

**Decision Maker:** **RENEWAL AND RECREATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date:** **Tuesday 11 June 2013**

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

**Title:** **TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT UPDATE JUNE 2013**

**Contact Officer:** Martin Pinnell, Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support  
Tel: 020 8313 4457    E-mail: martin.pinnell@bromley.gov.uk

**Chief Officer:** Nigel Davies, Executive Director for Environment and Community.

**Ward:** (All Wards);

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1. Reason for report

Members have requested a regular update on Town Centre Management and business support activities. This report covers activities which have taken place since the previous update to Members in February 2013, and also summarises the priorities for Quarter 2 2013/14.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**Members of the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee are asked to note the key developments which have taken place in the Town Centre Management & Business Support team as outlined in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.7 below and also to note activities summarised in APPENDIX 1 of this report.**

## 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 2013/14: £387k
  2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost £65.4k
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Town Centre Management
  4. Total current budget for this head: £65.4k, £38k, £42.5k, £8k & £233k
  5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2012/13, OLF 2 funding, S106 resources and funding set aside in an earmarked reserve
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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: Not Applicable: No decisions are requested by this report
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## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
- 

## Ward Councillor Views

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

### **3. COMMENTARY**

- 3.1 The Town Centre Management and Business Support service exists to maintain and enhance the competitiveness, attractiveness and vibrancy of the borough's town centres – and to support businesses across the borough. 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, sponsorship, high street promotions and attractions, and grants (e.g. The Mayor of London's Outer London Fund).
- 3.2 Highlights of the TCM and Business Support work programme in recent months is provided as APPENDIX 1. However, Members attention is drawn to key changes in the following paragraphs.

#### **ESTABLISHMENT OF ORPINGTON BID**

- 3.3 At the last PDS Committee meeting it was reported verbally that the ballot of Business Rate payers to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) for Orpington town centre had been successful. The results were announced on 22 February by Bromley Electoral Services, which ran the ballot in strict accordance with the BID regulations and electoral best practice. 164 valid ballot papers were received (representing a 48% turnout), of which 88 were in favour – which provided a 54% majority. These 88 votes in favour represented properties with an aggregate rateable value of £2.9m – 60% of all the properties represented in the ballot. On this basis, the proposed BID passed the necessary democratic requirements to start operating officially from 1 April 2013 for a term of 5 years.
- 3.4 The BID Board has formed and currently consists of six Directors, plus two co-opted members from the Council – Cllr William Huntington-Thresher and the Head of Town Centre Management & Business Support, who attend meetings in an advisory capacity only. With the initial assistance from Council officers the BID Board is setting up the necessary systems to collect the BID levy (set at 1.5% of the rateable value of each property per annum), to manage its finances effectively, and ensure there is robust and representative decision-making structures in place. The BID Board is also seeking to recruit an executive manager who will manage the organisation and deliver the projects and services as set out in the BID Proposal document.

#### **STAFFING CHANGES**

- 3.5 As outlined in previous reports to the R&R PDS and to the Executive on the subject of the Orpington BID, the establishment of the BID in Orpington has personnel implications, in that the Council will no longer be required to provide a Town Centre Management service in that town centre. For this reason, one post has been deleted with effect from 1 April. The previous incumbent of this post has now started duties in the role of Town Centre Manager for Beckenham and will also take on responsibility for Penge from July 2013. As part of the Council's commitment to assist the BID in its start up phase, 18 hours per week of this officer's time has also been placed at the disposal of the BID Board until the end of June 2013. The previous Town Centre Manager for Beckenham and Penge is now on a short term contract to cover duties in Penge until these temporary arrangements have ceased. In addition one administrative post has been deleted from the team as part of 2013/14 budget options previously agreed with Members. It is therefore expected that by the end of July 2013, that the Town Centre Management and Business Support team will consist of 3 full time officers only (down from 5 full time posts in July 2012).

## **TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT IN SMALL TOWN CENTRES**

3.6 It is in this context that the responsibilities for the Town Centre Managers have been reviewed by management. The main focus of their work will continue to be the three remaining large managed town centres – Beckenham, Bromley and Penge. Additionally, Town Centre Managers will continue to assist a number of smaller town centres, and are also taking primary responsibility for the implementation of the Local Parades Improvement Initiative – with schemes in progress or proposed for a number of locations, including Anerley Hill, Chislehurst, Clock House, Coney Hall, Hayes, Keston, Penge and Sundridge Park. However, in the light of the staffing changes outlined in paragraph 3.5, the role which will be played for the small towns will need to change. The towns which have traditionally received a Town Centre Management input are as follows:

- Biggin Hill
- Chislehurst
- Hayes
- Mottingham
- Petts Wood
- St Mary Cray
- West Wickham

In each of these locations the emphasis will now be on encouraging local residents and traders groups (where these exist) to take primary responsibility for organisation of local events, promotions and Christmas lights initiatives, with the Town Centre Managers taking more of an advisory and signposting role only. This is already the case with many of the above town centres – but some have historically required more time and attention than others. From now it is expected that the role of the TCMs will change to be much less hands-on for all the smaller centres – and they also will have much reduced availability for attendance at local meetings. Responsibilities for liaison with specific towns for each small town centre will be reallocated in response to the staffing changes – and these changes will be communicated to relevant business groups and other key stakeholders in each of these towns during summer 2013.

## **FUTURE STRATEGY FOR BIDS**

3.7 With the success of the BID campaign and ballot in Orpington, the major focus of the Town Centre Management and Business Support team will be to encourage the formation of new BIDs in the other major towns. This will require intensive engagement with all key stakeholders in each of the towns, especially with Business Rate payers and their representatives. During the coming 3 months the team will be undertaking some initial feasibility work to identify the potential for BIDs in Beckenham and Bromley, and will come back to the Portfolio Holder and the R&R PDS Committee with a report on options for taking the programme forward at the 1 October meeting of the Committee.

## **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

The activities of the Town Centre Management and Business Support Team are resourced through various funding streams, summarised as follows:

### Funding available for TCM and Business Support Activities

<b>Funding type</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Town Centre Management Initiative Fund	65
Grant to Orpington BID	38
Outer London Fund	43
S106 funding	8
Earmarked Reserve re Local Parade improvements	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Legal, Personnel
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Town Centre Management Initiative Fund report to R&R PDS Committee 26/2/13 (DRR13/034)