

Minutes

Business and Town Centres Committee Wednesday, 15 October, 2014

Attendance

Cllr Kendall (Chair)	Cllr Quirk
Cllr Keeble (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Reed
Cllr Hossack	Cllr Russell
Cllr Mrs Murphy	Cllr Ms Sanders
Cllr Newberry	Cllr Sapwell

Also Present

Cllr Baker
Cllr Barrett
Cllr Hirst
Cllr Parker
Mike Hawkins – Chief Executive of Brentwood Chamber of Commerce
Clive Othen - Chair of Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group

Officers Present

Ashley Culverwell	Head of Borough Health Safety and Localism
Gordon Glenday	Head of Planning and Development
Anne Knight	Economic Development Manager
Tracey Lilley	Community Safety Manager
Chris Potter	Monitoring Officer & Head of Support Service
Elaine Richardson	Town Centre Development Co-ordinator
Jean Sharp	Governance and Member Support Officer

176. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the 16.7.2014 Business and Town Centres Committee meeting were approved as a correct record with the addition under Minute 90 (Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group Terms of Reference and Workplan 2014/15) that Members had agreed to the transfer of £5,000 from the Renaissance Group Budget to the Business and Town Centres Committee budget to be used for Economic Development.

177. Apologies for Absence

There were none.

178. Verbal Update from the Chair

The Chair advised the Committee:

- Free parking days savings/MSCP cleaning: at the previous meeting it had been suggested that the £3600 savings from the Free Parking Days be spent on cleaning the Multi Storey car park.

Work had commenced on a number of areas around the car parks, including a deep clean of the lift and the funding would assist with the improvements to the foyer areas around the lifts and some of the shrub areas in Chatham Way car park.

- Update on car park revenues: parking revenue had improved due to the increased usage of the car parks and further improvement was anticipated with the signing of an agreement with IFDS for the use of the car parks.
- Night time charging in car parks would be introduced from Monday 20 October 2014. Usage would be monitored and an update given at the February 2015 B &TC Committee meeting.
- Brentwood Night time Action Group: a meeting was to be convened to consider the future of BNAG and a possible merger with the Renaissance Group.
- Business rate relief: Members were advised that the production of promotional material proposed at the previous meeting had resulted in a further 105 businesses applying for this rate relief
- Night-time survey: Members had requested that research be undertaken to survey the Night Time Economy, but the costs were found to be prohibitive in relation to identifying this economy and what outcomes and objectives could be achieved in terms of better support. There was no budget for this and the Chair had agreed with Cllr Sapwell (who had raised the issue) that it would not be undertaken at this time.

179. Presentation from the Chamber of Commerce

Mike Hawkins, Chief Executive of the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce gave a presentation on the work and relevance of the Chamber of Commerce to Brentwood businesses and traders. He confirmed that the Chamber welcomed traders from the whole of the Borough, not just the High Street.

The Chair requested that Mr Hawkins find out from members of the Chamber of Commerce in what ways the Council could assist Brentwood businesses.

Mr Hawkins was warmly thanked for his interesting and informative presentation, also for the positive contribution made by the work of the Chamber, much of which was undertaken voluntarily.

*(Cllr Kendall declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce;
Cllr Reed declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of Chamber events being held at the Brentwood Theatre by whom he was employed).*

180. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Policing Act 2014

The report before Members identified the challenges and opportunities faced by the Council under the new Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Policing Act. The Act received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014 and was to commence on 20 October 2014. The Act was designed to put victims at the heart of the response to anti-social behaviour and to give professionals the flexibility they needed to deal with any given situation

The overarching aim of the Act was to provide more effective powers to tackle ASB, protect victims and communities and treat the underlying behaviour of perpetrators. The new powers would impact both in terms of expectations on local Authorities, and the ability of Local Authorities to respond.

Member training related to the ASB Act had been arranged for 1 December 2014 and further information would be circulated to all Members.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendations in the report and following a full discussion it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Members:-

- 1. Note this report about the new Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Policing Act and the potential implications for the Council.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Heads of Health, Safety & Localism, Street Scene, Housing and Planning and officers nominated by them to enforce the anti-social behaviour and irresponsible dog ownership control powers given to this Council within the Act.**
- 3. Agree to this Council acting as the single point of contact for all ASB Case Reviews.**

4. Support member training seminars to get a good understanding of how these new powers could be used in Brentwood and to consider how other Essex City, Borough and District Councils intend to use them.

181. Business Directory Update

The report before Members provided an update on the Business Directory project and officers gave a further breakdown of the costs provided within the report.

The last Business Directory had been published in 2008 and it was considered important that an updated version be compiled in order that the Council could engage and communicate effectively with businesses within the Borough. A secure database had been populated and would be kept updated and Members suggested this could be utilised for other uses, eg tendering.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendation within the report and it was RESOLVED that Members agree to support the development of a comprehensive Business Directory for the Borough.

182. Brentwood Business Advice and Funding Event

The report before Members provided an update on the Brentwood Advice and Funding Event which was to take place on 29 October 2014 at Hutton Poplars Hall and which the Chair requested Members to support.

Members noted that regular meetings were to take place to discuss economic development issues between the BBC Leader and Acting Chief Executive and the relevant ECC Cabinet Member.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendation included in the report and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Members agree to support the Brentwood Business Advice and Funding Event and promote it .

183. Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group Workplan Update

The report before Members provided an update on the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2014/15 Workplan and Budget following agreement of the Annual Workplan at the 16 July 2014 Business and Town Centres Committee meeting.

