

Decision Maker: Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee on:

Date: 10th July 2012

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE - PROGRESS REPORT**

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Chief Officer: Marc Hume, Director Renewal & Recreation

Ward: Copers Cope

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report seeks to provide Members with an overview of the work carried out to date by Urban Design consultants, East Architecture & Urban Design, on the concept design for Beckenham Town Centre. The views of the Renewal & Recreation PDS are sought before the Portfolio holder in consultation with Chairman of the R&R PDS, approves the final concept design in order that the plans can inform the submission of a funding bid to Transport for London's (TfL) Major Schemes initiative in September 2012.
- 1.2 This report also outlines a preliminary list of short term improvements that could be carried out against the Member Priority Initiatives relevant to the Renewal & Recreation Portfolio, as agreed by Council on 26 March 2012. The Portfolio Holder is asked to agree the draw down of the full £250k and agrees this preliminary list subject to the outcome of the concept design in consultation with the Beckenham & West Wickham Town Centre Working Party.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Renewal & Recreation Portfolio Holder agrees:

- 2.1 in consultation with the Chairman of the Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee, the approval of the final concept design in order that the plans can inform the submission of a funding bid to Transport for London's (TfL) Major Schemes initiative in September 2012.
1. the preliminary list of improvements set out in **Appendix 1** and agree to prioritise any further spend in consultation with the Chairman of the Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment Vibrant, Thriving Town Centres:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: £250k:
 2. Ongoing costs: Non-Recurring Cost:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Town Centre Renewal
 4. Total current budget for this head: £250k
 5. Source of funding: Earmarked Reserve for Member Priority Initiatives
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 3
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Applicable:
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Beckenham Town Centre
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

Background

3.1 The Council has been successful in the past in obtaining TfL's Area Based Programme funding, namely for Orpington town centre and Bromley North Village, based on schemes that have been well thought out, achievable, have clear objectives and an initial concept design. To support the submission of an initial 'Step 1' Beckenham bid to TfL in September 2012 the Council will need to have an improvement strategy and public realm concept designs. If successful this could lead to detailed design work starting in April 2013 and implementation commencing early 2014 and will require a certain level of match funding from LBB.

3.2 Following a competitive tendering exercise, Architecture and Urban Design consultants East Architecture & Urban Design were selected to undertake the initial design work and prepare a concept design. The Consultant team have been working with officers in undertaking a full analysis of how the area is used by different groups and are undertaking specific consultations.

3.3 The key aims of the Beckenham public project is to:

- Identify how the current public realm in Beckenham Town Centre is used and, through a review of current studies and a series of stakeholder consultations, provide a critical report which will inform the outline design stage.
- Provide outline design drawings which will form the basis for implementation of public realm improvements that create usable footway spaces and legible, safe and comfortable pedestrian spaces and crossings. The final report will include a costed proposal that will inform a Step 1 Major Schemes bid to transport for London in September 2012.
- Support the economic renaissance of the area, acting as a catalyst to promote inward investment into the High Street

The Beckenham Town Centre Major Scheme Objectives as agreed by the Beckenham & West Wickham Member Working Party are attached as **Appendix 2**.

3.4 The Consultants were appointed in mid-May and have undertaken some initial consultation and a review of existing baseline data for Beckenham. They have presented some initial observations to the Beckenham & West Wickham Town Centre Working Party (BWTCWP) at their meeting on 24th May 2012. This was preceded by an in depth site visit of the town centre with officers from across the Council including Planning, Renewal, Transport & Highways and Town Centre Management.

3.5 In order to establish priorities and requirements of the business community, on 6th June 2012, a 'loading and delivery' questionnaire was created and hand delivered by East to each business premises on Beckenham High Street. This allowed initial face-to-face discussions with over 40 traders, and allowed the Consultant team the opportunity to note any preferences or requirements for loading and deliveries that could form part of the initial concept design.

