage.

- 3.9. The Maylands Business Centre continues to thrive and has now expanded its office accommodation through the conversion of one of the light industrial units. This has created an additional 3 offices, all of which are fully occupied, and there remains a waiting list of 6 for offices and 18 for light industrial units.
- 3.10. Business support, advice and guidance are now embedded in the MBC service provision. We offer personal business support, we have access to COBRA, a suite of information providing business intelligence, fact sheets and regular updates on current business legislation, and we are currently investigating the feasibility of buying into Wenta's my incubator service, which offers online business support, available via live chat with expert business advisors. Additionally the small business forum, which allows micro businesses to network, share experience and self mentor, runs at the MBC monthly. In total for 2014/15 to date 168 businesses have been supported on a one to one basis at the centre.
- 3.11. The third business showcase "A taste of Dacorum" was held on 11th July 14. The showcase had a particular focus on local food suppliers, in addition to the commercial business stands. 37 commercial businesses held stands at this event and 17 businesses exhibited in "A taste of Dacorum". 250 visitors enjoyed the day and 92 new business contacts were made.
- 3.12. The partnership with Herts Chamber of Commerce continues. A new Business Development Manager for Dacorum started in September 2014. Membership of the chamber has increased by 11% since September and 8 events have been hosted here to date, and at least one Dacorum event planned per month moving forwards. This gives Dacorum's businesses additional opportunity to network and expand their business contacts locally.
- 3.13. Dacorum's Den 2015 has been planned and the judging day set for 12th June. For the 2015 Den we have £10000 for grants, half of which has been sponsored by a private company – Symbio House. Our business advisor at the MBC continues to work with all previous winners; a brief update of their progress is shown in annex 3.
- 3.14. 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. We will continue to work with the LEP and strive to take a leading role in accommodating employment growth for the county through the M1 growth Corridor. The M1 Growth Corridor group

is planned to be formed in early 2015 which will lead to opportunities to secure funding for employment enabling projects within the borough.

- 3.15. The MBC continues to offer affordable, bite sized courses which address areas of concern raised by the business community through continual 2 way contact. These now self fund and are an established service provided as part of our care and retention package. Current courses running include customer service, time management, using social media to enhance marketing, Excel formulae, health and Safety management for the SME, developing management skills and appraisal skills. We have had 132 delegates to date attend our workshops.
- 3.16. Promotion of apprenticeships and other routes into employment is ongoing in the borough via our Economic Development 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 1.3% (as compared to a national figure of 1.9%). 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. 10 grants have been paid to Dacorum Businesses; a further 8 are currently ring-fenced whilst we work with the employers to find the right apprentices and training framework.

4. Future work for Economic Wellbeing (EW)

- 4.1. The Economic Wellbeing team are currently working on the formation of a new Hemel Hempstead Ambassadors programme to continue the place shaping message that Hemel Hempstead and thus Dacorum as a whole are the place for inward investment. This programme will enable us to continue to spread the message about all we have to offer, and our reputation as being open for business. This scheme will also start to raise a new income stream to be re-invested into the continual promotion of the area. This will be managed by a high level place board, made up of business and council representation and delivered by a place manager.
- 4.2. Work has commenced on a project to expand the MBC light industrial stock. It is thought that this could accommodate a further 4 to 5 units, and it is envisaged that this development will take 18-24 months to complete. This will allow additional businesses to be supported and will also raise revenue to be reinvested into the EW service, currently estimated at £35k per annum.
- 4.3. The EW Officers are comfortable that additional funding is not required in order to maintain our level of work around care and retention for our business community support, advice and guidance for business start-ups. We now charge for events that we hold to cover costs and we are looking at other ways to raise revenue which we can re-invest into economic development. An example of this is charging for our on-line business directory based on the DLNF website. This has currently brought in £1000+ which can be used for other ED activity.
- 4.4. The team are currently assisting Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in establishing an ED service on a consultancy basis. This work is being seen as a test case for services we could potentially sell to other boroughs in the future. This piece of work has brought approx. £18k of income.

4.5. The EW team will continue to investigate ways in which to raise additional funding for this service, be it through the MBC offering, selling consultancy to other boroughs or increasing the charges for the events we host.

Summary

The Dacorum Look No Further funding ceases at the end of March 2015. Much has been achieved using this which has helped to create growth and opportunities in the Borough which are sustainable into the future thanks to this pump priming initiative.

From our use of this additional funding the reputation of Dacorum has been greatly increased through our promotional channels and we now need to build upon this to continue to raise Dacorum's profile.

This initiative now needs to be embraced as a corporate focus. A Dacorum Look No Further Communications Officer has been recruited, to work across the council to promote the use of the Dacorum Look No Further branding. This position is initially on a part-time 2 year basis, a proportion of which has been funded through the Dacorum Look No Further project. This post sits within the communications team to allow the work to continue post DLNF funding.

All of the council should now be looking at how their department, function, team and external partners can continue to spread the word that when you are looking for a great place to invest, work, live and visit - **Dacorum: Look No Further.**

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Dacorum’s Den winners 2012-2014 – where are they now?

Winners from 2012

All 8 companies that received awards in 2012 are still trading although one winner under a different name. Their current positions since winning the awards are set out below.

Lush Pups – Following her success in the Den, the business owner secured a contract with Harrods to sell her dog beds within the store and this was successful until Harrods closed its pet department. She is currently working as the interior designer for a pet hotel in Hertfordshire as well as selling her pet beds online.

Baby Moments – Having been awarded the money on a ‘drip-feed’ basis, as the business owner was working part time for an employer, she has since quit her job and is now full time on Baby Moments. She has grown from strength to strength and has just found her first ‘franchisee’ for the business. She is currently working on the franchise offer with her business advisor.

Grim Reaper Foods – Since receiving the grant to buy a gazebo to take to fairs and events, the company increased their profit in the first year from £2K to £26K and have increased their profits each year consistently by 15%. Originally with 1 employee, they have taken on 2 full time and 1 part time employees and are taking on their first premises in Tring in the Autumn. His products are also now sold in Selfridges, Fenwicks and 29 gadget stores called Menkind in Lakeside, Bluewater, Westfield and stores all around the UK.

Quest Joinery - When they applied for the funds they were in their first year and employed 2 people. The additional machinery helped them to now employ 8 and have a further 12 working for them as subcontractors. Their turnover has grown from 350k in our first year to 1.2m in their last. At the time the grant was very helpful to help invest in tools which aided the business in establishing itself and helped them to grow locally, in turn helping to secure work.

Industrial Floor Machines - The grant allowed the company to invest in a Martindale EasyPAT 2100 PAT tester for the owner’s son, who is now working full time, increasing staff from 6 to 7, to attend a PAT testing course at Martindale's offices in Watford. Simon also attended a one day course on Risk Assessment for Portable Appliance Testing held by Seaward, the leader in PAT testing equipment. They use the PAT tester on a frequent basis, testing every mains powered machine that they repair, and have used it for various service contracts including the annual repairs for Aylesbury High School and regular/monthly repairs for Ashley Cleaning Services (Enfield), JPM Contract Cleaners (Watford) and many others besides. They estimate that sales of over £8,000 can be attributed to PAT testing of electrical cleaning equipment, in addition to the kudos gained by being able to properly and legally provide certificated testing of electrical cleaning equipment to clients in the public and private sectors.

Aid4Disabled – The £1000 was spent developing a website which provides help to Multiple Sclerosis sufferers. This has had a huge impact on the business and has enabled to the owner to launch a ‘public speaking’ career where he speaks at local charity dinners, the MS Society and the NHS on living with MS.

Hemel Stags – The award helped the Club to part fund their website which has had a huge impact on the appearance of the club within the Community and illustrated their step into professional sport. It also helped them to gain sponsors such as Haven Holidays and NGK Spark Plugs.

