

Decision Maker: **Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee**

Date: **10 July 2012**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Key Non-Key

Title: **Town Centre Management Update Quarter 1 2012/13**

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

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

At the previous Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee meeting (27 March 2012) Members requested that an update report be provided at future meetings of the Committee, to summarise the activities undertaken by the Council's Town Centre Management and Business Support team. Each report will cover any activity undertaken since the previous PDS Committee meeting. This report therefore focuses on the period from end of March until the end of June 2012.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Members of the R&R Committee are asked to note and consider the actions undertaken during Quarter 1 2012/13 in the town centres served by the Town Centre Management and Business Support team.

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 for 2012/13 £269k
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost £74k
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Town Centre Management
 4. Total current budget for this head: £74k, £95k and £100k
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2012/13, OLF funding and funding set aside in an earmarked reserve
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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: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: This is an information only report.
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Customer Impact

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

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

Activities during April to June 2012

During Quarter 1 for Town Centre Management and Business Support the main priorities have been:

- 3.1 Working in partnership with Orpington businesses, consultation and development of the proposed Business Improvement District. This has involved coordination of one to one interviews with up to 60 local businesses, development of BID branding, collation of draft baseline agreement, development of customer relationship management database (to assist with BID campaign and canvassing), consultation on BID levy rules and drafting of BID proposal and budget. The BID project is the subject of a separate (Part 2) report to the R&R PDS Committee.
- 3.2 Planning and delivery of town centre Queen's Diamond Jubilee events which took place in various locations, the biggest of which was the visit by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to Bromley Town Centre on 15 May. In spite of poor weather conditions tens of thousand people turned out to watch the progress of the Royal Party through the town by car and on foot. The sheer size and complexity of the event meant a considerable proportion of staff time from the Town Centre Management team and a number of other Council sections were devoted to the event which was partially funded by the Mayor's Outer London Fund (Round 2).
- 3.3 Assisting businesses in Bromley North Village and Chislehurst to set up Town Teams and to develop a bid for Bromley North Village to the Government's Portas Pilots scheme. Successful bids could be in receipt of up to £100k towards the development of each town. The latest version of the Bromley North Village Portas bid includes a proposal to work with Fashion Enter (one of the main partners for the delivery of Bromley's Queen's Diamond Jubilee event) to open a 'pop up' fashion outlet in the High Street.
- 3.4 Assisting with the facilitation of the Beckenham & West Wickham Working Party – including development of a list of possible short term improvements, and working up more detailed proposals for these as required.
- 3.5 Finalise delivery of Outer London Fund Round 1 – working on delivery of some projects (including Shop Front renewal scheme in Bromley North and installation of Wayfinding maps at Orpington station) extended to 2012/13, and completing claims and evaluation for Q4 of 2011/12 as required by Greater London Authority. Also negotiating final grant agreement with the Greater London Authority for Outer London Fund Round 2 – working with colleagues in Town Centre Renewal.
- 3.6 Consulting with local businesses and Members regarding the proposed Local Parades Improvement initiative, also the subject of a separate report to the R&R PDS Committee.
- 3.7 Engaging with landlords and agents to seek to insert shop front dressings (vinyls) to smarten the appearance of empty shops in the borough. Vinyls have already been applied to the old Bell Hotel in Bromley North Village, the lower level of the Village Halls in Orpington and a number of smaller shops around the borough. A stock of printed vinyl is now available thanks to the Outer London Fund – although the cost of installation of these would need to be paid for from contributions from landlords, where possible.

