

1. Summary of activities November to January 2014/15

1.1 Business Improvement Districts

- i. Since the Grant Agreement with the **Bromley BID Working Group** was finalised, the Working Group has appointed a specialist consultant Central Management Solutions (CMS) to undertake the work programme required to bring the proposed BID to a ballot in October / November 2015. Work is now nearly complete on the Feasibility Stage – which includes a review of the business rates data and some light touch consultation which is expected to confirm the results of the Council’s own initial feasibility work. In addition, work has started on developing the key legal agreements (Baseline and Operating Agreements) which will underpin the future relationship between the Council and the BID. Discussions have also begun with regards to the operation of the ballot and the development of a levy system in the event the ballot is successful.
- ii. Once the results of the feasibility study are received by the BID Working Group (expected early Feb), they will then launch an in–depth consultation which will seek to understand the issues for the town centre, and the aspirations of the businesses that could potentially be met through a BID. The results of the BID consultation and a draft Bromley BID Proposal are expected to be available in spring / early summer 2015.
- iii. The Council continues to maintain direct contact with the **Orpington 1st BID** Board through the attendance of non–voting members Cllr William Huntingdon–Thresher and the Head of Town Centre Management & Business Support. Recent Orpington BID project highlights include:
 - Initiating a partnership with the Police which has seen the formation of a dedicated town centre team – part funded by the BID.
 - Occupation of an office building on the High Street – which has started to function not only as the BID HQ but also as an enterprise hub and meeting point for local businesses and also a touch–down point for the new town centre Police team.
 - Joint purchasing opportunities for BID members through partnership with Meercat procurement specialists – to help businesses save money
 - Christmas Celebration event took place on 20 Nov involving a road closure at the southern end of the High Street to create a space for

stalls, entertainment and children's activities and a viewing point for a fireworks display.

1.2 Vacant units

Beckenham 11.0% (Dec 14) – *c.f. 9.1% (June 14)*

Bromley 11.8% (Nov 14) – *c.f. 12.8% (May 14)*

Orpington BID area 15.2% (Jan 15) – *c.f. 15.2% (Sept 14)*

Penge 8.1% (April 14) – *c.f. 7.4% (May 13)*

GB average 13.2%

Data source: Local Data Company

1.3 Local Parades Improvement Initiative Fund

During the past 3 months work has been ongoing to implement improvement projects in various areas including:

- Anerley Hill – Improvements to the frontage and signage for the Crystal Palace Museum.
- Chislehurst, High Street and Belmont Parade – a deep clean of pavements has taken place.
- Chislehurst, Royal Parade – grant to upgrade Christmas lights
- Clockhouse – improvements to damaged shop frontage, a deep clean and upgraded litter bin installation planned.
- Coney Hall – installation of planters has taken place – with some other work pending a possible change to parking and loading bays, which is under consideration by local traders and ward Councillors.
- Hayes Village, The Street – improvement to frontage of village hall and new bins.
- Hayes, Station Approach – community noticeboards, repair to car park entrances and deep clean of the pavement from Station area and round into Bourne Way.
- Keston – Permanent planters installed. Bid for planting of permanent Christmas tree not successful due to conservation restrictions to planting which can take place on the Common. However, temporary Christmas lights were installed for 2014.
- Mottingham, Kimmeridge Cross – planters, community noticeboards and benches.

In each case, Town Centre Managers have been assisting local groups to identify costs and explore feasibility for a variety of projects. Since 2012 £208.7k has been spent or committed on projects in various locations. There is an additional £7.2k allocated to be spent this financial year and another £34.1k to be spent in future years (mostly 2015/16). All the original £250k has now been authorised for expenditure on projects in various locations.

1.4 Bromley town centre

The Town Centre Management Team has led on an initial review of the operation, location and offer of the town's 3 day market, the results of which were reporting to Councillors at a Committee in November. Members agreed to fund, from a section 106 allocation, a second stage of the review which will involve market research and consultation, design of a new market for a new location and the development of a tender for the possible contracting out of the market operation. A market research agency and a specialist markets consultancy are expected to be appointed by end of January to assist officers with the project. The outcome of the review and options for the future shape, location and operation of the market will be reported to Members for a decision on implementation in June.

The Bromley North Village improvement works were mainly complete by end of November 2014 and Market Square, High Street and East Street were clear of contractors for the Christmas period. Market Square was able to play host to Bromley's Christmas lights switch on event and Christmas Village.