Marios - Originally DELI-ghtful Foods, the proprietor realised that the competition was vast and they would need to change their image to survive. The £1000 was used to rebrand the business to give it a more modern feel. She believes that they would probably not have survived without the £1000 which allowed them to keep up with the competition and the times. Another positive outcome was that she feels it gave the business the confidence to spend on rebranding'. They started with 0 employees and they currently employ 3 staff.

Winners from 2013

12 businesses were awarded grants in 2013, although 2 of the social enterprises did not get off the ground and take up their award

The current positions of the other 10 since winning the awards are set out below.

Green Light Mediation – Following the award of the Dacorum's Den funding, which enabled the co-owners to keep going forwards, their turnover increased by 100%. They have now just completed their tax return and again this year achieved over 100% increase. Their figures in the last three months are the best ever, enabling them both to become full time employees of the company. This year they are looking to increase the areas in which they work and potentially bring in two part time freelancers. They believe that they would not be trading without that small cash injection at the right time and the support associated with it.

Divine Trees – The business owner used her £1000 to secure an online shop as she was originally trading in the market but this did not suit her needs. The online website has allowed her to sell her wig products both nationally and globally and has allowed her to make sufficient living to survive. She is now able to pay herself a full time salary.

The Counselling Living Room has now set up a clinic at home and also work within other premises such as Ginger in St Albans. Two years on, she now also does some freelance work for a counselling agency and is building-up her own private practice. She is currently in the process of expanding from individual counselling to couple therapy and will also be working with EAP (Employee Assisted Programmes) later this year when as soon as she is accredited.

Skin Therapy - Most of the grant was spent on a professional update to their website which included making it much more accessible to those viewing on mobile devices. The stats reveal that many more customers are using these to browse and place orders and their turnover for the year following the grant increased almost 3 times. They have also taken on 3 part/time staff (2 FTEs).

Wickes Ice Cream – The owner bought a bicycle with the money to trade his ice cream from. Over the past year of so he has had to put the ice cream business temporarily on hold but he feels the market is still there and hopes to restart in time for Christmas.

Watts Hussein - Watts Hassan were given the money to develop an educational ‘app’ to help with media learning. Their app has now been developed and is currently with Apple for approval.

Grand Union Community Energy – The money was used to create a toolkit to capture learning from previous projects and create a practical guide for the future. Dacorum’s Den funded 40% of the costs. The company report that the Toolkit saved hundreds of hours of volunteer effort and supported the application to become a mentor with the UK Co-Operatives Community Energy Mentoring Scheme. They have also recently been invited to plan and fundraise for Watford Community Housing Trust for solar panels on over 20 of their sheltered accommodation and community buildings.

Rockin’ Lockin’ – The owner set up an online store which grew steadily over the next 13 months. However, circumstances have since meant that she has given up the site and is now in full time employment.

Sunnyside Rural Trust – The money was used on an irrigation system for their plants which has saved many volunteer and staff hours, freeing them for other tasks. The money has made them far more cost effective and productive.

Cake Stories – The business continues to work on the children’s parties and produce celebration cakes. Her business continues to be successful today.

Lessons Learnt – the two failing businesses were part of a specific amount of money specifically allocated for Social Enterprises and these have been the hardest parties to work with. Moving forwards it is unlikely that Social Enterprises will be eligible to apply for the Den.

Winners from 2014

8 awards were given. All businesses are trading and growing.

A1Optician – The award recipient reported that they spent their award on printing and designing new leaflets and created a special poster card for meals on wheels housebound people, delivered to all 2600 housebound in Hertfordshire. From this they have gained 9 new patients a week and are working 6 days to see all the patients. They are now looking into maybe employing an extra staff member to help with paperwork.

The Tea Tree – The business won the Dacorum's Den double award and opened her shop in the summer and is now a thriving tea shop in the Old Town. The shop currently employs 4 members of staff. Lisa also reached the final 5 in the Best Newcomer section of the Hertfordshire Food Awards. They are currently looking at options to open in the evenings.

TSE Productions –The team have gained several new projects through the grant and are now looking at working with cruise ships also.

Cinnamon Travelling café – Cinnamon Travelling Cafe won the Dacorum's Den double award. The £2000 grant changed the business from a good idea to a working concept that they have expanded and now market as a viable profit making entity. The money enabled them to move from using small

domestic kitchen appliances to being able to purchase proper catering equipment and create and design marketing material, which opened their business up to a much wider audience and the ability to cater for much bigger occasions. They were able to progress from catering at small village fairs of a few hundred to successfully tendering big music festivals, such as Hatfield House's folk festival which attracted 8,000 people. They have won a rolling contract with a local brewery and regularly cater for big council run events. They recently came second in the Best Newcomer section of the Hertfordshire Food Awards

MMSpark – The owner reports that Modern Marketing Spark (mmspark.com) has evolved immeasurably in the past year, and the seed funding to develop the online services was an invaluable part of this growth. MMSpark has grown by leaps and bounds and is now proud to serve a wide range of diverse clients across Herts, Beds and Bucks, as well as further afield. Winning this award increased the business profile in the business community and opened many doors.

Ecqo – Ecqo was slow to start as there were production issues that Jessica had to work through. Now these are resolved, they are steadily growing their range of products and the orders are growing proportionally also.

3spirit UK – The winner met one of the judges after the Den who helped her to put together an electronic version to pilot her training scheme. Several other order have now been taken for the pilot and the business continues to grow.

Hippoty Hop Shoes – The grant was requested to help fund a new shop window for the children's shoe shop in Berkhamsted. The business reports that this has made a big impact on their turnover as the new window catches the customer's eye and attracts more passing trade. They feel this has made a considerable difference to their business.

Economic Wellbeing Team Annual Report – (April 2014 – March 2015)

Corporate Statistics

Stats to be Measured Quarterly	Yearly Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
MBC Occupancy	Maintain 95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Website Hits (Ave Per Month)	1000 per month	1092	2061	2095	1586	1709
DBC Apprentice Grant Paid	10	3	0	5	3	11
Jobs into the Borough (Net)	500	40	279	104	166	589
New Businesses (II)	10	1	6	4	7	18
Business Visits	360	104	88	83	56	331
Filming Days	100	52	31	7	8.5	98.5
MBC Meeting Room Income	£4,800	£ 2,511	£ 1,539	£ 2,235	£ 2,837	£ 9,122
MBC Virtual Office Income	£10,800	£ 3,222	£ 2,930	£ 3,000	£ 2,745	£ 11,897
No. of Events Held	10	7	4	1	3	15
No. of Attendees	-	140	91	88	35	354
JSA Claimants (Ave)	-	-	1410	1236	1286	1311
Customer Satisfaction Rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
DLNF Twitter Followers	20% increase	-	413	447	487	15%
MBC Twitter Followers	20% increase	-	333	366	385	14%
Network Events Attended	40	10	17	7	10	44

New Businesses

Company	Location	Jobs	Date In
Marks and Spencer	Berkhamstead	40	May-14
Aldi	Hemel Hempstead	40	Jul-14
Apex Accountancy Solutions	Hemel Hempstead	1	Aug-14
Van Hound	Hemel Hempstead	1	Aug-14
Fit4Less	Hemel Hempstead	7	Aug-14
Henkel	Hemel Hempstead	200	Sep-14
ISFL	Hemel Hempstead	30	Sep-14
Lidl	Berkhamsted	40	Nov-14
Chiquito	Hemel Hempstead	50	Dec-14
Open Hairdressing	Berkhamsted	4	Dec-14
Pandora	Hemel Hempstead	10	Winter 2014
Robert Dyas	Hemel Hempstead	50	Jan-15
HealthyU	Hemel Hempstead	5	Jan-15
Coast to Coast	Hemel Hempstead	45	Jan-15
Nandos	Hemel Hempstead	35	Feb-15
The Gym Group	Hemel Hempstead	2	Mar-15
Forsythe House	Hemel Hempstead	15	Spring 2015
Devonshire House	Hemel Hempstead	12	Spring 2015