The Renaissance Group Chair, Clive Othen, was in attendance at the meeting and Cllr Kendall advised Members that Mr Othen would attend future B&TC Committee meetings to give updates on the work of the Renaissance Group and thanked him for the work he had undertaken so far relating to the Group.

Members were advised that Trade Clusters were being established for the main retail areas in the Borough and Members requested a Cluster be set up for the row of shops in Ongar Road close to the Robin Hood pub and also for rural areas. Cllr Kendall advised that key trade area Clusters were being established then others would be considered.

Mr Othen advised that, following discussion with the Brentwood Nighttime Action Group (BNAG) it had been proposed that BNAG should form a Cluster Group to include representatives from the police, street pastors and town link radio and act in an advisory capacity to the Renaissance Group. However, the vice-chair of BNAG was in attendance and advised that BNAG was prepared to work with the Renaissance Group but not merge with it.

In light of the discussion, the Chair MOVED, Cllr Keeble SECONDED and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the item be deferred to the 16 December 2014 Business and Town Centres Committee meeting before which a meeting would have taken place with representatives from BNAG, Renaissance Group and relevant Members and Officers to propose a way forward.

(Cllr Reed declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of his involvement with Renaissance Group through his employment at Brentwood Theatre)

184. Termination of Meeting

In accordance with Rule 28 of Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, the business of the meeting not having concluded by two hours after its start, Members voted and agreed to continue with the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

185. Brentwood Schools Careers Event

Members were advised that meetings had been held with the Youth Strategy Group and Brentwood Learning Partnership to discuss the Council's support for a Schools Careers Fair to be held in February 2015.

This event had been organised previously by the Brentwood Learning Partnership (BLP) but due to budget cuts an application had been submitted by BLP for a Brentwood Council Community Grant of £3,500 to support the event in 2015 if it was to take place and if so, an additional £1,500 from the economic development budget was proposed to support the event.

Members were advised that some schools were undertaking their own careers fairs and therefore it might not be appropriate for the Brentwood Schools Careers Fair to continue as it had in the past. It was proposed that schools be approached to ascertain what assistance could be given and Cllr Kendall would report back on findings to Committee members.

Cllr Sapwell advised that additional funding may be available from the Youth Strategy Group to assist in careers events.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendations in the report and it was RESOLVED:

- 1. To support the principle of developing the Brentwood Schools Careers Fair subject to delivery by Brentwood Learning Partnership and other parties.**
- 2. To agree an estimated ED budget contribution of £1,500 subject to the event taking place.**

186. Council Apprenticeships Scheme

Members were advised that research had been undertaken to identify possible apprenticeship opportunities within the Council to increase the number of apprentices from the current two to six. Each apprenticeship would last for one year and it was proposed the scheme would continue for four years.

Members requested a breakdown of the costs provided within the report.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendations within the report and it was RESOLVED that:

- 1. To note the research undertaken to date to investigate the proposal for an Apprenticeship scheme for the Council.**
- 2. To agree to support the proposal in principle for four apprenticeships within the Council subject to the additional resources (£83,000) being agreed as part of the 2015/16 budget setting process.**

187. Termination of Meeting

During the preceding item, in accordance with Rule 28 of Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, the business of the meeting not having concluded by two hours after its start, Members voted and agreed to continue with the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

188. Alternative Markets for Brentwood

The report before Members provided an update on research into the provision of new types of market for Brentwood which would enhance the Borough's attractions, including a night time market, teenage market and continental style or Christmas market. The update was requested by Members at the Business and Town Centre Committee meeting held on 16.7.14.

Members were advised that Essex Farmers Markets would manage the proposed teenage market to ensure it was organised efficiently and there would be a vetting process. Legal implications would be investigated and feedback from schools would be requested on the proposal.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendations in the report and it was RESOLVED that:

- 1. The introduction of Teenage Markets be supported.**
- 2. It be recommended to Licensing Committee that there should be a concessionary license fee for teenage market stalls of £5.00 and this be reviewed after the market has been in operation for a period of nine months.**
- 3. The introduction of an Evening Market linked to night time economy promotional events be supported.**
- 4. Holding a German/Continental style Christmas market for 2015 be investigated**

189. Visitor Website

The report before Members provided an update on the research undertaken in relation to procuring, launching and promoting a new visitor website for Brentwood Borough.

Members expressed concern at the cost of the proposed website and suggested the information it would include could be found at other locations.

The Chair assured Members that the Committee would be given the opportunity to view the website before it was launched.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendations in the report and it was RESOLVED:

- 1. To support the proposal to commission and implement the visitor website, subject to future resourcing for the on-going promotion and servicing of this website being resolved.**
- 2. To agree that the final decision with regard to how this project was progressed would be determined by Council in March 2015 as part of the budget setting exercise.**

3. That a short presentation be made at the 16 December 2014 B&TC Committee meeting by Partners by Design on the proposed website for Members' information.

(Cllr Reed declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of his employment at Brentwood Theatre which would be included on the website).

190. Termination of Meeting

During the preceding item, in accordance with Rule 28 of Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, the business of the meeting not having concluded by two hours after its start, Members voted and agreed to continue with the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

191. Economic Development Update Report

The report before Members provided an update on progress with the Business Needs Survey, Brentwood for Growth, Essex Rivers LEADER bid, Low Carbon Grants for Business, superfast Essex Broadband Programme and Crossrail Economic Impact Study,

With regard to Brentwood for Growth, the Chair advised that he and Anne Knight were to meet with prospective members of the group to discuss its objectives before a decision was made whether it should re-convene.

The Chair thanked officers for their work in relation to the Council's economic development.

Cllr Kendall MOVED and Cllr Keeble SECONDED the recommendations in the report and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Members note the report and progress made on key initiatives and projects.