1.5 Beckenham town centre

The Town Centre Manager continues to support the Town Centre Team and the Beckenham Member Working Group in their role of guiding and consulting on the design of the major TfL scheme currently in development. A number of short term improvements complementary to this scheme are in the process of being implemented following the allocation of £47k from a section 106 agreement. During the past quarter, the Town Centre Manager has:

- Coordinated the development of the Purple Flag project – which is about developing a programme to promote improvements to safety in the evening economy in partnership with colleagues in Public Protection, licenced premises and other partners (e.g. Street Pastors).
- Developed and supported a programme of networking evenings for retailers, with an event hosted at an art gallery and a bookshop.

- Supported the Beckenham Business Association (BBA) in outreach to retailers with the aim of increasing the number of high street businesses in the BBA membership
- Assisted with the organisation of the Christmas event in partnership with Beckenham Town Centre Team.
- Secured sponsorship in kind and in cash from Waitrose and Sainsbury and other parties to support events.

1.6 Penge town centre

During the past quarter the Town Centre Manager has:

- Brought together various stakeholders to create a Town Centre Team for Penge which has now been formed and recognised by the Association of Town and City Management
- Discussed ideas with local groups for potential High Street Fund bids for Penge
- Delivered the Penge Christmas event, involving for the first time the Bridge House theatre
- Helping to promote the new location and facilities at the library through organising a complementary event in Empire square which coincided with official opening
- Liaising with the new owners of the Goldsmiths Arms to establish links for future events and joint promotion when the pub re-opened
- Liaising with the GLA appointed 00 architects on ideas for development of future projects

1.7 Events

- i. Poppies were installed in trees and lamp columns in Bromley in the 2 weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday.
- ii. The Town Centre Management Team working with local partners coordinated the following Christmas events:
 - Beckenham – Saturday 29 November
Featuring a Candle-lit parade down the length of the High Street, children’s fun fair, entertainment on stage, food stalls, Santa, carol singing and mince pies. Estimated of number of attendees: 1,500
 - Penge – Thursday 20 November

Featuring Christmas stalls, Santa and entertainment on stage, appearance of pantomime dames from Bridge House Theatre. Estimated number of attendees: 1,000

- Bromley Town Centre – Sunday 30 November
Featuring the annual Santa Dash (in partnership with MyTime Active) entertainment from 12 noon, festive stalls, an appearance from the Churchill Theatre Panto Stars, Christmas parade starting with reindeer and Father Christmas, lights switch on with snow, glitter and light show.
Estimated number of attendees: 20,000.

It should be noted that only part of the costs for these large scale events were met through Council budgets, with the remainder funded through commercial sponsorship and other third party contributions.

The Town Centre Managers also played a part in assisting and advising the organisers of the following festive events across the borough:

- Biggin Hill (New Life Church) – Saturday 22 November
Featuring entertainment, mulled wine and mince pies
- Chislehurst (Royal Parade) – Sunday 23 November
Featuring Christmas market, food, entertainment and a raffle
- Chislehurst (High Street) – Saturday 29 November
Featuring mulled wine, Father Christmas, popcorn, roasted chestnuts and entertainment.
- Hayes (New Inn, Station Approach) – Saturday 22 November
Featuring Santa's grotto, stalls and entertainment
- Orpington (High Street) – Thursday 20 November
Featuring Santa and his reindeer, lantern parade, fairground rides, Christmas market stalls, entertainment and a fireworks display.
- Petts Wood – Saturday 29 November, 1–6pm
Featuring stalls, rides, entertainment and fireworks at 6pm.

- iii. Festive Impact Lighting Ltd won the contract to install festive lights in Beckenham, Bromley, Chislehurst, Coney Hall, Orpington, Penge and Sundridge Park on behalf of the Council for 2014 and the Town Centre Management team have managed and monitored the delivery of this contract throughout the festive season. Some of the smaller town centres also independently procured and installed Christmas lights displays for the 2014/15 season.