Notable Activity

- The team has been modified to include Becky Oblein (Team Leader), Lesley Crisp (Assistant Team Leader), Lisa Devayya (Economic Development Officer), Sue Lea (Tourism & Marketing Officer), Liz Dand (Maylands Business Centre Manager), Louis Devayya (Technical Assistant) and Rose Campbell and Christine Cowlard (Maylands Business Centre Technical Assistants).
- The Dacorum Online Business Directory was launched and at this point in time has 114 listings, resulting in revenue of £1489.50.
- Dragon's Apprentice - 23rd September, Project organised by Connect Dacorum to turn children into young entrepreneurs, Lesley Crisp from the business centre mentored the team from Adeyfield School and they won best overall school!
- The Growth Forum continues to meet quarterly, guiding the work of the Economic Development Officer and having an active role within the business community.
- The Small Business Forum meets regularly and is increasing in size, with its members being very involved and appreciative of the group.
- Maylands Partnership meets on a monthly basis, reviewing the goings on of Maylands and working alongside DBC, inputting ideas and suggestions.
- The Maylands Business Centre subsidised workshops are very well received and increasing in popularity and reputation.
- Holding a stand at the Tour of Britain allowed for the team to engage with the public, focussing on Tourism and engaging with the Council.
- The development of Tourism and Town Centre e-newsletters have been created to further connect with members of the public. The Tourism newsletter has a database of 55,000 contacts and is a family friendly insight of things to do in the borough.
- The DLNF website has been updated and reviewed to be accessible and usable for all. The development of the website is ongoing, with new pages and information added daily and improvements always being implemented.
- Maylands Business Centre is flourishing over time; it has a waiting list for the offices and units and the virtual office is widely used. Hiring out the meeting room also provides a steady income. The café is running well and the mezzanine put in is a sign of the demand and requirement of the business centre.
- Being commissioned by Welwyn Hatfield to provide an Economic Development service has highlighted the opportunity to sell our services to neighbouring boroughs.
- Tourism is consistent and increasing as the Town Centre team begin to plan events, as well as the development of a 2 year strategy of Tourism for Dacorum.
- The Ambassadors Programme is in the making to raise the profile of Dacorum, with Hemel Hempstead being the champion of the borough.



AGENDA ITEM: 7 SUMMARY

Report for:	Scrutiny
Date of meeting:	7th July 2015
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Tourism Strategy
Contact:	<p>Cllr Graham Sutton, Portfolio Holder, Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>Lesley Crisp (Asst. Team Leader - Strategic Planning and Regeneration) 01442 531003/01442 228942</p> <p>Sue Lea Strategic Planning and Regeneration office – 01442 228719</p>
Purpose of report:	To inform the committee of the proposed direction of work for the Tourism Officer over the next two years and consider the Tourism Strategy
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this report be noted and the future direction of work be endorsed 2. To comment on the strategy content.
Corporate objectives:	The corporate plan, vision and priorities for Regeneration and the Economy is to support the growth of businesses, jobs and investment in the borough. Tourism is an important contributor to Dacorum's economy and this work seeks to help maximise its benefits in the area. This project is also key to raising the profile of Dacorum locally, regionally and nationally and an important component of Dacorum Look no Further
Implications:	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Previously Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) allocated a total of £200,000 across two years towards this work</p>

	<p>through the Dacorum Look No Further funding. Funding has now been agreed for a further 2 years. This post will seek to self-fund after this period.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>This work aims to increase footfall and therefore spend within the borough into the tourism economy. Ultimately this will allow these business to grow and expand, creating local employment opportunities.</p>
Risk Implications	Risk Assessment completed as part of the Dacorum Look no further (DLNF) Project Initiation Document (PID) and monitored through Corvu
Equalities Implications	Equality impact assessment carried out as part of DNLF PID
Health And Safety Implications	All works will be carried out to full building regulations and all Health and Safety conditions adhered to.
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>*****</p> <p>S.151 Officer</p> <p>*****</p>
Consultees:	Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), HCC, Tourism Partnership, Local Businesses
Background papers:	DLNF Overview and Scrutiny Report March 2015 (annex 1).
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>DLNF = Dacorum Look No Further</p> <p>LEP = Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>HCC = Herts County Council</p> <p>PID= Project Initiation Document</p> <p>SPAR = Strategic Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>PR = Public Relations</p>

1. BACKGROUND

Dacorum Borough Council recruited a Tourism and Marketing Officer in January 2013 for two years to work within the economic wellbeing team. The Tourism and Marketing Officers role is to look at the tourism economy for Dacorum and to support the growth and development of local tourism

businesses to increase both visitor spend and tourism related employment in Dacorum.

The success of this role has resulted in the Tourism officer's position being extended for an additional 2 years with an annual revenue budget of £20000. The aim is that this position will be sustainable from April 2017 onwards through income raised from tourism partner's membership fees.

To build on the work carried out in the last two years and set the structure for 2015-2017, a consultation with stakeholders was carried out.

In March 2015 a Tourism Workshop was held with 40 Tourism businesses attending this event to give their input and expertise to develop tourism strategy. The workshop was led by a Tourism Consultant employed for three months to help support this work.

The opinions of the businesses were sorted on the type of work that will bring most gain to the area and from the results of this consultation the forward plans have been formed.

2. DRAFT STRATEGY

The draft strategy was completed at the end of April 2015. (Annex 2) this sets out the vision, objectives and targets for the next two years including an engagement plan which will work towards building a sustainable tourism partnership providing the resources to fund the Tourism Officer beyond March 2017.

The specific objectives of this work are;

- Developing a clear identity for the destination as a whole
- Identifying Dacorum's tourism positioning now and where it should be in the future;
- Identifying the needs, wants and desires of the two market towns (Berkhamsted and Tring) as part of the strategy to bring the destination together;
- Clarifying the key audience segments for the destination
- Developing a detailed action plan to deliver the strategy and integral sub-plans for Tring and Berkhamsted.
- Considering a workable model for shared delivery
- Developing a viable and robust business model to financially support tourism delivery into the future.

1. STRATEGIC VISION

By 2017 Dacorum will be known as a place and understood for its breadth of assets and depths of offer. It will inspire new and repeat business as a compelling destination of choice for both day and increasingly weekend visits, a convenient base for business and a fantastic resource for those proud to call

it home. Dacorum will be positioned to grow its core markets and take effective steps forward, safe in the knowledge it operates from strong foundations.

That activity will be supported by an interactive network of businesses and stakeholders, working alongside each other, delivering a joined-up approach, sharing the benefits and ensuring the experience lives up to the promise.

2. ENGAGEMENT PLAN – (Membership for Tourism Businesses)

Following on from the workshop, it became clear that businesses were keen to continue with the Tourism Partnership, however to make this sustainable group the Tourism Officer looked at a membership scheme to fund this future work.

Those who take up the membership scheme will benefit from services and expertise to support the performance and growth of tourism businesses and destinations across the borough. Working in partnership is one of the best ways forward to enhance customer experience and to provide an even more attractive offer.

For a nominal fee, implemented on a graduated scale depending on business size, members will be able to gain access to exclusive benefits for their business. Membership will be charged on a yearly basis with renewals due on 1st August.

Membership benefits

Tourism businesses who sign up for the scheme will receive the following benefits;

- Dedicated Tourism Officer to promote the area and their services
- Free listing on the Dacorum business directory
- Full use of the Dacorum brand – including access to the copy bank, image library and other tools and resources
- Inclusion on the destination website with an enhanced listing
- Opportunity to have their special offers promoted on the destination website
- A prominent presence in Dacorum marketing (for example editorial in Discover Dacorum newsletters, reaching out to approx. 54,000 readers)
- Inclusion in Dacorum Borough Council organised press and family trips
- Access to tourism research and intelligence to help their business
- Provision of networking opportunities for potential customers and partners
- Membership to the tourism partnership and the opportunity to help share how tourism develops in the area

3. FUTURE WORK FOR TOURISM

The Tourism Strategy provides a two year action plan for the tourism officer to follow. The action plan is set out in sections. These sections are as follows;

- Developing a clear identity of Dacorum as a whole
- Co-ordinating activity

- Raising the awareness and building inspiration
- Optimising the experience

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Enjoy Dacorum

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

BERKHAMSTED

TRING



Dacorum Tourism Strategy

2015-2017

April 2015

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1.0 Introduction

In January 2015, Dacorum Borough Council commissioned Black Spiral Design and Tourism Engineers to develop a short-medium term Tourism strategy for the destination covering the next 2 years up to April 2017.

