



**AGENDA ITEM:
SUMMARY**

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	21st 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>Rebecca Oblein– Strategic Planning and Regeneration Team Leader 01442 867882</p> <p>Lesley Crisp - Strategic Planning and Regeneration Assistant Team Leader 01442 228942</p> <p>Sue Lea – Tourism Officer 01442 228719</p>
Purpose of report:	To introduce the Tourism Strategy and associated action plans.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this report be noted and the future direction of work be endorsed 2. That the Tourism Strategy be submitted to Council for adoption.
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:	<u>Financial</u>

	<p>Previously Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) allocated a total of £200,000 across two years towards this work 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 businesses 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).
Equalities Implications	Equality impact assessment carried out as part of DNLF PID
Health And Safety Implications	
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>No comments to add to the report.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>The costs for the activity are contained within the revenue budget and any carry forward of surplus externally generated funding will be through the usual year end processes.</p> <p>This is the second time funds have been approved to pump prime the project. In order to provide assurance that the project will be self-financing within the required two years careful monitoring against the assumptions set out in section 5.5 in the annex will be required and key milestones set if required.</p>
Consultees:	Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), HCC, Tourism Partnership, Local Businesses
Background papers:	DLNF Overview and Scrutiny Report March 2015.
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>

	PID= Project Initiation Document SPAR = Strategic Planning and Regeneration PR = Public Relations
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1. BACKGROUND

Dacorum Borough Council recruited 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 sort 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 1) 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 shape 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