

Decision Maker: Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder, for pre-decision scrutiny by the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Date: 27 March 2012

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES FUND 2012/13

Contact Officer: Martin Pinnell, Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support
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Chief Officer: Marc Hume, Director of Renewal and Recreation

Ward: Borough-wide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The Town Centre Management section is responsible for working with businesses and other partners to help maintain and enhance the competitiveness, attractiveness and vibrancy of the borough's town centres. This report outlines some of the Town Centre Management events and activities planned for 2012/13 and seeks approval to release sufficient resources to ensure these activities can be undertaken successfully.
- 1.2 The report also includes proposals to fund Christmas Lights during the 2012/13 financial year – which includes seeking additional contributions from the private sector. Due to the assistance obtained from the Outer London Fund during 2011/13, which enabled the Council to purchase the lights for 3 out of 4 of the main towns the total cost of Christmas lights for the borough has been reduced by more than half on the 2009 and 2010 levels.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee members are asked to:

- 2.1 Note and comment upon the proposals outlined below.

The Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder is asked to:

- 2.2 Agree the schedule of Town Centre Management events, activities and projects for 2012/13 outlined in paragraphs 3.2 – 3.4 (and provided in more detail in Appendix 1), which will have a total net cost of £34,750 funded from the Town Centre Initiative Fund.
- 2.3 Agree that £33,955 be set aside from the Town Centre Initiatives Fund 2012/13 for use on Town Centre Christmas Lights schemes as set out in paragraphs 3.5 – 3.12.
- 2.4 Agree that £5,500 be set aside from the Town Centre Initiatives fund as match funding to assist in delivery of the Outer London Fund Round 2 programme in Bromley town centre, as outlined in paragraph 3.13.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Vibrant Thriving Town Centres.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost £74,205
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring cost.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Town Centre Management Initiatives Fund
 4. Total current budget for this head: £74,218
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget for 2012/13
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 4
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: No statutory requirement or Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Approximately 2,000 town centre businesses, plus residents using town centres.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The Town Centre Management service in Renewal & Recreation exists to maintain and enhance the competitiveness, attractiveness and vibrancy of the borough's town centres. This involves working closely with town centre businesses, both directly and through business and traders groups, and with other key town centre occupiers and service providers. The resources for the service are derived not only from Council budgets but also from income from business donations and sponsorship. The proposed work programme for the Town Centre Managers during 2012/13 will involve a wide range of duties ranging from facilitation of high profile public events through to day to day assistance to town centre occupiers. The following paragraphs outline the main activities proposed for 2012/13.

EVENTS

3.2 Managing events for the general public aimed at increasing footfall and raising the profile of our town centres have always been a key part of the work of the Town Centre Management service. During 2011/12 a number of successful events took place which were funded from the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund, boosted by a carry forward agreed by Executive, and also grant funding of around £72k from the Outer London Fund, specifically for Christmas events and marketing. In addition to significantly enhanced Christmas events, other highlights of the year included the Bromley Festival of Sport, the Street Theatre Festival and the Summer Fete in Orpington, all of which drew in additional visitors, encouraged trade and enhanced the 'feel good factor' about our town centres. In addition, during 2011/12 the carried forward budget has been used to assist with preparations for a major celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee which is scheduled for 15 May 2012 in Bromley town centre.

3.3 In 2012/13 Town Centre Managers are planning a series of events, both large and small, across all the main town centres. A draft list of planned events is attached as Appendix 1. The largest two of these, the Queens Diamond Jubilee celebration and a Festival of Sports and Arts, will take place in Bromley Town Centre and have significant funding requirements which have been covered through various sources, including the Mayor of London's Outer London Fund (Round 2). No additional funding from the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund is expected to be required for these two events. Of the other events planned for the year ahead, the highlights include the following (all details subject to alterations):

- 'Dancing Feat' event in Orpington on 14 July – part of the national Big Dance festival. The one day event will include a live dance competition and demonstrations, with stalls and refreshments. Estimated net cost to the Council: £6k.
- Summer Family Fun Weekend on Beckenham Green in July timed to link in with the London Olympics – to include continental market, rides and live entertainment. Estimated net cost to the Council: £1k.
- Poppy Appeal Display (Nov 2012). Once again Bromley Town Centre will be decorated with giant poppies in honour of the season of Remembrance – and in support of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. Estimate net cost to the Council: £1k.
- Christmas celebrations in towns across the borough, with high profile spectacular events - incorporating entertainments, community carol singing, fashion shows, children's rides and firework displays - taking place in Bromley, Orpington, Beckenham and Penge. Estimated total net cost of the 4 main town events: £20.75k.

