

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Date: 12th April 2011

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

Title: Bromley North Village Member Working Party Report

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Ward: Bromley Town Centre

1. REASON FOR THE REPORT

1.1 At the meeting of the Renewal and Recreation PDS on the 29th June 2010, Members agreed to establish a Working Group to work with stakeholders to develop key elements of the Bromley North Village Improvement Plan and that the findings from this Working Group would be reported back to a future meeting of this PDS. This report summarises back to the Renewal and Recreation PDS the progress that has been made on these key elements of the improvement plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Renewal and Recreation PDS note the work of the PDS Working Group on progressing Community Safety and Branding and Wayfinding issues and in particular note the future member overview provisions for the development of the wider improvement plan and Bromley North Village Public Realm Project.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: New policy. Bromley Town centre Area Action Plan Policy IA1 Bromley North Village Improvement Area.
 2. BBB Priority: Vibrant Thriving Town Centres.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head: £
 5. Source of funding:
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional):
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: TBC
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable. PDS Report
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Customer Impact

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

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: NA

3. COMMENTARY

Background

3.1 At the meeting of the Renewal and Recreation PDS on the 29th June 2010 Members considered and endorsed a report on the draft Bromley North Village renewal strategy and improvement plan. A copy of the original renewal strategy is attached at Appendix 1. The draft renewal strategy set out a 10 year vision for the area, supported by a series of objectives, which were to guide further renewal initiatives. Key elements of the improvement plan included:

- Public Realm Upgrade.
- Community Safety Issues.
- Branding and Wayfinding.

To support the development of the improvement plan and gain full stakeholder support Members of the Renewal and Recreation PDS agreed it should be the focus of a Renewal and Recreation PDS Working Group. This report provides a summary of the Group's findings. The Working Party was chaired by Cllr Sarah Phillips (R&R PDS chair) and included Cllrs, Huntington-Thresher, Payne, Mrs McMull, Harmer and Hastings.

Public Realm Upgrade

3.2 The BNVMWP received a scheme presentation and endorsed the concept design prior to the submission of the funding bid to Transport for London in September 2010. An update report on the successful outcome of the funding bid for the BNV Public Realm scheme was considered by the R&R PDS Committee on 15th February 2011.

3.3 The project is now in the design review stage and a number of Members presentations have already been held and a wider stakeholder event is programmed for early April for local businesses, residents and statutory stakeholders. The design programme also allows for a further two public consultation events in late May and late August 2011. The preliminary timetable is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Preliminary Detailed Design Programme

Stage	Tasks	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1	Procurement & internal discussions on design	■										
2	External discussions on design, modelling of traffic options, site investigations, data collection & update on concept design			■								
3	Outline designs, EqlA, safety audit & scheme costs					■						
4	Stakeholder and public consultation on design							■				
5	Detailed design									■		

3.4 It is was agreed at the R&R PDS Committee on the 15th February 2011 that the Town Centres Member Working Party (TCMWP) would be designated as the main Member forum for the public realm project and provide Member oversight and strategic guidance. Members of the Bromley North Village Member Working Party would be invited to attend the TCMWP for these considerations. R&R PDS and Executive meetings will continue to provide overall governance and approval of design and funding.

