

15 October 2014

Business & Town Centres Committee

Brentwood Business Advice and Funding Event

Report of: *Anne Knight, Economic Development Manager*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Brentwood Business Advice and Funding Event.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 **It is recommended that members agree to support the Brentwood Business Advice and Funding Event and promote it to maximise attendance by businesses.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Brentwood Borough Council are jointly developing and hosting a business advice and funding event with Invest Essex's Innovation Team on the 29 October 2014, 2-6pm at Hutton Poplar Hall.
- 3.2 The event will see up to 16 providers of business advice, funding and support exhibit and present their services in a "market place" style arena, where businesses will be able to find out about what is on offer, receive advice, consult with providers and network.
- 3.3 The range of exhibitors invited includes Innovation Growth Team, Funding & Investment Team Essex County Council, Invest Essex, University of Essex, Anglian Ruskin University, NWES, MAS, Growth Accelerator, Low Carbon Business, Essex Skills Team, UKTI, Start-Up Loans, Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, FSB, local banks.
- 3.4 The event is free and businesses have the option of attending one of two sessions (2-4pm or 4-6pm) and can register using the following link <http://www.investessex.co.uk/events/access-to-finance-roadshow-brentwood/>

- 3.5 Where appropriate there will be opportunity for business to have one-to-one sessions with the exhibitors to find out more about the advice and grants on offer.
- 3.6 There is a joint campaign to promote the event to maximise business attendance, including PR, twitter, websites. Business forum, Council Members and Parish Council Clerks have also been asked to help promote the event. The new business directory will be utilised to issue invitations to businesses.
- 3.7 The event will be evaluated and an update provided to Committee, in order to consider having an annual or bi-annual event in the future.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 Different options for delivering this event were considered, but to ensure a strategic approach, minimise resource implications and strengthen partnership relations, the opportunity to deliver this event with the innovation team at Invest Essex has been pursued.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The Brentwood Business Event will provide coordinated advice on support and funding available to businesses as well as create effective opportunity for business engagement and networking. It supports the delivery of the Economic Development Strategy.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 This project supports the delivery of the Draft ED Strategy which has successfully undergone public consultation.
- 6.2 Key partners and business groups for each thematic work area are being consulted and engaged with project development.

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 Economic Development is a key priority to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities of sustainable economic development, promoting a mixed economic base across the Borough, maximising opportunities for retail and a balance night time economy. This includes:
- Facilitating the creation of new businesses
 - Assisting in the provision of advice and guidance for local businesses

- Working in partnership with the business community and support agencies
- Seeking inward investment into the Borough
- Assisting the SE LEP and Heart of Essex Partnership to secure projects and funding to benefit the Brentwood economy

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive

Tel & Email 01277 312712; jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 The event is estimated to require up to £2,000 of the ED budget to pay for the venue, set-up, refreshments and Brentwood business banner, subject to numbers attending. However Invest Essex has also indicated they may be able to provide some financial support and we are awaiting final confirmation of this amount. Invest Essex are providing the resource to undertake the PR and administration/registration for this event.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer

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- 8.2 None

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 8.3 None

9. **Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- 9.1 None

10. Appendices to this report

- 10.1 None

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