

**Decision Maker:** **Renewal & Recreation Portfolio Holder with pre-scrutiny by the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee**

**Date:** **2 October 2012**

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

**Title:** **Town Centre Management Update Quarter 2 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

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1. Reason for report

At the previous Renewal & Recreation PDS Committee meeting of 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 June until mid September 2012.

The report also requests that a sum of £8k from an earmarked s106 fund be re-allocated to assist with the Orpington BID project as described in paragraph 5.3.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**The Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder is requested to approve the re-allocation of £8k from the Nugent s106 agreement (total £45.3k) to assist with the Orpington BID project as described in more detail in paragraph 5.3.**

**Members of the R&R Committee are asked to note and consider the actions undertaken during Quarter 2 2012/13, and planned for Quarter 3, 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 £477.8k
  2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost £74k
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Town Centre Management
  4. Total current budget for this head: £74k, £59.5k, £44.3k, £50k and £250k
  5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2012/13, OLF funding, S106 resources, GLA funding and resources 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 June to mid-September 2012

During Quarter 2 for Town Centre Management and Business Support the main priorities have been:

- 3.1 Continuing to work in partnership with Orpington businesses to develop the proposed Business Improvement District (BID). This has involved collating the results of 60 one to one business interviews, plus other informal consultation with local business owners and managers. This has resulted in the drafting of a BID Proposal and 5-year business plan – setting out the priorities of the BID should the ballot be successful. This is a key document which is in effect the ‘manifesto’ for the yes campaign.
- 3.2 Following the endorsement of the key themes of the BID Proposal by the R&R PDS Committee in July, officers worked with the BID Working Group members to prepare a full draft of the BID Proposal for consideration by the Executive – which as a result agreed to the running of an official ballot in February. Alongside the BID Proposal work has continued with the preparation of various draft legal agreements necessary for the BID to function, the development of BID branding and marketing materials and a customer relationship management database in preparation for the BID campaign – expected to start at the end of September.
- 3.3 Planning and delivery of town centre events continued over the summer period – particularly the Makers Market (7 July) and Big Dance event (14 July) in Orpington, Torch Relay events in Bromley, Beckenham and Penge (23 July) and the Bromley Town Centre Festival (incorporating a celebration of sport, arts, heritage and culture) in Bromley (29 July). The latter event, supported by a number of external organisations (including the Outer London Fund, London Outdoor Arts Festival, Bromley Arts Panel and ProActive South London) was particularly complex, given the huge range of activities on offer across multiple venues across the town centre. The large number of people attending the Festival is attested by the fact there was a 23% increase in footfall compared to the previous Sunday.
- 3.4 Liaison and support for Town Teams in Bromley North Village and Chislehurst continues. Bromley North Town Team – whilst unsuccessful in its bid for the latest round of Portas funding – is still ambitious to develop a pop up fashion outlet for Bromley North Village. Officers are exploring alternative sources of funding.
- 3.5 Assisting with the facilitation of the Beckenham & West Wickham Working Party – including facilitating public consultation on the East proposal for the upgrade of Beckenham’s public realm – which is the subject of a Step 1 bid to TfL submitted in early September. Officers are also developing proposals for possible short term improvements for the town.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 Finalising the protocols for applications for funding from the Local Parades Improvement initiative and disseminating these guidelines to all Councillors (sent via email in August). Officers have also been working up detailed proposals and starting to implement improvements to a number of parades as part of the Initiative.

- 3.8 Continuing to engage with landlords and agents to seek to insert shop front dressings (vinyls) to smarten the appearance of empty shops in 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.
- 3.9 Recruitment of new Town Centre Manager (TCM) to cover Beckenham, Penge, Hayes and Mottingham has taken place over the summer and during August a new incumbent, the former Events Manager in the Town Centre Management Team, was appointed. She has made it a priority to work closely with the business community in these towns and has already has a number of positive meetings with the Beckenham Business Association. The new TCM has also been planning, in partnership with the businesses, to ensure that Christmas lights and seasonal events in these towns are a success.
- 3.10 Liaising with contractor to ensure Christmas Lights for Bromley, Orpington and Penge are delivered in good time for proposed switch on events. Officers have also sought contributions from businesses, and undertaken procurement exercises to engage contractors for delivery of Christmas lights in Beckenham and smaller town centres.
- 3.11 Hosting and facilitation of the July 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 through local business groups such as the Beckenham Business Association and Orpington Business Forum. Town Centre Managers have also maintained communications with town centre businesses through regular emails and visits.