- 3.8 Since the end of April due to the re-deployment of the previous post-holder, the post of Town Centre Manager covering Beckenham, Penge, Hayes and Mottingham has been vacant. The Head of Town Centre Management has continued to engage with businesses and residents in these towns and work has continued with business groups in Beckenham and Penge, with a particular focus on promotion of the Torch Relay through these towns and provision of entertainment to accompany that event. The Head of Town Centre Management has also been liaising with the Hayes residents with a view to the installation of a new town clock in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee (paid for by residents and businesses). Recruitment of a new Town Centre Manager, with a remit to cover these towns, is ongoing and the post is expected to be filled by the end of the summer.
- 3.9 Engagement and liaison with businesses in all the towns affected by the Torch Relay has been undertaken since the route was first announced publicly. Members of the Town Centre Management Team have also distributed messages about the potential transport impact of the Games (including for freight movements) to businesses across the borough
- 3.10 Hosting and facilitating the regular commercial property agents forum and establishment of a sub-group to develop a programme of promotion for the borough's office market, which will include a workshop planned for autumn 2012.
- 3.11 Hosting and facilitation of the quarterly Bromley Economic Partnership meeting – which is a forum involving a range of representatives including South East London Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Job Centre Plus etc.
- 3.12 Maintaining regular communications with businesses across the borough, for example editing and distributing the Bromley Business E-Bulletin (sent bi-monthly to approx 2400 mailboxes) and contributing to the Council's bi-monthly page in the NewShopper's 'Talking Business' supplement. Also engaging with businesses through networking events such as the Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfast meetings and the Bromley Business Expo – and through local business groups such as the Beckenham Business Association and Orpington Business Forum. Town Centre Managers have also maintained regular communications with town centre businesses through regular emails and visits.
- 3.13 Working in partnership with Action Coach and Baker Tilly to co-host and promote a free evening 'Money on the Table' workshop attended by 30 local businesses and which provided practical advice on understanding business financial figures. The event was paid for by private sector partners and involved no financial commitment from the Council.

Priorities for July to September 2012

For the next quarter the Town Centre Management & Business Support team will prioritise the following activities:

- 3.14 Finishing consultation on the Orpington Business Improvement District (BID), followed by development and finalisation of the BID Proposal. This is with a view to a formal request to hold a ballot to be presented to the Council's Executive Committee in September. These actions would be prerequisite to the launch of the BID campaign in late September.

- 3.15 Planning & promoting summer events such as the Big Dance event in Orpington (14 July), Torch Relay events in Beckenham and Penge (23 July) and the Bromley Town Centre Festival (incorporating a celebration of sport, arts, heritage and culture) in Bromley (29 July).
- 3.16 Planning and promotion of markets such as the re-launched and relocated Charter Market (5 July) and the Makers Market (arts & crafts) in Orpington (7 July).
- 3.17 Continuing to engage with the Beckenham & West Wickham Working Group and assist the urban design consultants developing the initial designs for a public realm improvement scheme for Beckenham. Town Centre Management will also facilitate the delivery of short term improvements as specified by the Working Group.
- 3.18 Delivery of extended Outer London Fund (OLF) Round 1 schemes in Bromley & Orpington and of revenue schemes (such as business support workshops and empty shop vinyls) in Bromley town centre under OLF Round 2. Assist with the delivery of the OLF Round 2 shop front improvement scheme in Bromley North Village.
- 3.19 Planning and delivery of Office sector workshop in partnership with local and central London property agents.
- 3.20 Delivery of proposed Local Parades Improvement initiative – including liaising with Ward Councillors, local businesses and resident groups, and processing applications for use of earmarked funds.
- 3.21 Continue to roll out the empty shop front vinyl scheme to vacant shops across the borough.
- 3.22 Extension of work with Action Coach, GLE and other partners to run local business workshops, to help small and medium businesses to grow. This activity would be cost neutral to the Council, but would involve some staff time and use of the Council's links with local businesses.
- 3.23 Liaise with contractor to ensure Christmas Lights for Bromley, Orpington and Penge are delivered in good time for proposed switch on events. Obtain quotations, seek contributions from businesses and engage contractors for delivery of Christmas lights in Beckenham and smaller town centres.
- 3.24 Continue to engage with businesses, local business groups and business representative bodies across the borough, and maintain regular communications with businesses through e-bulletins, visits and meetings. Undertake a review of the contents, promotion and financing of the Bromley business e-bulletin to ensure it is fit for purpose and represents value for money.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The work of the Town Centre Management & Business Support team has as its primary focus the delivery of the Council's Building a Better Bromley priority of encouraging and sustaining Vibrant Thriving Town Centres.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The majority of the costs associated with the activities of the Town Centre Management & Business Support team are met from within existing Culture & Leisure budgets, including the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund of £74k, which was

allocated to events, Christmas lights and match funding for specific Outer London Fund projects following a report to the R&R PDS on 27 March 2012.

- 5.2 The Queen's Diamond Jubilee event and the planned Bromley Town Centre Festival were part funded by Outer London Fund round 2 – with contributions from that source of £80k and £15k respectively.
- 5.3 An earmarked reserve of £100k was set aside as a contribution towards the Jubilee event.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal, Personnel
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Town Centre Management Initiative Fund 2012/13 Report to R&R PDS Committee 27 March 2012 (DRR12/028)