3.6 On 12th June, a further site visit of the town was arranged for a number of key stakeholders in Beckenham to allow the Consultant team to hear first-hand any issues, concerns and aspirations from local traders, amenity and friends groups. Many attendees were members of the BWTCWP and included:

- Rod Reed, former Councillor, Beckenham Civic Society
- Marsha Berg, Copers Cope Residents' Association and Beckenham Business Association
- Cliff Watkins, Beckenham Civic Society
- Pat Manning, Beckenham Civic Society

- John Parker, Beckenham Civic Society
- Martin Pinnell, LBB
- Christian Strover, Christchurch
- Colin Hughes, Beckenham Business Association
- Paula Mc Waters, Beckenham Civic Society
- David Wood, Beckenham Civic Society
- Anne Wynne, East
- Julian Lewis, East

- 3.7 The group spent a few hours walking from the War Memorial to Beckenham Junction station, identifying and talking about any special characteristics of the town and looking at less obvious opportunities for the lane ways and spaces close to the High Street.
- 3.8 East plan to hold further consultaion events as a concept design takes shape. This is likely to include a stakeholder workshop, exhibitions and other community engagement activities. Further details of the emerging concept design will be circulated in advance of the R&R PDS meeting and will be reported to Members as they become available.
- 3.9 However, there is no R&R PDS timetabled to meet before the need to submit the 'Step 1' Beckenham funding bid to TfL in early September 2012. This report therefore seeks the views of the R&R PDS on the emerging plans before the Portfolio Holder approves the final concept design in order that the plans can inform the submission of a funding bid. A separate authority to submit the bid will need to be sought from the Executive Committee to agree any potential match funding capital contribution that is identified through the current design work.

4. Programme of Short Term Improvements

- 4.1 Council on 26th March 2012 approved the setting aside of £2.62m in an earmarked reserve for Member priority initiatives. The original report provided a breakdown of schemes as set out below.
- (i) £750k for footways, highways and general improvement projects;
 - (ii) £250k relating to support for "Friends" Groups;
 - (iii) £150k to renew/replace the Council's community recycling sites;
 - (iv) £400k for investing in small shopping parades and targeted neighbourhood activity;
 - (v) £500k to support tackling youth unemployment amongst young people;
 - (vi) £250k to support immediate Beckenham Town Centre improvements and support a bid to Transport for London for traffic and public realm improvements;
 - (vii) £250k for community based initiatives;
 - (viii) £70k to encourage physical activities in parks.
- 4.2 Items (iv), (v) and (vi) fall within the remit of the Renewal & Recreation Portfolio. Separate reports on items (iv) and (v) are reported elsewhere in this PDS agenda.
- 4.3 There have been a number of previous studies that have examined the issues confronting Beckenham Town Centre and each has recommended a series of improvements. There are themes and suggested improvements that are common to each of the studies, and it is acknowledged that many of the suggested recommendations relate to improvements to the public realm and could involve significant alterations to the road network.
- 4.4 At the last meeting of the BWTCWP on 24th May, Members were asked to consider a long list of improvements and resolved that it would be prudent to allow East to undertake their initial evaluation before committing to any specific interventions, so as not to prejudice the development of a concept design for the High Street. The Portfolio holder is requested to agree the attached list of short term improvements that can be developed alongside the work of the

design team to allow implementation in the financial year 2012/13. This list of short term improvement projects is attached as **Appendix 1.**

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The development of a Major Schemes Step 1 Bid are entirely consistent with Policy Objectives set out in Building A Better Bromley and the Local Implementation Plan (2011-2014)

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 On 26th March 2012 the Council approved the setting aside of £2.62m in an earmarked Reserve for Member Priority Initiatives. This included a sum of £250k to support immediate Beckenham Town Centre improvements and support a bid to Transport for London for traffic and public realm improvements.
- 6.2 Details of actual spend on the Improvement programme will be reported to Members in future budget monitoring reports.
- 6.3 It should be noted that prior to submitting a funding bid to TfL, Executive approval should be sought for an agreed level of match funding from capital receipts in order to secure the TfL bid.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None for the purpose of this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None for the purpose of this report.

Non-Applicable Sections:	
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Council 26 th March 2012 Report http://sharepoint.bromley.gov.uk/documents/s13925/Council%20260312%20Reference%20Rep2.pdf