3.4 Whilst many of the smaller events are expected to be entirely self financing and Town Centre Managers are working to reduce the cost of other events through a mixture of sponsorship, donations and other income, there is potentially a total net cost to the Council of £34,750 across all towns.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2012

3.5 Another key operational area for Town Centre Management is the organisation of Christmas lights for town centres. In 2011/12 a total of £44.5k was agreed by Members to cover supply, installation and removal of lights in Bromley, Orpington, Beckenham and Penge and to cover donations to assist with lights in a number of smaller town centres. This was agreed on the basis that Town Centre Managers undertake a campaign of outreach to businesses especially in the four main centres to encourage a higher level of contribution from businesses to the lights – aiming for half of the costs to be covered by business or community donations. In the spring and summer of 2011 businesses were written to on a number of occasions, and managers at some of the larger occupiers were visited in person to canvass support. The Town Centre Managers also worked with local traders groups who often provided the conduit for the donations to the lights schemes in each town.

3.6 As a result of this exercise the following sums were received for these towns:

- Bromley - £8,000
- Orpington - £2,500
- Beckenham - £1,600
- Penge - £170

3.7 In total £12,270 was generated from businesses to add to the Council's own contribution. The resulting budget would not have provided particularly extensive or high quality displays. However, officers were successful in bidding for a grant of £115k from the Mayor of London's Outer London Fund, which meant that for 3 of these towns – Bromley, Orpington and Penge – sufficient additional funding was available to make up any shortfall.

3.8 The generous funding from Round 1 of the Outer London Fund also meant that the Council could purchase the lights used in Bromley, Orpington and Penge and these are available to be re-used over at least 2 years – and almost certainly longer. Following a full tendering procedure officers were authorised to enter into a contract with a Christmas lights supplier who will store the lighting displays and re-install / de-install these for Christmas 2012 and Christmas 2013. The cost of the contract to undertake this work for the 2 years is £22,955 per annum, and therefore this sum needs to be set aside from the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund for 2012/13.

3.9 Beckenham was not in receipt of Outer London Fund grant money for Christmas lights. The Council does not therefore own any lights for the town – and any lights scheme for this town would need to be hired in. It is expected that the cost of this will be no more than £6k, as was the case in 2011. The Council may also, as in previous years, provide a donation to lights committees in 10 smaller town centres – to a suggested total budget of £5k (£500 per town).

3.10 In addition to the Christmas Lights themselves, natural Christmas trees provide a welcome focal point for the displays in the town centres. However, due to limited funds available to the Council it will be for the Town Centre Managers to seek contributions or sponsorship from businesses to cover the full costs of these.

- 3.11 A total Christmas lights budget of £33,955 from the 2012/13 Town Centre Management Initiative Fund is recommended to cover the requirements outlined above. Although this figure is slightly more than was spent by the Council in 2011 (£25.2k, thanks to the Outer London Fund grant), the estimated figure for 2011/12 represents a reduction on the costs of the schemes which the Council funded for the 2009 and 2010 Christmas seasons.
- 3.12 As in 2011 Town Centre Managers will be vigorously campaigning to bring in external funding to help offset the costs of the lights for all towns. Although it is recommended that the Council sets aside budget to pay the whole costs of the lights installation for 2011/12, any additional contributions raised from the private sector will be utilised to augment the displays or enhance the town centre events programme.

OUTER LONDON FUND ROUND 2 PROJECTS

- 3.13 Following the successful bid for Bromley town centre under Round 2 of the Outer London Fund, just under £2m will be available to spend in the town – most of which will be focussed on upgrading the public realm design in the central and southern areas of the town, to harmonise with the scheme already in development for Bromley North Village. Amongst other elements, the successful bid also included provision for setting up a shop front improvement grant scheme for Bromley North Village, with funding of up to £150k over two years, and an extension to the ‘Are You Bromley?’ campaign (for £25k over 2 years) which highlights and promotes the exciting changes planned for the town centre under the Area Action Plan. These two projects require match funding from the Council of no more than £5.5k during the 2012/13 financial year. It is proposed that the Council’s contribution to these projects is funded from the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The events and activities outlined above are aimed specifically at enhancing the vitality of town centres across the borough and as such contribute to the Building a Better Bromley key priority of Vibrant, Thriving Town Centres.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 For 2012/13 the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund budget is £74,220.
- 5.2 The following table summarises the proposed spending on this fund: -

| Town Centre Management Fund | £ |
|--|----------------------|
| 2012/13 Budget | 74,220 |
| Proposed events and activities | |
| Town Centre Events | 34,750 |
| Christmas Lights | 33,955 |
| OLF Shop Front grant scheme marketing match funding contribution | 3,000 |
| OLF Are You Bromley promotion match funding contribution | 2,500 |
| Total | <u>74,205</u> |

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| Non-Applicable Sections: | Legal, Personnel |
| Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer) | |