The Importance of Tourism

Tourism is a hugely important sector. The visitor economy is now worth £106bn¹ a year to England, employs in excess of two million people and accounts for nearly 10% of the entire UK workforce. It supports many thousands of businesses nationally, both directly and indirectly and is increasingly integral for economic growth, social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

In Dacorum, the visitor economy is worth £218m² annually and supports almost 4,000 jobs. The sector is characterised by several key hallmark attractions and experiences, alongside a diverse breadth and depth of offer, characterised by distinctive retail, a rich tapestry of landscape, heritage food and culture, opportunities for adrenaline sports and a solid accommodation base. At present the contribution from VFR³ and Business segments dwarf the more traditional leisure market but combined have shown a stable base since 2011 and ensure Dacorum accounts for between 10% to 20% of tourism as a whole across Hertfordshire.

Aspirations of this strategy

This strategy plans to build on the excellent work and progress achieved in the last two years and set out a clear direction, targets and actions for the forthcoming two year period. The approach focuses on the destination of Dacorum as a whole and addresses the range of elements that make-up Destination Management, looking equally at in-situ experience, industry support and product development alongside the marketing and promotional component.

The strategy does also recognise that no single body can manage a destination effectively and certainly cannot do so unaided, therefore the plan also addresses the need for a sustainable model to resource the activity and specifically links smaller destination plans for Tring and Berkhamsted (2 of the key places within the destination).

Further the strategy seeks to align its aims and activities with other key ventures and initiatives locally, namely the Business Improvement District in Hemel Hempstead and the development of the Ambassadors programme, again for Hemel.

Finally the key driver for this strategy is to visibly and tangibly move tourism and the performance of the destination forward over the two year period, making the most of the current resources and assets, addressing key gaps and positioning Dacorum strongly to take its next steps in 2017.

¹ Figures from VisitEngland 2013

² Figure for 2013 derived from Volume and Value data generated by Tourism South East

³ "visiting friends & relatives"

About this strategy

The contents of this strategy and its associated actions were developed from a thorough review, incorporating original research and analysis. This was further compounded by a programme of consultation and dedicated engagement with key stakeholders throughout February and March 2015, including three dedicated workshops and online engagement. In total around 40 businesses and organisations have been consulted and their needs and priorities have been key in shaping the plan.⁴

The following document outlines the resulting strategy and presents an action plan for its implementation.

⁴ See Appendix 2 for notes

2.0 Situational Analysis

A thorough review and audit of the destination was conducted as part of the strategy development which comprised; analysis of current research and context, a product audit, assessment of current and potential markets, in-situ experience audits, external marketing assessments, a business survey and series of consultation events with key stakeholders.

The full results are shown in appendix 1 but are summarised in the SWOT analysis below.

2.1 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged and supportive tourism sector Council dedicating specific support Energetic and well respected tourism team Location and access Several major "destination" attractions Range and diversity of attractions (all weather) Rural setting and context (Chilterns) Diverse retail and catering offer Quality of welcome and service is high Healthy accommodation base Good programme of business support Strong performance with business and VFR Generally positive online reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of current data at destination level Overarching brand means little to non-residents Little buy-in to the brand beyond DBC channels Poorly joined up marketing and experience between the destination components Confused B2B and B2C approach to communications Information delivery is patchy at best Signage and directional information poor Poor events calendar and information availability Lack of visibility as a destination from external and referral sources
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging the tourism sector more strongly in the new strategy development Build on the base of tourism development that has occurred over the last 2 years Thinking Place Ambassador and place work Continuing Evolve regeneration of Hemel Hempstead (includes Jellicoe Water Gardens). Planet Ice reopening adding to activities portfolio Growth of VFR and Business leisure Growing popularity and visibility of Warner Bros Studio Tour Outdoors/nature/wildlife/landscape Continued focus and awareness from the group tour market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in council funding to lead tourism development Failure to translate business engagement into financial investment A competing marketing entity developing for Dacorum as a destination Competition for membership income from the new Hertfordshire DMO Business apathy

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2.2 Challenges

In summary the key challenges faced by the destination and which this plan will address include:

- **A confused message** - The way in which the destination is perceived has an impact on its ability to attract.. Currently the overall message lacks consistency, neglects some of the key elements and has little focus on any particular audience.
- **Less than the sum of its parts** - Dacorum has a strong offer, but it is fragmented, operates in silos. As such its constituent parts are each stronger than the destination as a whole and currently have little to bring them together for the audience..
- **In the know...** - Much of the experience and promotion of the destination relies on prior or existing knowledge to get the best from. Dacorum needs to help its potential visitors, providing reasons why they should choose, enjoy, recommend and return. Inspiration is key.
- **Right tools for the job?** – Current marketing channels across the destination are either confused, difficult to find or un-optimised for the task in hand. Better communication is a core component of getting the message to the right people.
- **Key gaps in the experience** - Generally the standard of the experience is high, however several key areas require attention, notably information provision and directional information. Vigilance needs to be maintained on presentation of the destination to encourage visitors to explore with confidence.
- **Limited resources to make a difference** - The strategy calls for change and real progress within a short time span and with limited resources. Quick wins with tangible impact are vital to really leverage the enthusiasm and willingness of stakeholders to buy into the plan.
- **Keeping Momentum** - Equally an enormous amount of goodwill and enthusiasm has already been generated, this needs to be retained and channelled rather than lost in a wholesale redevelopment of approach.

3.0 Strategic Direction

3.1 Vision

By 2017

Dacorum will be known as a distinct place and understood for its breadth of assets and depth of offer. It will inspire new and repeat business as a compelling destination of choice for both day and increasingly weekend visits, a convenient base for business and a fantastic resource for those proud to call it home. The destination will be positioned to grow its core markets and take effective steps forward, safe in the knowledge it operates from strong foundations.

This activity will be supported by an interactive network of businesses and stakeholders, working alongside each other, delivering a joined-up approach, sharing the benefits and ensuring the experience lives up to the promise.

3.2 How will this be achieved?

To achieve this vision, tourism across Dacorum will be guided by a clear and widely agreed plan that focuses on several specific principles:

Consolidate

Addressing key gaps and working with what we have. This recognises certain constraints and issues but seeks to maximise and optimise current resources over throwing weight behind entirely new efforts that may not show the required return over the lifespan of the strategy.

Position

Focusing efforts on actions that can make a difference now and position us to move forward after 2017. One eye is always on where the destination will be at the culmination of this process and putting in place the basic foundations to allow us to move forwards.

Invest

Investing time and energy now in structures and tools that have longer lasting use and impacts This means that certain of the activities may not be "instant quick wins", some will be longer lead or multi-stage.

Share

The plan will primarily be delivered by the tourism team at Dacorum Borough Council, supported by the Tourism Partnership - a representative body of tourism interests from the public and private sectors, and through newly established Destination Groups - locally based stakeholder groups with a focus and purview over their immediate geography.

Measure

All aspects and elements of the plan will be directly measurable. There will be overarching indicators to assess progress, but equally each specific activity will have its own in-built indicators and measurement mechanisms. This way we understand not just whether we have encouraged change, but which actions directly contributed and by extension provides justification and evidence for forward planning from 2017.

3.3 Target Audiences

Given resources and timescale the selection of audiences must be pragmatic and based on the biggest returns and the most sustainable ones, therefore priority is given to firming up the most accessible audiences before specifically targeting further groups.

→ Existing visitors

Those who have already chosen to visit and sample the destination.