Community Safety Issues

- 3.5 One of the meeting of the BNVMWP focussed on community safety issues and the perceived fear of crime within the town centre, particularly at night. Inspector Murphy from the Police's town centre team, Pastor Jonathan McGill from the Bromley Street Pastors Initiative and Colin Newman the Council's Head of Community Safety were able to attend this session to discuss a range of issues and highlight the range of initiatives currently being implemented.
- 3.6 Inspector Murphy explained that more resources had recently been deployed to the High Street, East Street and Bromley North and that he was prepared to alter operational policing patterns to respond to any new demands. He stated that the police had the manpower and flexibility to respond to any change in policing demands in the town centre in the future. Inspector Murphy highlighted the long standing perception problem the town centre has, for although crime across Bromley had reduced by over 12%, it seemed that both residents and businesses still perceive that more crime and anti-social behaviour takes place in the town centre than is reported. Inspector Murphy acknowledged that there may be a degree of under reporting of crime but for a town its size and accessibility, the overall crime levels were low in the town and BNV and comparable to other town of a similar size.
- 3.7 Specific initiatives the police agreed to introduce include improving the engagement with residents and businesses in the town centre and Inspector Murphy agreed that the Town Centre team would undertake regular fortnightly visits to businesses in BNV. He also agreed that they would include an article, as part of the regular Safer Neighbourhood newsletter, to highlight the level of town centre crime and place it into perspective.
- 3.8 A number of other issues were identified including the need for the public realm improvement scheme to address the issue on anti-social urination in alleyways and other public spots at the weekend and better lighting of alleyways.

Branding and Wayfinding

- 3.9 One of the key issues that was highlighted by the research undertaken to inform the concept design for the public realm, was the degree of isolation experienced by BNV businesses in relation to the main town. In many ways businesses in BNV were invisible to both shoppers and other businesses and suffered from having a low profile. Whilst the proposed public realm improvements should address some of the physical barriers causing this isolation and provide some impetus for change, there needs be a significant input from the BNV business community to play its part in developing their own business led initiatives.
- 3.10 Initial branding ideas have focussed on exploiting the leisure offer in BNV, based around the offer of 23 restaurants, 8 pubs and bars, 2 night clubs, the cinema and theatre. Local businesses were invited to provide their input on branding and wayfinding ideas directly to the BNVMWP. Following on from this session, the Council's town centre management team, working with local businesses providing financial sponsorship, produced the inaugural BNV 'What's On, Where ?' leisure map, which was circulated to local businesses and residential properties in the areas adjacent to BNV area. Work is continuing with local businesses to

further develop the unique business brand and develop further the idea of the Village concept and offer.

- 3.11 One of the key issues impacting on how successfully the town centre as a whole is used is the quality of information available, especially to pedestrians. Research has illustrated that a majority of the shoppers and workers using the town have very established patterns and tend to stick to a very narrow circuit, which mirrors the pedestrian areas. In many instances the lack of clear signage or other clear wayfinding materials restricts choice and more importantly the opportunity for these groups to explore the full extent of the town. This is true of the businesses in BNV, as it is of the wonderful open spaces of Queen’s Gardens or Churchill Gardens. There is a particular problem at the points of access into the town especially at Bromley North and South stations and the main car parks. The current signage does not work, it is a mishmash of styles and formats and is not based on any recent research or analysis.
- 3.12 The BNVMWP received information around the “Legible London” pedestrian wayfinding system, which has been adopted by Transport for London as their Pan-London standard. (Large scale examples will be available at the R&R PDS Meeting) The system was previously successfully piloted in Central London and Richmond and Twickenham town centres. The approach is based on sophisticated analysis, producing a base map and strategy that underpins a comprehensive orientation/signage system for the town centre, enabling pedestrians and users to locate the main points of interest, transport interchanges and retail offer within the town. A summary of the Pilot Scheme evaluation Summary is attached as Appendix 2. TfL had indicated that they would wish to see the system rolled out across all the main Metropolitan Centres in London as an example for good practice. To facilitate this they have commissioned a Pan-London base map and are committed to funding and undertaking the preliminary design work identified above. Work has already commenced in Kingston and Croydon town centres and a site visit has been arranged for Bromley town centre.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The development of the Renewal Strategy and Improvement Plan are entirely consistent with Policy Objectives set out in Building A Better Bromley 2011 and Renewal & Recreation Portfolio Plan 2010/11.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None for the purpose of this report.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

Non-Applicable Sections:	LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Bromley North Village Renewal Strategy Legible London - Pilot Scheme Evaluation Summary