

# BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

<b>Meeting:</b>	Economic Partnership
<b>Date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2013
<b>Subject:</b>	Town Centre Management and Business Support Update Report April 2013
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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 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2012/13
- 1.2 Note and endorse the plans for Town Centre Management and Business Support activity during the next quarter.

## 2. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES IN QUARTER 4 2012/13

### 2.1 Events

- 2.2 The quarter began with a special event in the Walnuts on 26 January, commissioned by the BID Working Group in partnership with the Town Centre Management. The event was aimed at raising awareness about the proposed Business Improvement District amongst both business owners and shoppers. The day was a great success, with several hundred people passing through the doors of the pop up shop, which contained an exhibition about the proposed BID and the potential benefits to Orpington. More about the BID project is given in 2.6 below.
- 2.3 The TCM team assisted with the coordination of the Hayes Clock Unveiling on 24 February. After months in the planning, fundraising and making, the diamond jubilee clock was unveiled in Station Approach by the Lord-Lieutenant of London Sir David Brewer. Around 150 attended the unveiling before a reception was held at the New Inn nearby. The clock cost around £9,000, with the money coming mainly from fundraisers and donations by Hayes residents, businesses, schools and associations.
- 2.4 The major event to take place during this quarter was the Bromley Arts Festival on 24 March in Bromley Town Centre. This was a multifaceted event which provided opportunities for visitors to participate in a wide range

of arts and craft activities, story telling sessions, circus skills and music making. There was also an entertainment programme, a pop up art gallery (using a shipping container) and guided historic tours. The event was funded by the Mayor of London's Outer London Fund. Despite the weather the footfall in the town centre was up 11.9% compared to the Sunday the week before.

- 2.5 Due to the weather a planned fair for Beckenham Green on the same day was cancelled, due to very poor ground conditions.

## **2.6 Business Improvement District (BID) for Orpington**

- 2.7 Throughout January and early February, the BID Team worked closely with the BID Working Group, in preparation for the BID Ballot which took place on 21 February. Much of the work involved keeping track of the 346 ballot papers that had been issued by Bromley Electoral Services, making contact with the voters to ensure that they had the correct papers and encouraging ratepayers to vote. The result was announced on 22 February: 54% of votes were in favour, representing 60% of the rateable value – on a 48% turnout. Much of the remainder of the Quarter has been spent on finalising legal agreements and other arrangements in preparation for the BID Company to go 'live' in April 2013.

## **2.8 Environmental Issues**

- 2.9 During Quarter 4 environmental audits have taken place in a number of the towns including – with issues arising being pursued by the relevant TCMs, mostly involving liaison with colleagues in Environmental Services.

## **2.10 Vacant Units**

- 2.11 A verbal update will be provided about current town centre vacancy rates at the meeting.
- 2.12 As part of the Outer London Fund investment in Bromley town centre, the Foxton's-leased double-fronted shop in East Street will be treated with a vinyl design to highlight both heritage and the future plans for the area. Another unit in the pedestrian area is also expected to be treated soon under the same scheme.
- 2.13 TCM are engaging landlords for other vacant units across the borough to press for the installation of shop window vinyls or temporary use for displays / pop up shops.

## **2.14 Beckenham and West Wickham Working Group**

- 2.15 Officers are working on implementation of short term improvements to Beckenham Town Centre following the recommendations agreed by the Beckenham & West Wickham PDS Working Group. The next meeting of this Working Group will be the last as most elements of the improvement project are now at implementation stage. It has been agreed that a permanent Beckenham Town Centre Team will be established from the summer – which will involve a wide range of stakeholders for the town. The Town Centre

Manager will play a key role in helping to establish this Team and in coordinating its agenda going forward.

## **2.16 Local Parades Initiative**

2.17 Work has been ongoing to respond to applications from local areas for funding from the Local Parades Initiative. Because a fewer than expected number of applications have been received to date, the geographic criteria for the scheme was adjusted in February (with approval from the Council's Renewal & Recreation Portfolio Holder) to include many of the medium sized centres, such as Chislehurst, Petts Wood and Penge. At present work is ongoing to finalise improvements at Sundridge Park Parade and Keston Village and officers are working up a scheme for Anerley Hill. Other areas recently expressing an interest in the scheme are Coney Hall, Clock House and Chislehurst.

## **2.18 Business Support Programme**

2.19 As part of the Outer London Fund programme for Bromley, the Council has commissioned ActionCoach to deliver a programme of support, including workshops, business planning sessions and mentoring. The programme was launched in February and will run to the end of 2013. During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 1 business planning session and 1 workshop (on business sales) took place with 34 business owners in attendance. To date 7 business owners have signed up to the mentoring programme.

2.20 The Bromley TCM continues to work closely with the Bromley North Town Team and thanks to Mayor of London funding has commissioned the design of a special map to promote the Bromley North area which will be used on leaflets and promotional goods during the next year.

## **3. PLANS FOR QUARTER 1 2013/14**

3.1 The Town Centre Management & Business Support team's main priorities for Quarter 1 of 2013/14 will be as follows:

- Assisting with the set up of the Orpington 1<sup>st</sup> BID Company – including concluding all required legal agreements and arrangements for BID levy collection. As a consequence of the BID ballot success there will be changes to the structure of the team, and the responsibilities of its individual members, from April.
- Engaging with and strengthening partnerships with local businesses and other town centre stakeholders. There will be a focus on developing Town Teams or similar partnership bodies for Bromley and Beckenham.
- Undertaking initial consultation and feasibility work for possible BID proposal in both Bromley and Beckenham town centre, and formulating a strategy for implementation of further BIDs across the borough.

- Leading on Town Centre Management elements of the short term improvements programme for Beckenham, working with Town Centre Development on capital projects.
- Continue delivery of the events programme across the borough including a major Fashion Week in Bromley in May and a HG Wells themed heritage event in September in Bromley town centre (funded by the Mayor of London) and a new local produce market for Beckenham in May. The team will also be working with the Town Centre Development Team on a project to activate the space between the Church House Gardens and the High Street in Bromley during the summer.
- Continue to guide and promote the Action Coach business support programme for Bromley Town Centre.
- Maintain regular business communication channels and publications – including the business e-bulletin, distribution and promotion of the Bromley Business Guide and Directory (2013/14 edition) and the 2013 edition of the 'A to Z Guide to Services for Business'. The Council will be represented at the 2013 Bromley Business Expo event at the Warren in June.
- Work with local commercial property agents to develop a joint campaign to promote Bromley as a location for commercial space occupiers, including a possible promotional event.