This group are day visitors who may come from a wide catchment but who will be coming for a single purpose only. They generally visit one of the large attractions within Dacorum (mainly the Snow Centre or Warner Bros Studio Tour) which comprises the majority or entirety of their visit. They may also purchase food & drink or indulge in retail but are just as likely to do this en-situ at the attraction as outside of it.

This audience will likely have little perception or knowledge of Dacorum as they view the attraction as king and the surrounds as simply surrounds. They will visit throughout the week and year but with specific spikes at weekends and holiday periods.

The focus needs to be on extending stays, inspiring additional action, encouraging returns and eliciting recommendations.

→ Local Residents (& by extension VFR - visiting friends and relatives)

Those who live within the borough, but who may be limited by awareness of the geographical scope or of the depth or breadth of the product, or who currently choose to spend their leisure time elsewhere.

This audience is aware of "Dacorum" as an entity and have some knowledge of the destination. They generally focus on specific trips to an attraction in leisure time, retail offers, short period outdoor activities and food & drink especially. Are willing to travel within the destination but are more likely to frequent known and trusted establishments than always try something new. Dwell times are short but repeat visit potential is high as is spend on the experience as they are not committing to overnight or travel expenses. This group has the highest potential for evening activities.

This audience is likely to have mixed perceptions of Dacorum and will likely be more negative than any other (local perceptions are always more critical than a visitor). However they also hold the key to the potentially lucrative VFR market which has seen significant growth in recent years, with a trend more towards leisure activity rather than in-home entertainment. Persuading residents of the value of the offer and converting them as ambassadors is therefore key, so they choose to entertain locally or are able to recommend and suggest local experiences for their guests.

The focus needs to be on encouraging and inspiring them to explore (and keep on exploring) their own doorstep.

→ **Local businesses**

Corporate business accounts for a large proportion of the overall tourism volume and value for Dacorum and is driven by local businesses based within the borough.

Local business breaks down into three specific groups; contractors or individuals in Dacorum on business with local companies, those using Dacorum as a convenient base or stopping point en route to business elsewhere and small-medium scale conference and meeting business at the venues around the borough. Each of these groups are looking for convenience in location and facilities and value for money (not necessarily cheap) in accommodation. They will equally spend on food & drink and some occasional retail. Business will be skewed towards a Sun-Thursday stay pattern with dwell times ranging from a single meeting to multi-night stays.

This audience will likely view Dacorum in the context of their professional lives and may not make the connection to it as a place for leisure.

The focus needs to be on awareness of the product, easing the experience and showing that corporate tourism is valued alongside leisure.

→ **Special interest groups**

Likely heritage or countryside interest based who are active in their interest and travel as arranged groups (both large and small). They will originate outside of the destination but remain relatively easy to target through their shared interest.

A group comprising individual with a shared or specific interest that brings them together to travel. They will generally arrive escorted and visit to a fixed itinerary for which they have paid in advance. Groups will generally be UK based and will have interests around heritage, specific activities and the outdoors. They will likely have little knowledge of Dacorum as an entity, with their focus being on the constituent parts of their experience (much like "Destination" visitors but with a broader list). If given the opportunity this group is keen to explore on foot and will spend on quality but are not on the whole big purchasers. This group is generally reached through its organisers.

Focus needs to be on enticing them to "try", giving confidence in the offer and ensuring the quality of the experience.

→ "Local" day visitors

Finally there are large markets within day visit distance, notably the capital but also larger conurbations throughout the periphery of South East and the Midlands.

This group are drawn from areas in close proximity to Dacorum and comprise a diverse demographic. Their defining feature is an awareness of the offer and experience available and the ease of travel to reach, thereby making Dacorum a viable (and easy) day trip from home. They will generally travel on weekends and during holiday periods but a significant proportion may travel throughout the year. Spend will be capped at the costs of an attraction or two plus food & drink and they will be largely daytime visitors, with some evening potential.

This audience may have knowledge of Dacorum as an entity but are more likely to know places by geographical names and to orient and plan a visit as such.

Focus needs to be on targeted messages, delivering inspiration and confidence and showcasing at least two coordinated experiences in any suggested message.

3.4 Targets

The following represent the overarching targets for the strategy, in effect the bottom-line change and improvement it will aim to deliver by April 2017.

- Grow annual visitor spending by 3% annually
- Grow annual visitor numbers by 3% annually
- Grow number of "overnights" spent annually in Dacorum by 3% annually
- Generate 50K in matched funding by April 2017

These targets will be measured through the annual volume and value statistics, as well as additional data collected through this strategy and external sources such as the Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) sponsored by Visit England.

Targets will be assessed annually when data is available and revised/updated if required.

3.5 Pillars & Objectives

The strategy itself rests on 4 key pillars of activity, each with their own specific objectives:

1. Developing a clear identity for the destination as a whole

Bringing together and defining the nature and offer of Dacorum for its core audiences and creating practical tools and support to roll out the identity destination wide as a key component of developing Dacorum's market position

- 60 businesses actively using the Dacorum brand in their own activities by November 2016
- 40% recognition of the Dacorum brand amongst a sample audience by September 2016

2. Co-ordination of activity

Joining up the constituent elements of the destination (places, experiences and businesses) through promotion, development of shared products, increasing knowledge and development of a robust network.

- Growing membership of the tourism partnership to 150 by April 2017
- 50 joint promotional initiatives comprising at least 2 Dacorum businesses undertaken by April 2017
- 85% approval rating from partnership members for activities and initiatives undertaken by April 2017
- Establishment of functioning destination groups in Hemel, Tring and Berkhamsted by October 2015

3. Awareness raising & building inspiration

Addressing the methods the destination uses to promote itself, focussing these to convey the identity and offer more consistently. To target and deliver specific campaigns with core audiences and above all to inspire, enthuse and educate.

- 60 inbound links from Dacorum businesses to the Dacorum website
- 3000 followers on Dacorum B2C social media channels
- Dacorum presence & inbound links from 32 established referring websites
- 20% of visitors choosing to visit as a result of destination marketing activity

4. Optimising the experience

Ensuring quality is inherent in all aspects of the destination, at both macro and local scale. Understanding its performance, addressing information and interpretation provision and supporting sympathetic product development

- 30 info points across the destination showcasing minimum 5 other Dacorum businesses
- 50 businesses contributing data to destination performance
- Develop a follow-on Destination Management Plan for Dacorum beyond April 2017

Specific actions relating to these pillars are discussed in the following section. In addition there is a separate pillar of the strategy the deals with the resourcing and development of the business model behind the strategy allowing it to be sustainable and to continue to grow and develop tourism in Dacorum beyond the lifespan of this plan. This is dealt with in section 5.

4.0 Actions

Following are the actions prescribed to deliver the strategy. These are not designed to be "set in stone" and should be flexible as time and needs move on.

All actions listed here are important and should be attempted within the timeframe of the plan, however there is always a competition for resources and time. Therefore each action is given a priority rating to help assess which are vital if resources become stretched. *** denotes the highest priority.