1.8 Business Support Programme

- i. Town Centre Management has continued to work closely with various organisations to ensure that there continues to be a programme of support and networking opportunities for local businesses. The events are organised without any financial subsidy from the Council – but rely on offering third parties free use of space, promotion via our networks and officer time.
- ii. Following the June 2014 ‘Bromley Means Business’ Expo hosted at the Civic Centre further feedback was requested from participants. On the basis of positive feedback provided by attendees and stall holders, officers are in discussions with London Means Business about hosting another Bromley Means Business Expo on 16 June 2015, possibly utilising the Great Hall.
- iii. Following the re-launch in October of the Bromley Business Growth Club (operated in partnership with ActionCoach) two further sessions (on 25 November and 23 January) have taken place with further monthly events planned for the rest of 2015.
- iv. The TCM and Business Support Team have also worked closely with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales (ICAEW) and Metro Bank to run joint business workshop events, hosting a well-attended session on 14 January in a Committee Room, and 2 more sessions are planned for April and June.
- v. The Town Centre Team assisted with the marketing and organisation of the Mayor of Bromley’s first Business Networking Reception in the Old Palace on 27 November – which was successful in drawing a range of business people from across the borough to network and hear about the Mayor’s chosen charities.
- vi. The bi-monthly Business e-Bulletin has changed its format and is now being hosted and managed on behalf of the Council by a local e-marketing agency. At present just over 3000 businesses are sent the bulletin every other month, with the next issue published in mid-January.

1.9 Business and Traders Group liaison

In addition to the main town centre activities, the Town Centre Management team has maintained links, providing support and advice where required to a number of traders and town centre groups across the borough. As discussed in 1.1 the Town Centre Management team maintains direct links to the Orpington 1st BID through both formal and informal meetings.

2. Key priorities for the Town Centre Management & Business Support Team from January 2015 to March 2015

The Town Centre Management & Business Support team's main priorities for this period will be:

- 2.1 Encourage and support the Bromley BID Working Group in engaging with businesses across the town centre to consult on a potential BID – including assisting with joint communications. Coordinating the Council's internal officer team in responding to the development of the BID proposal as the project progresses – including agreement on protocols for the ballot, development of legal agreements and the framework for the levy billing process.
- 2.2 Support for the Beckenham Town Centre Team and the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group – including assisting with engagement with businesses and other town centre stakeholders on designs for the major TfL-funded scheme for Beckenham and also the Town Centre Team's High Street Fund alleyway improvement project – if successful. Working with colleagues in the Regeneration Team to deliver some other minor improvement projects including stage cover and infrastructure on Beckenham Green.
- 2.3 Coordination – in partnership with colleagues in Public Protection – the Purple Flag project to improve the safety of Beckenham's night time economy.

- 2.4 Coordination of the second stage of the review of Bromley markets to prepare for the possible relocation and refocussing of the Bromley market – and prepare for a possible tender for a commercial operator for Bromley town centre markets. The initial stages of this will be focussed on commissioning and overseeing appropriate market research and data gathering.
- 2.5 Finalise the majority of the remaining agreed projects for the Local Parades Improvement Initiative (LPII) or where the originally agreed projects have not been feasible, to obtain authorisations for the re-allocation of any unspent funding to other LPII projects.
- 2.6 Planning a programme of TCM-coordinated events and Christmas lights schemes in 2015 preparatory to a report to Members March 2015 for pre-scrutiny of a Portfolio Holder decision on allocation of the Town Centre Management Initiative Fund for 2015/16.
- 2.7 Preparation for delivery of the revenue elements of the New Homes Bonus funding which we expect to have been allocated to Penge and Orpington for expenditure in 2015/16 and 2016/17 (although not at this point confirmed in writing). If Orpington bid to the High Street Fund is successful (with results expected in early Feb), this team would be involved in developing and commissioning the business support aspects of that. This team will also support Penge Town Centre Team and Penge Traders Association and consult with these groups on initiatives for Penge.
- 2.8 Oversee the re-launch and promotion of the online Bromley Commercial Property Database.
- 2.9 Work with partner organisations to deliver a programme of support workshops and seminars for local existing businesses and start-ups – including hosting the Bromley Business Growth Club in partnership with Action Coach, workshops in partnership with ICAEW and MetroBank, a ‘Growth Accelerator’ showcase event and also possible business start-up seminars. Plan for the delivery of the Bromley Means Business Expo at the Civic Centre in June.
- 2.10 Undertake some initial liaison work with BDUK and other parties for the development of a possible joint project to introduce superfast broadband to certain rural parts of the borough.
- 2.11 Maintain regular business communication channels and publications – including the business e-bulletin, website content, including a new Bromley Business Directory (for publication in late 2015). The team will continue to engage with

businesses through attendance at various networking events, and also facilitate the Bromley Economic Partnership and the Commercial Property Agents Forum.