

BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

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| Meeting: | Economic Partnership |
| Date: | 18 October 2011 |
| Subject: | Update report on activities for Town Centre Management and Business Support |
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1. Recommendations.

The Partnership is asked to:-

- 1.1 Note recent work around Town Centre Management and Business Support in the 2nd quarter 2011/12
- 1.2 Note and endorse the plans for Town Centre Management and Business Support activity during the next quarter.

2. Quarter 2 update

- 2.1 For Town Centre Management and Business Support the main priorities have been:
 - Delivery of summer events
 - Outreach to businesses for Christmas lights donations and Christmas lights procurement
 - Submission of Outer London Fund round 1 bid
 - Developing proposal for project to introduce Business Improvement District (BID) to Orpington
 - Responding to the August riots and following up with affected businesses
 - Continue environmental monitoring Contributing to the management of the Invest Bromley event (20 Sept) and the accompanying inward investment brochure.
 - Publication and promotion of the Explore Bromley Borough electronic visitor map and guide
 - Liaison with local commercial property agents through the forum meeting

- Ensure publication of 2 editions of the Bromley Business E-bulletin and promote the wider take up of the service.
- Liaison with colleagues in Environmental Services and with businesses regarding the Chislehurst Road Bridge rebuild

In addition the TCM team have maintained regular communications with businesses through newsletters and email updates and have contributed to initiatives led by other sections of the Council, for example the Bromley North Village project.

- 2.2 Town Centre events successfully delivered during the quarter included in July a Family Fun weekend in Beckenham and the Orpington Town Fete, and in September a Street Theatre Festival in Bromley and Fun in the Park at Orpington's Priory Gardens. We also delivered the successful Orpington's Finest Competition in partnership with the Orpington Business Forum. In addition, local business forums were supported through the organisation of business networking meetings in all four main towns during the period, and Pub Watch meetings in Beckenham – which are increasingly well attended by local licensees.
- 2.3 Following the Member decision on Christmas lights funding, the TCMs sent mailings to around 2000 businesses and made direct approaches to key businesses across the 4 main town centres to request donations. Responses were disappointing overall – with a total of approx £12,800 raised from business contributions (£9,000 for Bromley, £2,500 for Orpington and £1,300 for Beckenham). This total is well short of the target of £34,500 for the 4 towns. This situation would have led to vastly reduced lights schemes (or even no schemes) in these towns in 2011 were it not for the Mayor's Outer London Fund.
- 2.4 In June the Mayor of London launched his Outer London Fund which is targeted on improving the vitality and competitiveness of town centres, particularly in areas of the Capital not likely to benefit significantly from either Crossrail or the 2012 Olympics. The first round had a very short timescale for applications and required bids to be in by mid July. All funding for round 1 is to be spent in the current financial year which means that although capital projects were not excluded, the emphasis was on revenue expenditure, for example on events, Christmas lights, promotional campaigns which will provide a short term boost to town centres. Working with colleagues in Town Centre Development the Town Centre Management prepared and submitted bids for Beckenham, Bromley, Orpington, Penge and also Crystal Palace. Only bids for Bromley, Orpington and Penge were successful providing funding of £468,000 (£308k for Bromley, £90k for Orpington and £70k for Penge). The projects funded include:
- Purchase / installation of Christmas lights
 - Christmas events and marketing campaigns
 - Support to independent businesses
 - Installation of graphics to empty shop fronts

- Extension of public realm design and upgrade to Bromley central High Street
 - Heritage trail for Bromley
 - Business Improvement District feasibility and engagement for Orpington
- 2.5 Bromley's town centres did not emerge unscathed from the widespread rioting, disorder and criminality which hit Greater London during the early part of August. According to Police up to 60 businesses in the borough suffered some damage or loss due to the disorder – with most of the trouble centred on Bromley North (East Street), Beckenham, Orpington and the Nugent Retail Park. TCMs took part in the follow up in the immediate aftermath of the first night of rioting and visited all the businesses in the 4 main towns – distributing information from the Police door to door. In the following weeks TCMs also visited most of the worst affected businesses – ascertaining levels of damage and loss and providing advice on the next steps. Businesses were provided information on sources of advice and funding – including the Riot Act Compensation Scheme and the charitable High Street Fund.
- 2.6 As a result of initial presentations to businesses at the Orpington Business Forum the Executive of the Forum was mandated to explore in depth the opportunity to form a Business Improvement District in the town. This included a joint visit with the TCM to the forming BID in Bexleyheath and to an established one in Hitchin (similar sized town). A proposal for the Council to support the BID proposal with both funding and personnel has been prepared and is due to go before Councillors at the Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee on 11 October.

5. Proposed activities for the Town Centre Management and Business support service.

The key priorities for Town Centre Management and Business Support during the 3rd quarter of 2011/12 include:

- Delivery of agreed projects for the Outer London Fund (OLF) Round 1
- Preparation and submission of bids for the OLF Round 2 – covering financial years 2012/13 and 2013/14. Deadline now extended to 14 November.
- Subject to Councillor authorisation – to launch a project to undertake detailed feasibility and business consultation on a potential BID for Orpington – working with the businesses to develop a business plan and proposal which would be put to a ballot during the 2012/13 financial year.
- Continue support to businesses affected by the summer disturbances – including finalisation and roll out of High Street Support Scheme grants, supported by the Department Communities and Local Government.
- Continue a review of Markets, Promotions and Rides in town centres for presentation of a report to Councillors on options for future management and locations.

- Delivery of Christmas / Winter events in the 4 main towns – and ongoing preparation for 2012 Queens Jubilee events.
- Delivery of Christmas lights schemes in the 4 main towns with selection of supplier taking place through a borough wide tendering process. Also assistance to smaller towns for delivery of Christmas lights and events.
- Develop and deliver OLF-funded business support projects including business support scheme in Bromley, Orpington and Penge, an inward investment campaign for Bromley North and shop front improvement grants in Bromley North and Penge.
- Continue to lobby the Shop Safe Radio supplier for roll out of upgrade to system in the borough's town centres. Delivery of extension to the scheme to Petts Wood.
- Ensure publication of one edition of the Bromley Business E-bulletin and promote the wider take up of the service.
- Develop TCM programmes for pitching to potential sponsors for core funding or support for specific events / projects for 2012/13.
- Distribute copies of the new Invest Bromley brochure.
- Liaison with local commercial property agents through forum meeting
- Maintain vigilance on town centre environmental issues
- Continue to work with local business groups to encourage participation