### **Priorities for mid-Sept to December 2012**

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

- 3.13 Public launch of the Orpington BID campaign – starting at end of September and running until mid November. This is with a view to a ballot taking place in February and will involve intensive engagement with businesses in the BID area, with the aim to have face to face meetings with representatives from at least half of the 450 eligible businesses. The campaign will be particularly time intensive for the TCM covering Orpington, Biggin Hill, Petts Wood and St Mary Cray, who will have to focus almost exclusively on the Orpington BID project during this period.
- 3.14 In the original report of the Orpington BID presented to Members in October 2011, approval was given to use £37.1k of the Nugent centre S106 agreement resources to part fund the Orpington BID project and the balance of £7.2k be used for the purchase and installation of footfall counting equipment for Orpington. Since that date arrangements have been made to receive this information from the Walnuts Shopping Centre, therefore making the purchase and installation of a Council-owned footfall counter unnecessary. However, there is a need for additional resources to bolster the

BID project – particularly as we enter the critical BID campaign period. Officers are therefore requesting that the £7.2k previously allocated to people counting equipment be re-allocated to the BID project. These additional funds will be used to assist the Town Centre Management team to work towards a ‘Yes’ vote in the ballot planned for Feb 2013.

- 3.15 Planning & promoting autumn and winter events including the Late Summer Fair on Beckenham Green (22/23 Sept), a launch event for the Bromley North Village improvements (date tbc), with the main focus being on preparation for coordinating, supporting and promoting Christmas events taking place in towns across the borough.
- 3.16 Finalise details and ensure successful deployment of Christmas lights displays in all the main towns and support the installation of lights schemes in smaller towns.
- 3.17 Planning and promotion of markets, including regular markets (including the re-located Chislehurst Farmers Market) and specialist ones – for example use of Beckenham Green for a French Market on 22/23 September and Christmas market in Bromley.
- 3.18 Continuing to engage with the Beckenham & West Wickham Working Group to plan and facilitate the delivery of short term improvements as specified by the Working Group.
- 3.19 Finalise delivery of wayfinding improvements at Orpington Station (funded by Outer London Fund round 1) and start delivery of projects (e.g. events and business support workshops) in Bromley town centre funded by OLF Round 2. Assist with the delivery of the OLF Round 2 shop front improvement scheme in Bromley North Village. Commission research surveys (paid for by OLF) of Bromley town centre visitors / shoppers and business to establish baseline parameters for the evaluation of the Outer London Fund schemes.
- 3.20 Assist with the planning and delivery of Office sector promotional campaign and workshop in partnership with local and central London property agents.
- 3.21 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.
- 3.22 Continue to roll out the empty shop front vinyl scheme to vacant shops across the borough.
- 3.23 Working with Action Coach, Baker Tilly, 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.
- 3.24 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 programme of Outer London Fund-linked events (including the Bromley Town Centre Festival), business support and vacant shop dressing are funded through a revenue contribution for this financial year from OLF 1 and 2 of £59.5k.
- 5.3 The Orpington BID project is part funded by £37.1k from S106 funds earmarked for Town Centre Management. A further £7.2k is available, should the Portfolio Holder agree to the funding being used for the Orpington BID project.
- 5.4 The GLA has granted each London Borough up to £50k as a contribution towards supporting London Boroughs during the period of the 2012 Games. The Council used the funding to support the Bromley Town Centre Festival, The Big Dances and World Record Zumba attempt at Crystal Palace Park and a small amount was used for localised street dressing mainly around the Biggin Hill Airport.
- 5.5 £250k is available from the earmarked reserve for Member priority initiatives to improve local parades as reported to the July meeting of this committee.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	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) Town Centre Management Update Quarter 1 2012/13 Report to R&R PDS Committee 10 July (DRR12/083)