

**Raising Sponsorship and Advertising Revenues from our web sites**

**(Report by the Director of Commerce & Technology)**

**1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet an opportunity to generate revenue from the sale of sponsorship opportunities and advertising space on the Council's web sites and, in future, other e-channels.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Huntingdonshire District Council main website now attracts significant traffic; on average, approaching 1,500 individual Huntingdonshire citizens visit the website every day.
- 2.2 In common with most other District and Borough councils, we have been looking to increase this traffic, delivering a greater proportion of services and information via the website and other e-channels, where appropriate, possible and relevant. Many citizens prefer self-service, available 24x7 via the web, and the efficiency opportunities to HDC are substantial.
- 2.3 As the traffic to our website has increased, the potential to also 'monetise' or derive revenue from this traffic – through sponsorship and advertising – has also developed.
- 2.4 Our traffic - and the UK on-line advertising market generally - has now reached the point where the potential revenues are of note. A 'commercial', private sector view of our website and traffic may also provide perspectives that help to further accelerate citizen use of our website.

**3. OPPORTUNITY AND TIMETABLE**

- 3.1 In 2007, the on-line advertising market in the UK alone was worth £2.8 billion. By 2009, current estimates from PWC and the Internet Advertising Board suggest spend on internet advertising will exceed television advertising spend. The on-line advertising market is therefore established and growing very rapidly. The annual value of the advertising opportunity on the HDC website, based on current traffic volumes and shape, is estimated at just over £30,700 pa. This estimate was produced by an external agency specialising in this area, using real analytics data collected between April 22<sup>nd</sup> and May 19<sup>th</sup> of this year.
- 3.2 The same analysis also demonstrated that if our traffic continues to grow and adopt a shape or 'profile' similar to other Councils, the total potential value may well be significantly higher.

- 3.3 These revenue streams can be brought on-line in 12 to 15 weeks. The first step is a set-up process, usually taking 6 to 7 weeks, when the areas on the website where advertising or sponsorship messages will appear (the placements) are defined. For each and every placement, we will also generate policies in terms of what type of advertising will be permitted.
- 3.4 The advertising opportunity is then introduced to the market for a further 6 – 8 weeks and, finally, fully marketed.
- 3.5 Whilst terms have yet to be agreed with the agency it is expected that set-up costs will be very level (external costs of £1850). Once our policies for accepting advertising are agreed we anticipate very little internal effort to maintain this advertising revenue. It is estimated that if c.70% of the revenue estimate is achieved, the set-up cost will be recovered in just over 5 weeks.

#### **4. POLICY AND PROCESS FOR VETTING ADVERTISEMENTS**

- 4.1 Unlike paper based advertising, on line advertising may come and go in real time. Processes for getting advertising up, and for removing it must be simple in order to be cost effective and practical for the advertiser. Having said this, the same basic principles apply to the kind of advertising that we should be accepting.
- 4.2 Huntingdonshire DC must not be seen to be endorsing or approving the products and services of any advertisers or allowing any inappropriate products or services to be advertised.
- 4.3 We will define in advance what we consider to be 'inappropriate' advertising and will also generate specific policies for specific areas on the website; all advertising will be subject to assessment and categorisation by the agency before it may be displayed and any inappropriate advertising will be filtered out and barred.
- 4.4 The sample page designs provided as an appendix to this paper, and which give a feel for how the website might look when carrying advertising, also illustrate how this can be achieved, with clear marking of advertisements and explanatory text alongside.

#### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 The Cabinet Office approves of advertising on public sector websites and the guidance also states 'Over time, it is likely that advertising and sponsorship will become increasingly important as ways of funding the provision of information services or developing websites.'
- 5.2 It is also worth noting that advertising does currently appear in Authority publications and that the principle of Hunts DC accepting advertising is therefore broadly established.
- 5.3 The revenue opportunity is already of note and is likely to increase over time.

- 5.4 Only practise will tell whether the procedures proposed will be robust enough to support the Council and whether revenues will be strong enough to make this initiative worth while. Consequently we will need to review the success of both the advertising revenues and the vetting policy and be able to terminate the arrangements at short notice should they not be in the interests of the Council

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is recommended to:**

**Delegate authority to the Director of Commerce & Technology, after consultation with the Executive Cabinet Member for IT and Customer Service, to appoint an agency to manage web advertising on behalf of the Council.**

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**Annexes:.** Screen prints of web pages with advertisements.



**Service directory**

- Online Services | Forms
- ← Home
- ← Environment and Planning
- ▶ Planning
  - 1App Guidance
  - A14 Improvements
  - Paperwork Charges
  - Planning Application Advice
  - Planning Applications
  - Planning Enforcement
  - Planning Forms
  - Planning Policy

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**A to Z listing**

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[W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

**Advertising**

Huntingdonshire District Council seeks to ensure that advertisers are reputable companies but does not endorse any products or services advertised on this site.



**Get and compare quotations**  
Architects, engineers, project managers, builders....

**Planning**

Planning Services play a key role in making Huntingdonshire a better place to live. It promotes and regulates new development, to help ensure that the community's needs are met in the most appropriate locations and that buildings are of a high quality.

**Latest news**



**Have Your Say On Draft Design Brief For Primrose Lane Huntingdon (08/04/08)**  
Local people will soon be able to have their say on a draft design brief that will help shape the future redevelopment opportunities on the former health authority office site to the south of Primrose Lane, Huntingdon.



**Young People Develop Zero Carbon Master Plan (05/03/08)**  
Students from Abbey College, Ramsey gave a presentation to the Huntingdonshire District Council's development control panel last week about their zero carbon master plan project.


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### Service directory

Online Services | Forms

- Home
- Leisure and Culture
- Leisure Centres

- Free Membership
- Huntingdon
- Impressions Fitness Suites
- Online Bookings
- Ramsey
- Sawtry
- St Ivo
- St Neots

[view the site map](#)

### A to Z listing

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V  
W X Y Z

### Online Services

**Online Bookings**

Online Bookings

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### Leisure Centres And Impressions Fitness Suites



Every year there are over 1.5 million visitors to the leisure centres in St Ives, Huntingdon, St Neots, Ramsey and Sawtry.

They provide a wide variety of sports and leisure activities for all ages and interests. The facilities are available to use by local residents and visitors to Huntingdonshire.

For more information please use the links on the left.

### Leisure Centres News



Register today for online bookings

#### Book Leisure Facilities Online

Visitors to leisure centres can now beat the queues by booking over 150 fitness classes and badminton, squash or tennis courts via a new online leisure bookings system.

### Advertising

Over the last year, advertising on this site raised over £33,000. See our ad policy.

See if you can get slimmer for summer the Special K way



Find out how 