4.1 Action Plan

Pillar 1 - Developing a clear identity for the destination as a whole

Project	Description	Priority	Deadline	Cost	KPI
1.1	Agree and develop a clear brand identity for the destination as a whole. Include core ethos, values and features, visual identity and sample copy/introduction	***	30/06/2015	Low	Clear identity created, agreed and shared with engaged businesses
1.2	Create brand toolkit for others to use. Include sample copy (various uses), image library, visual style guide, tone of voice and experience examples, notes on audiences etc.	***	31/07/2015	Med	Toolkit available online. E-newsletter sent to raise awareness + follow-up support given
1.3	Apply the new brand identity to all Dacorum collateral and channels (web, social media and print as reprints due).	***	31/07/2015	Low	Clear & consistent identity on all B2C & B2B channels
1.4	Public launch and PR to raise awareness (coincide with web revamp)	***	31/07/2015	Med	4 media reports, support from 2 wider orgs
1.5	Review business take-up of the brand identity -if low then ask if further support etc. required	***	30/11/2015	Low	40 stakeholders using consistently
1.6	Visitor focus groups to assess recognition and response to brand identity	***	31/08/2016	Med	2 focus groups completed
1.7	Review business take-up of the brand identity - assess need to refresh, revise or expand elements	***	30/11/2016	Low	60 stakeholders using consistently

Pillar 2 - Co-ordinating Activity

Project	Description	Priority	Deadline	Cost	KPI
2.1	Research and build full tourism database with contact details and bios. Encourage opt in to sharing data amongst partners	***	31/08/2015	Low	Database established with 60 partners opted in
2.2	Make database available to partners who agree and sign up to data disclosure agreement	***	31/08/2015	Low	60 partners signed up to data disclosure
2.3	Support and arrange 2 x annual tourism partnership meetings, to include updates on progress, pitching of marketing opps, networking time and leaflet/literature exchanges	***	Feb/Mar & Oct/Nov yearly	Med	4 tourism partnership meetings held
2.4	Dedicated B2B e-news to drive membership. Showcase B2C activity, industry news and explain member benefits	**	Quarterly from Q2 2015	Low	7 x B2C newsletters sent
2.5	Create guidelines for joint marketing activity. Include usage of the brand, tips for working together, selection of Dacorum images, suggestions for partners/locations to include	***	30/09/2015	Low	50 joint promotional activities undertaken
2.6	Annual partner survey to assess approval of activity and needs moving forward	***	Jan/Feb yearly	Low	85% approval rating from partnership members
2.7	Establish Destination groups in Tring, Berkhamsted and Hemel to coordinate tourism focus locally.	***	31/10/2015	Low	3 groups established with initial actions agreed
2.8	Provide mentoring and support to destination groups (email, phone advice etc)	**	ongoing	Low	15 actions achieved across destination groups
2.9	Lead on coordinating and developing a "Dacorum event" encouraging businesses to showcase something special with tasters over a prescribed period (weekend/week). Coincide with B2C campaigns to raise awareness	**	Q3 2015 & 2016	Med	Involve: 20 businesses in 2015 30 businesses in 2016
2.10	Design and roll-out a Dacorum training package, helping businesses and other front of house teams to understand the destination better and what's on offer.	**	31/03/2016	Med	40 individuals trained

Pillar 3 - Raising Awareness & Building Inspiration

Project	Description	Priority	Deadline	Cost	KPI
3.1	Plan visitor journey through the new tourism section - entry points, vital information, useful information, calls to action etc.	***	31/05/2015	Low	Visitor journey & wireframe completed
3.2	Review DLNF web presence and highlight key areas for improvement / amendment & key info to retain + identify areas with advertising potential.	***	31/05/2015	Low	Core list of improvements and retentions mapped out
3.3	Move "Enjoy" section of DLNF to a dedicated micro-site with dedicated URL (e.g. www.enjoydacorum.co.uk) landing page and user friendly template.	***	31/07/2015	Med	New micro site created
3.4	Re-work and expand content on new site to match visitor journey and to appeal to key audiences. Include SEO at this stage	***	31/07/2015	Med	New site populated and beta tested
3.5	Public launch and PR to raise awareness (coincide with web revamp)	***	31/07/2015	Med	4 media reports, support from 2 wider orgs
3.6	PPC (pay-per-click) campaigns aligned with other campaign activity and delivered periodically throughout the year	**	Ongoing	Low	2000 direct click-thrus
3.7	Work with destination groups to develop further microsites for Hemel, Tring and Berkhamsted as offshoots of main Dacorum website	**	31/03/2016	Med	3 dedicated microsites established
3.8	Launch B2C Twitter / Flickr / Youtube presence and link up clearly with website. Encourage partners to add images, video and contribute content for tweets.	**	31/08/2015	Low	3000 followers by Apr17 50% of content being sourced from partners
3.9	Seasonal B2C e-newsletters to contacts database (N.B. make efforts to increase signup wherever possible).	**	Quarterly from Q2 2015	Low	7 x B2C newsletters sent
3.10	Research and review Dacorum content on key 3rd party marketing channels (e.g. Visit Chilterns, VisitEngland, Days out with the kids, VirtualTourist, Enjoy Hertfordshire etc.). Offer new content and images etc. to improve with focus on experiences.	**	31/03/2016	Low	Dacorum presence & inbound links from 12 established referring websites
3.11	Continue to monitor 3rd party details, updating as needed and continuing to seek out new avenues to promote the destination	**	31/03/2017	Low	Further 20 websites with Dacorum presence & inbound links
3.12	Ongoing proactive PR activity (minimum 4 x releases per year) and contribution to blogs and articles	**	Quarterly from Q3 2015	Low	6 x seasonal PR releases 10 blog articles
3.13	Organising familiarisation trips for press and key influencers to Dacorum	**	Ongoing	Low	5 trips by end year 2

3.14	Re-print Dacorun map with new branding and distribute to all venues and key touch points within the destination (include redeemable code)	**	31/01/2016	Med	20% conversion rate (visits using code)
3.15	Print a simple, focussed publication for the destination to drive traffic to website and distribute to key target areas to generate awareness	*	31/01/2017	Med	2000 direct click-thrus
3.16	Research annual calendar of consumer travel shows and draw up priority list based on interest and audience types. Target very tightly and attend only those with best ROI potential	*	30/06/2015	Med	Attend 3 consumer shows per year
3.17	Develop a series of new (days out) itineraries for the destination, themed and directed to key audience groups. Engage destination groups to do the same locally. Showcase as pdfs online	***	31/01/2016	Low	10 Dacorun itineraries created
3.18	Investigate costs and potential to translate itinerary content to a dedicated mobile app (iOS & Android)	*	30/07/2016	High	Mobile app launched
3.19	Create dedicated marketing campaigns devoted to key markets (local & VFR, business, day visitors and specific groups). Each campaign to have own identity under Dacorun brand and tie in with other activity (e.g. local campaign & Dacorun event).	***	Ongoing	Med	7 campaigns delivered by end of year 2
3.2	Repeat assessment of external marketing	**	28/02/2016 28/02/2017	Low	Clear and consistent message across DBC channels

Pillar 4 - Optimising the Experience

Project	Description	Priority	Deadline	Cost	KPI
4.1	Audit current points of information provision - cover places, publications & organisations to assess current performance and highlight areas for improvement	***	31/08/2015	Low	Audit completed and priority areas identified
4.2	Create guidance and overall content resources (e.g. maps, images, brand elements and Calls to action) that can be common to all.	***	30/09/2015	Low	Guidance rolled out to destination groups & businesses
4.3	Work with destination groups and businesses to address issues and upgrade/plug gaps.	***	Ongoing	Low	20 info points upgraded across destination
4.4	Co-ordinate collation and exchange of publication and materials to ensure all info points showcase as wide a Dacorum offer as possible.	**	Ongoing	Low	30 info points showcasing minimum 5 other Dacorum businesses
4.5	Repeat mystery visit assessments in key destinations to assess information provision and offer support where needed to improve.	**	28/02/2016 28/02/2017	Low	Clear improvements in localised information provision
4.6	Commission yearly Volume & Value research	***	Ongoing	Med	3% increase in vol & val
4.7	Encourage all partners and stakeholders to contribute to occupancy and visitor number research	***	Ongoing	Low	50 businesses providing data
4.8	Undertake face-to-face visitor survey across the destination.	*	30/09/2016	Med	200+ sample visitor survey completed
4.9	Encourage all partners and stakeholder to collect and share visitor/customer origin and feedback data. Include providing standardised forms and short surveys	**	Ongoing	Low	Visitor feedback data collected from 30 partners

