

BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Meeting:	Economic Partnership
Date:	12 July 2011
Subject:	Update report on activities for Town Centre Management and Business Support
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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 1st quarter 2011/12
- 1.2 Note and endorse the plans for Town Centre Management and Business Support activity during the next quarter.

2. Town Centre Management

- 2.1 For Town Centre Management the main priorities have been:
 - Delivery of spring events
 - Finalise Christmas lights policy for 2011 – and run outreach campaign to encourage increased business donations
 - Undertake informal consultation with businesses on the possible introduction of BIDs in Orpington town centre
 - Continue environmental monitoring and improvements
 - Initiate review of town centre markets, promotions and entertainments

In addition the TCM team have maintained regular communications with businesses through newsletters and email updates and have contributed to projects led by other sections of the Council, for example the Bromley North Village improvement strategy.

- 2.2 Town Centre events successfully delivered during the quarter include a Bromley 'Easter Egg-stravaganza' (April) and Festival of Sport (June), a French Market and Spring Fair on Beckenham Green (including a

Community Safety promotion), a topping out ceremony for the new Orpington Library and TCMs also supported the Petts Wood May Fayre. In addition, local business forums were supported through the organisation of business networking meetings in all four main towns, with the Beckenham Business Association being re-launched in April. The TCM for Orpington also launched the Orpington's Finest Competition in partnership with the Orpington Business Forum.

- 2.3 At the April meeting of the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee Councillors opted for a change to the policy on Christmas lights so that the Council would only fund up to half the costs of lights schemes on the basis of match funding contributions from businesses and residents. Following that decision Town Centre Managers wrote to around 2000 businesses across the 4 main town centres to publicise this decision and encourage donations from the businesses. TCMs also made direct approaches to a number of businesses, including larger employers in these town centres, and also contacted residents associations. At time of writing the level of donations either paid or promised has been quite disappointing, with all towns likely to see at best a much reduced scheme (in the case of Bromley and Orpington) or at worst no Christmas lights at all (probable in the case of Beckenham and Penge).
- 2.4 An initial feasibility study on the potential for the establishment of Business Improvement District (BID) for Orpington was undertaken on behalf of the Council in March 2011 – and the results of this were encouraging to explore the options for a BID further. As a result presentations from industry experts, on what BIDs are and how they can help revitalise a business area such as a town centre, were given during this quarter - first to the Orpington Town Centre Steering Group and then to the Orpington Business Forum. Audience reaction to the presentations suggests that the idea should be pursued further, and preparations are now underway work with local business leaders to initiate a formal BID campaign.

3. Business Support

- 3.1 For the Council's Business Support team the focus of the fourth quarter has been on:
- Promotion and distribution of the new Bromley Business Guide and Directory.
 - Revision of the Business web pages on the revamped Council website to improve content and navigation
 - Publication and promotion of the 'Explore Bromley Borough' visitor guide
 - Work with Communications and external consultant for publication of borough Invest Bromley brochure.
 - Liaison with local commercial property agents through forum meeting
 - Ensure publication of an edition of the Bromley Business E-bulletin and promote the wider take up of the service.

- Follow up and support for emerging Cray Avenue Business Forum
- Monitor delivery and take up of High Growth Coaching Scheme
- Promotion of new electronic 'A to Z Guide to Local Services for Business' publication in partnership with News Shopper

Further detail on some of these key projects is provided below. In addition the Town Centre Management and Business Support team have contributed to the delivery of projects led by other Council sections, for example the Local Economic Assessment / Core Strategy.

- 3.2 Following the estate meeting on the St Mary Cray industrial estate, facilitated by Soloman, a committee of local businesses was formed during April to decide on the priorities and modus operandi of the new Cray Avenue Business Forum. This development has been supported by the Town Centre Management and Business Support team, who have provided information on issues of interest – for example the Nugent Centre Parking Review.
- 3.3 The final delivery of the 'Bromley Business Guide and Directory' was unfortunately delayed but delivery of the book (and accompanying CD-ROM directory) to the Council took place in May, and distribution via a number of Council service points (e.g. Libraries), partner agencies and other local facilities (e.g. Hotels) is taking place and should be complete by July. The directory has also been direct mailed to the top 100 or so larger employers in the borough.
- 3.4 Some technical issues have forced the delay in publication of the 'Explore Bromley Borough' map and guide. However, it is expected that these will be resolved and the publication available on the website, and widely promoted during July.

4. Proposed activities for the Town Centre Management and Business support service.

- 4.1 The key priorities for Town Centre Management during the 2nd quarter of 2011/12 include:
- Developing proposals for inclusion in area based bids to the Mayor's Outer London Fund (July) and then starting delivery of funded projects once outcome is known (mid-August).
 - Continue informal consultation and project on potential BID for Orpington, including a visit to comparable BID town, and preparation for a report to Councillors (for October) requesting the support of the Council for initiation of formal process.
 - Undertake a review of Markets, Promotions and Rides in town centres for presentation of a report to Councillors on options for future management and locations
 - Delivery of Summer events – including new Orpington library official opening combined with Big Dance event in Orpington (July), a Street Theatre Festival in Bromley in September, and ongoing preparation for

2012 Queens Jubilee events. Potentially this events programme could be augmented with support from the Outer London Fund.

- Work with colleagues in Town Centre Development, Cathedral Group and Studio Egret West to support and integrate a promotional and consultation programme around proposed Westmoreland Road development and Bromley North Village scheme.
- Finalise campaign for business donations to the Christmas lights schemes for 2011 and start to procure lights and trees
- Development of town centres community safety partnership with Police and Shop Safe – including upgrade of system
- Proposals to potential sponsors for core funding or support for specific events / projects.
- Maintain vigilance on environmental issues
- Continue to work with local business groups to encourage participation

4.2 The key priorities for Business Support during quarter 2 include:

- Develop inward investment plan for Bromley North Village – with possible additional funding from the Outer London Fund.
- Work with Communications and external consultant for publication of borough Invest Bromley brochure. Also help to shape and promote the Invest Bromley event (20 Sept)
- Continue promotion and distribution of the new Bromley Business Guide and Directory
- Continue revision of the Business web pages on the revamped Council website to improve content and navigation
- Publication and promotion of the delayed 'Explore Bromley Borough' visitor guide
- Liaison with local commercial property agents through forum meeting
- Ensure publication of two editions of the Bromley Business E-bulletin and promote the wider take up of the service.
- Follow up and support for emerging Cray Avenue Industrial Estate business group.