

# London Borough of Bromley

Report No.  
DR04081

PART 1 - PUBLIC  
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Agenda  
Item No.

**4**

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Title: **SHOPS ON COUNCIL & PRIVATELY OWNED SHOPPING PARADES**

Decision Maker: **Local Economy Portfolio Holder**

Decision Date:  
**30 Jun 2004**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive

Non-Key

Budget/Policy Framework: Within policy and budget

Chief Officer: Chief Property Officer

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Ward: Borough-wide

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## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Local Economy PDS set up a scrutiny panel to consider the contribution to the local economy of shops on small to medium sized parades. It considered a report from the Chief Property Officer and Chief Planner on 23 March 2004 setting out the findings of the scrutiny panel. The report was also considered by the Development Control Committee and the Community Safety PDS

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The views of the Portfolio Holder are sought on the conclusions reached in the report to the PDS on 23 March and on the views expressed by the various Committees to which the report was submitted.

### 3. INFORMATION

- 3.1 The report that was submitted to the Local Economy PDS on 23 March 2004 is attached for information. The main conclusions, which were supported by the PDS are set out in Section 5 of that report and can be summarised as follows:-
- 3.1.1 There should be greater diversification in the use of units whilst retaining sufficient provision of convenience and service outlets.
  - 3.1.2 There should be a commitment to working in partnership with Broomleigh, the Police and local traders/residents associations. If a viable trading environment is not thought to be sustainable then development proposals could be considered but provision should be made for the required level of convenience shopping.
  - 3.1.3 The management of maintenance budgets should focus on planned maintenance and improvements.
  - 3.1.4 Consideration should be given to the use of a proportion of any capital receipt obtained through redevelopment for investment in the retained parades.
  - 3.1.5 There should be an annual report to the PDS to monitor progress.
- 3.2 The PDS also resolved that:
- 3.2.1 consideration be given to the use of empty units on any Council-owned shopping parades for business, service or community purposes and, in particular, to utilising such units to provide "drop-in centres" and facilities for physically handicapped and vulnerable residents as a means of assisting social services groups in a similar manner to these which have been provided at Cotmandene Crescent;
  - 3.2.2 in recognising the difficulties in reducing the number of outlets on parades selling alcohol and the paramount need to ensure the viability of such outlets, efforts be made in conjunction with the tenants to seek means to discourage drink-related anti-social behaviour in retail areas in accordance with recently published Government guidelines and that these community safety issues be drawn to the attention of the Community Safety Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee;
  - 3.2.3 the officer report setting out the conclusions of the Scrutiny Panel be referred to the Community Safety Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee for consideration of the overall community safety issues and to the Development Control Committee regarding aspects of the planning process; and
  - 3.2.4 The Scrutiny Panel be requested to continue to investigate private sector parades in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 3.3 The Development Control Committee considered the report on 20 April and supported the Chief Planner's view that given there were over 1,600 shops in the Borough, the scale of work involved would stretch the current level of resources in the Planning Division even where they were concentrated on shops within an area basis such as those in Anerley Hill where there were higher levels of vacancies. The Chief Planner suggested that a more pragmatic approach by planning towards changes of use on the more problematic parades in both private and Council ownership, could be a way of assisting lettings within existing resources whilst providing a consistency of approach towards vacancies on shopping parades in either public or private ownership. Members were fully aware, however, that the first consideration when determining a planning application was a relevant policy in the

adopted Unitary Development Plan unless there were relevant planning considerations to indicate otherwise.

3.4 The Community Safety PDS Committee agreed that there is an opportunity to consider the neighbourhood parades when developing local community safety action plans and asked the Head of Community Services to ensure linkages are made between portfolio activities and the community safety issues identified by the Local Economy PDS. Members asked that the Chairman or another member be involved with the Local Economy PDS Committee in further work on this issue.

3.5 Since the report was considered by the various Committees, progress has been made on some of the actions coming out of the report.

- Planning permission has been obtained for a change of use in respect of 2 units at Leith Hill which will permit them to be used for business rather than retail use.
- Following the support of the Strategy and Resources PDS to a decision of the Executive, a planning application has been submitted for permission for a change of use in respect of a retail unit at Cotmandene Crescent to allow its conversion to a standard day unit for adults with learning disabilities.
- The Strategy and Resources Portfolio Holder has approved the submission of a planning application for the erection of electronically operated security shutters at Tillingbourne Green/Ranmore Path and Leith Hill.
- Discussions have taken place with Broomleigh about the possibility of development or conversion of parades which do not appear to be viable as retail areas. This will be the subject of a future report once the discussions have been concluded.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Any costs arising from this work is being met from existing budgets.

#### 5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council's portfolio of shops contributes to the local economy by providing premises for small businesses but it is becoming increasingly difficult for retailers to maintain a sustainable business in these secondary locations. It is therefore important to develop a strategy that promotes sustainable business use whilst retaining essential convenience shopping and services to local residents.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Legal, Personnel
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Reports to Local Economy PDS 23 March 2004. Community Safety PDS 02 June 2004 Development Control Committee 20 April 2004