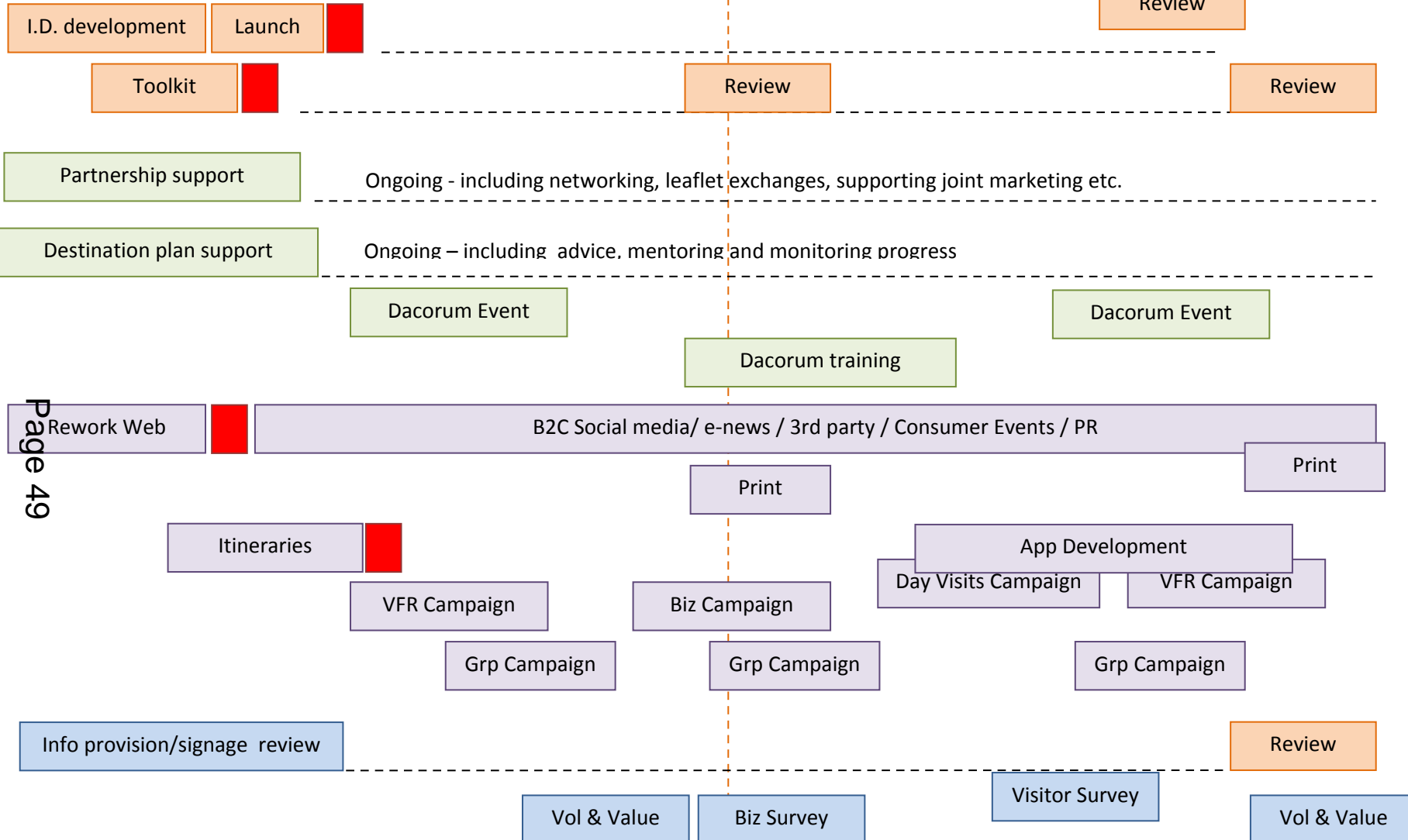
4.2 Timing Plan

Overleaf the key elements of the action plan are mapped out visually in order of delivery and colour coded by pillar.

A red box denotes a critical milestone that all other actions depend on.

Year 1

Year 2



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5.0 Delivering the plan

This strategy represents a more focussed approach to tourism but does represent a challenging way forward given the limited resources and budget available initially for its delivery. Where possible the strategy aligns itself to current activity, ensuring it is simpler and easier to make happen however there is a need for; a solid management plan, drawing in resource and support from the wider industry and specifically generating a broad financial base to ensure the sustainability of the work the strategy embarks on.

5.1 Roles

Dacorum Borough Council

The lead management and delivery role for the strategy falls to Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and specifically the tourism team. Tourism Officer Sue Lea will manage day-to-day delivery and be the key point of contact. Additional resources within Dacorum Borough Council will assist on specific tasks (e.g. Hemel Town Centre activities etc) where relevant.

The Tourism Partnership

The tourism partnership will work alongside DBC in delivering the strategy and provide support and input where required to enable delivery. More specifically the onus will be on the tourism partnership members to:

1. Deliver coordinated marketing opportunities with other members
2. Collect and report data
3. Provide content (images, copy etc.) for Dacorum marketing purposes
4. Use and promote the Dacorum brand and activities within their own marketing
5. Provide a clear backlink to the Dacorum website from their own (where possible)
6. Stock information on other businesses (where possible) and promote the wider offer
7. Work proactively with DBC to take key decisions on the development of the strategy

These will be set down in a member's charter to keep responsibilities clear.

The tourism partnership will meet formally twice per year but additional ad-hoc events may be developed if needed (leaflet exchanges, members fam trips etc).

Destination Groups

The strategy will facilitate the development of destination groups, initially within the key foci of Hemel, Berkhamsted and Tring (although further groups could be developed later for the more rural areas). These groups will be composed of local stakeholders (public, private and third sector) and may choose to meet formally or informally. Their remit will be to coordinate delivery of actions locally in support of the overall strategy thereby ensuring a more cohesive approach.

DBC officers will support both the tourism partnership and destination groups but will devolve certain actions and activities to these groups where relevant.

There may also be the need as the strategy develops to appoint specific working or task-and-finish groups to help achieve specific actions. These will be created as needed and will be composed of experts and influencers, however they will be short term in nature around the designated task. If longer term actions are required they will come under the purview of the Tourism Partnership.

5.2 Finance

The development of this strategy will be largely dependent on the budget available, dictating the scale of some of the actions or perhaps the order and timing of their delivery. Core funding is in place from DBC over the two years of the strategy (to end of 16/17 financial year) but is not guaranteed beyond that point. The council is committed to tourism but will need to see significant financial input from elsewhere to justify further investment beyond the life of this strategy.

At present DBC are committing £60,000 p.a. to the strategy with £40,000 p.a. covering the full time tourism officer post and leaving £20,000 p.a. as a budget for delivery. The strategy is designed to stretch this budget as far as it will go and maximise its impact but even so it is not enough to support all the aspirations.

In order to deliver the strategy therefore there is a need to not only supplement the working budget but also if possible reduce the council's proportion of the investment in delivery of a destination strategy by 2017. To that end the strategy will be pursuing a three tier business model to raise the required broad base of finance.

5.3 Membership

The core of the business model is simple base membership scheme. Here stakeholders gain access to specific benefits for a nominal fee that is implemented on a graduated scale based on business size (and potential resource). Membership will be charged on a yearly basis with renewals due at the end of the financial year (01st April).

Membership benefits

- Full use of the Dacorum brand - including access to the copy bank, image library and other tools and resources
- Inclusion on the destination website with an enhanced listing (priority page position or additional features over basic)
- Opportunity to have your special offers promoted on the destination website
- To receive a prominent presence in Dacorum marketing (e.g. editorial of B2C newsletters)
- Inclusion in DBC organised press and family trips
- Access to collated tourism research and intelligence useful to your business
- Provision of networking opportunities through the tourism partnership
- Priority access (first refusal) on any pay-to-play services purchased that year
- Inclusion as a member of the tourism partnership and opportunity to help shape how tourism develops in the destination

Membership should not be a static offer but should evolve and grow new benefits as time goes on, opportunities arise and needs change. However the focus needs to remain on high yield/low input elements and to reserve more specific, saleable opportunities for the pay-to-play services.

