

# BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

<b>Meeting:</b>	Economic Partnership
<b>Date:</b>	10 January 2012
<b>Subject:</b>	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 3rd 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 Christmas events and marketing
  - Outreach to businesses for Christmas lights donations and Christmas lights procurement
  - Submission of Outer London Fund round 2 bid
  - Continuing the development of a project to introduce Business Improvement District (BID) to Orpington
  - Continuing to respond to the August riots, following up with affected businesses
  - Continue environmental monitoring – including liaising with business groups regarding Snow Friends scheme
  - Distribution of the Invest Bromley brochure.
  - Liaison with local commercial property agents through the forum meeting
  - Ensure publication of 1 edition 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 The Town Centre team delivered successful Christmas-themed events in all 4 major towns – and provided support to those taking place in some of the smaller centres (e.g. Hayes and Petts Wood). The biggest of the events was the 24 November switch on event in Bromley High Street which attracted an estimated crowd of 10,000 plus people to watch the Christmas parade (with Santa and real reindeer), the lights switch on with stars of the Churchill Pantomime and a spectacular firework display. All the events were bigger and better than previous years due in part to funding from the Mayor's Outer London Fund (OLF) along with increased financial support from a number of local businesses. In a new departure from previous years, the OLF funding enabled a coordinated approach to marketing especially in Bromley town centre where a series of Festive Thursday events (including a live Nativity scene, with real donkey!) coincided with evening free parking at two of the Council's multi-storey car parks and late night shopping for the majority of stores in the town centre.
- 2.3 Another benefit from the OLF funding for 3 out of the 4 main towns in Bromley was the Christmas lights scheme, which allowed the Town Centre Management team to add to funding already raised from businesses, and to match funding from the Council, to create spectacular new schemes for Bromley, Orpington and Penge. The lights for each of these schemes have been purchased and can be re-used in future years which means that the benefits can be felt in the towns long after Round 1 of the Outer London Fund Round has expired. This will still require businesses and the Council to play a part in funding the installation and de-installation in future years but this will be a significantly lower amount than would be the case if the lights were to be hired every year.
- 2.4 As reported at the October Economic Partnership only bids for Bromley, Orpington and Penge were successful in attracting funding of £468,000 (£308k for Bromley, £90k for Orpington and £70k for Penge) to the borough. The projects funded have become part of the work programme for the Town Centre Management and the Town Centre Renewal Teams – and a number of these are to be played out during the next quarter including:
- 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
- Are You Bromley? – themed arts / cultural events

During the period the details were announced of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Outer London Fund – making available £40m to be spent across London during the next two financial years (2012/13 and 2013/14). Members of the Town Centre Management and Town Centre Renewal Teams worked on a 2<sup>nd</sup> round bid – with contributions from a number of officers, Councillors, business groups and residents representatives. A long list containing a number of different locations and schemes were whittled down to bids for 3 town centres – Bromley, Beckenham and Penge. The final bids were agreed by a panel of senior Councillors comprising the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation and the Chairman of the Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee. As the stated aim of this round was to effect longer lasting change through mainly capital funding, the focus of the bids were public realm improvements and shop front renewal in the towns mentioned – although there was also a request for support for softer outcomes such as installation of free public WiFi in Beckenham and contribution to major events in Bromley (including the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations). Results of Round 2 are expected before the end of January.

- 2.5 During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter officers continued to follow up with businesses affected by the August disorder, and developed the High Street Support Scheme under guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government. The scheme has allowed for 6 individual businesses and a traders group to be assisted through small grants to help cover uninsured losses and aid cash flow. In the case of the traders group (East Street Traders) this has allowed them to undertake joint marketing of the area in the wake of the disturbances which saw their trade significantly decrease.
- 2.6 Following close liaison and support from the Orpington Business Forum a proposal for the Council to support the BID proposal with both funding and personnel has been prepared and was agreed by Councillors at the Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee on 11 October. Following this decision officers have procured the services of an agency specialised in assisting with the development of BIDs and have also formed a BID steering group comprising all local stakeholders, which will meet for the first time in January 2012.

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

The key priorities for Town Centre Management and Business Support during the 4th quarter of 2011/12 include:

- Delivery of agreed projects for the Outer London Fund (OLF) Round 1 – especially:
  - Vacant shop vinyls – working with relevant landlords and agents
  - Business support scheme which will include workshops on subjects relevant to independent retailers, one to one surgeries and mystery shopping service),
  - Shop front renewal scheme development work,
  - ‘Are You Bromley?’ events and promotions
  - Inward investment pack for Bromley North Village.
- To publicly launch the BIDs project including undertaking 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 a review of Markets, Promotions and Rides in town centres for presentation of a report to Councillors on options for future management and locations.
- Work with Shop Safe Radio, Police and colleagues in Public Protection to develop a crime reduction intelligence sharing partnership with businesses. The partnership will oversee the upgrade of the radio system and addition of a web based intelligence portal.
- Ensure publication of two editions of the Bromley Business E-bulletin (in January and March) 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.
- 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 and partnership – with a view to possible extension of the BIDs concept to other towns.