Example membership fees 2015/16

Type of Business	Annual Fee
Band 1	
Restaurants, pubs, individual shops	£75
Attractions up to 20,000 visitors per year	£75
Serviced Accommodation with up to 5 bedrooms	£75
Self Catering accommodation with up to 2 units	£75
Campsites with up to 50 pitches	£75
Activity providers with up to 3 employees	£75
Band 2	
Attractions between 20 - 50,000 visitors per year	£140
Serviced Accommodation with 6 - 20 bedrooms	£140
Self Catering accommodation with between 3 and 5 units	£140
Campsites with over 50 pitches	£140
Activity providers with between 4-10 employees	£140
Band 3	
Attractions between 50 - 100,000 visitors per year	£205
Serviced Accommodation with 21 - 50 bedrooms	£205
Self Catering accommodation with over 6 units	£205
Activity providers with more than 10 employees	£205
Band 4	
Attractions over 100,000 visitors per year +	£345
Serviced Accommodation with over 50 rooms	£345
Self catering accommodation with over 20 units	£345
Large group businesses or national chains	£345

In-kind contributions

Whilst financial contributions are standard to access membership, the strategy does appreciate that some prospective members may not be in position to contribute financially by virtue of their structure or resources. Therefore any registered charities, other non-profit making entities or those with restrictions in their governing articles may instead contribute in-kind time or other resources in place of the membership fee. In kind contributions will need to cover the equivalent value and be calculated as follows:

Nature of contribution	Value
Donation of goods	Purchase value of goods
Unskilled labour (e.g. distribution of leaflets etc.)	£50 / day
Skilled labour (e.g. content creation, photography etc.)	£100 / day
Professional services (e.g. design, legal advice etc.)	Value of services

These value ratings are based on those set out by the National Lottery for ascertaining in-kind contributions so represent a fair and even playing field.

Year 1 investment

During the first some (if not many) of the member benefits will not be up and running or not ready to be implemented in their fully functioning form. Therefore for year 1 the onus is on encouraging stakeholders to "invest" in the direction and outcomes of the strategy (in essence paralleling the commitment of DBC) and ensuring we have a surplus up front to deliver with and then access to membership benefits as they develop.

Therefore in year 1 the model is essentially the same but is sold and promoted differently so expectations are managed in advance and equally so that the strategy is not hamstrung but lacks of funds in the early stages.

Membership incentives

Further incentives are recommended to incentivise membership, these could include:

- 10% early bird discount for those renewing more than 1 month before renewal cut-off
- 10% discount for referring another member and then a further 2% per additional member referred (to maximum of 20% discount)
- Ability to purchase a multiple year membership at this year's rate

5.4 Pay-to play opportunities

Beyond basic membership fees, we can also offer specific marketing opportunities based on dedicated campaigns and promotions undertaken throughout the year.

All pay to play offers are opportunities and developments specifically negotiated by DBC through partners and offer opportunities for businesses to gain reach and access to audiences they would otherwise struggle to do so alone.

Importantly pay to play services are open to members and non-members alike (although paid up members have preferential access).

Examples of pay-to-play services could include:

- Participation in marketing campaigns
- Advertising in Dacorum print publications
- Attendance at consumer & trade events facilitated by DBC, both as a stand share but also with the option of distribution of literature and data capture from consumers/leads in attendance.
- Prime advertising space on Dacorum website
- Promotion of special offers / advertising in B2C e-newsletter

Pricing Policy

Fees will vary dependent on cost of opportunity and likelihood of sign-up, but at all times DBC should aim to maintain a margin of at minimum 12% over actual outlay and running costs.

A selection of main opportunities will be mapped on an annual basis and standardised rates published. These can then be topped up and added to with other opportunities as they arise. However based on the strategy the following opportunity costs could apply:

Opportunity	Unit Detail	Unit Cost
Website Homepage Banner	Monthly	£ 250.00
	Link to own website (supplement)	£ 50.00
Website Key Landing page Banner (x4)	Monthly	£ 167.00
	Link to own website (supplement)	£ 33.00
Website Sidebar Advertising spot (x3)	Primary monthly	£ 125.00
	Secondary monthly	£ 95.00
	Tertiary monthly	£ 75.00
	Link to own website (supplement)	£ 25.00
B2B Newsletter Advertising spot (x6)	Per issue (Quarterly)	£ 100.00
B2C E-newsletter Advertising spot (x6)	Per issue (Quarterly)	£ 250.00
Dacorum Map Advert (x12)	Per printing	£ 500.00*
Trade Shows	Stand share (small show) -2 spaces	£ 750.00*
	Stand share (large show) - 3 spaces	£ 1,250.00*
	Literature display (small show) - 10 spaces	£ 175.00*
	Literature display (large show) - 15 spaces	£ 250.00*
Campaign inclusion	Featured - 10 slots per campaign	£ 350.00*
	"Hero" focus - 2 slots per campaign	£ 600.00*

* Estimated but should be cost + 12% minimum

Sourcing external funding

Specific funding from external sources should be proactively sought to deliver specific actions and projects. The nature of the funders and value will differ but invariably funders will be looking for cooperation in projects with numerous beneficiaries and long term benefits and applications. Funding could be sourced from:

- 2015-2020 Chilterns Leader programme
- Hertfordshire LEP
- Lottery funds
- Potential EU funded projects with partners (Interegg is currently open for application to the new programmes)

This funding could be channelled towards specific areas of activity in the strategy e.g.

- Dacorun training course development
- Itinerary / App development
- Commissioning research

5.5 Financial Targets

The table below summarises the financial targets for this strategy on a year by year basis

	Yr 1		Yr 2		Yr 3 (projected)	
	Target no's	Value	Target no's	Value	Target no's	Value
Investors	55	£8,780	0	0	0	0
Membership	0	0	90	£13,331	1220	£17,353
Pay to play services	77	£13,055	148	£35,945	208	£45,950
External Funding	n/a	0	n/a	£3,500	n/a	5,000
Sub-total	n/a	£25,335	n/a	£52,776	n/a	£68,303
DBC investment	n/a	£60,000	n/a	£60,000	n/a	£30,000
Total funds	n/a	£85,335	n/a	£102,776	n/a	£98,303

Breakdown of how these were arrived at is included in the modelling spreadsheets in appendix 3

5.6 Actions to manage and deliver

The actions in the following table represent the key steps and stages Dacorum Borough Council and its tourism team will need to undertake to ensure delivery of the plan over and above the integral actions associated with the plan itself.

Project	Description	Priority	Deadline	Cost	KPI
5.1	Officially publish and share strategy with tourism partnership and stakeholders within Dacorum	***	15/05/2015	Low	Strategy published
5.2	Coordinate implementation of the Plan and assist partner organisations and businesses to fulfil their actions	***	Ongoing	Low	Plan objectives achieved
5.3	Engage Visit England, Tourism Alliance and other wider bodies to secure their support and assistance for the Plan, and to raise awareness of Dacorum as a credible destination.	**	31/03/2016	Low	Recognised by VE as official DMO for Dacorum
5.4	Monitor progress on delivery of the plan including annual review after year 1 and final review end of year 2.	***	15/03/2016 & 15/03/2017	Low	Plan adjusted after midpoint monitoring & final results incorporated into follow-on DMP
5.5	Hold discussions with potential funding bodies (LEP, Leader, HCC, lottery etc) to identify potential elements within the plan that could attract funding and % level.	***	30/06/2015	Low	Advice sought from potential funders
5.6	Launch year 1 investor proposal to stakeholders	***	31/05/2015	Low	Proposal launched
5.7	Launch year 1 advertising rate card	***	30/06/2015	Low	Rate card launched
5.8	Launch year 2 membership package	***	31/01/2016	Low	Membership launched
5.9	Membership renewal reminders	***	01/02/2016	Low	80% retention of members
5.10	Year 2 advertising rate card	***	30/04/2016	Low	Rate card launched
5.11	Begin developing a full Destination Management Plan (DMP) to take the destination forward	***	28/02/2017	Med	DMP commenced

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