

**16 December 2014**

**Business and Town Centres Committee**

**Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group Workplan Update**

**Report of:** *Gordon Glenday, Head of Planning & Development*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2014/15 Workplan and Budget following agreement of the Annual Workplan at the Business and Town Centres Committee 16 July 2014.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That Members agree the updated Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2014/15 Workplan (Appendix A) and note the progress made on projects.**

**3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 This report provides an update on Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group (BB Renaissance Group) projects and budget as outlined in the updated 2014/15 Workplan.

**3.2 New Appointments**

Michael Hardy has accepted the new role of Environmental Auditor which will encompass the monitoring of Crossrail, Brentwood Environment, Brentwood Infrastructure and undertaking Street Audits. Alan Jefcoate, representing the Federation of Small Businesses, has replaced Michael Hardy as vice-chair.

**3.3 Local Trade Clusters**

Work has continued on the setting up of local business trade cluster groups to provide greater representation and access to bid funding for

traders in all retail sectors of the Borough. The Ingatestone Cluster has been formed since the last Business and Town Centres Committee meeting 15 October 2014.

The following Cluster Groups are formed or in the process of being formed:-

- i. Crown St./Roper's Yard, Brentwood (formed and up and running);
- ii. Ongar Road (formed and up and running);
- iii. Brentwood Town Centre – West End (under formation);
- iv. Brentwood Town Centre – East End (under formation);
- v. Brentwood Town Centre – Pubs and Clubs (talks underway);
- vi. Kings Rd., Brentwood (under formation);
- vii. Warley Hill Brentwood (not yet formed);
- viii. Pilgrims Hatch (under formation);
- ix. Upper Shenfield (formed and up and running);
- x. Central Shenfield (under formation);
- xi. Ingatestone (formed and up and running)

### **3.4 Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group Website**

The new website, [www.brentwoodrenaissance.co.uk](http://www.brentwoodrenaissance.co.uk) was successfully launched at the end of November, with the strap line, 'A Partner to Champion Growth in the Borough of Brentwood'. The website gives BB Renaissance Group a better window to explain who we are and what we do in support of the group's remit to encourage more shopping, visitors, and economic growth in the Borough. The site includes information on our objectives, partners, the support and funding of projects with case studies, cluster groups, meeting minutes, business resources and street audits. It is a great platform to promote Borough-wide community events such as Lighting Up and Small Business Saturday and to share information about retail activities. The site has a Twitter feed to post updates on local shopping offers and other retail and business news. Users can follow this account on @BwdRenaissance.

### **3.5 Public Realm**

Funds were agreed to update, improve and refurbish the directional finger post signs and noticeboards in Brentwood Town Centre to make it a more welcoming, attractive and easy to navigate environment for residents and visitors. A contract is being drawn up with Malcolm Lane signs for these works. This is being supported through the Head of Street Scene and Environment with the cleaning and maintenance of noticeboards, bins and clearing of areas that have grown into disrepair, by the Essex Rangers.

### **3.6 Crown Street Community Market**

As the market is planned to be weekly, and therefore subject to planning permission, talks have commenced with Planning Department regarding a

planning application. Permissions for market usage in the pedestrianised area are also being sought from Essex Highways. The Crown Street Cluster has decided not to implement a full market until planning permission is granted.

### **3.7 Events**

#### **Lighting Up**

Bid funding applications were agreed to support Christmas street and shop lighting in Upper Shenfield, Crown Street activities and entertainment and Santa's Helpers' Grotto for Lighting Up at the Chicken and Frog in Ongar Road. A bid was also agreed to support printed and online promotional materials for Ingatestone Christmas Victorian Evening. The evening is being organised by local traders and businesses, led by the Ingatestone and Fryerning Business Club, as the Parish Council were no longer arranging the event.

#### **Small Business Saturday**

In support of the second annual Small Business Saturday national event in the UK, bid funding was agreed for Crown Street, Ongar Road and Piccola in Brentwood High Street. Promotional activities and entertainment, including children's film characters, face painting and singers, were agreed to stimulate support and footfall for small businesses on 6<sup>th</sup> December and beyond.

#### **Street Pastors Mini Bus Project**

The Street Pastors are planning the purchase of a second hand minibus in the first quarter of 2015, to improve the servicing of the Night Time Economy. This would be placed in a central location near the High Street to provide the night time's most important support and safety function. Sawyers Church, a registered charity, has offered to own, service and store the mini-bus and for it to be used for other community projects. A contribution towards this of £5k was agreed in principal by BB Renaissance Group, if required and subject to a successful bid funding application. Funding support from other interested parties, including the Community Safety Partnership, churches and Night Time Economy businesses is also being sought. The Community Safety Partnership agreed a £5k contribution at their strategy panel meeting, 28 November 2014.

## **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 In addition to the budget for 2014/15 of £30,000, the Council resources the delivery and support for this plan.

## 4.2 Current Budgetary Position

Final allocation of the remaining £57,215 balance for 2014/15 will be carried out shortly as bids continue to be submitted and evaluated for agreement by Renaissance Group.

A budget bid for 2015/16 was submitted to the Council by the BB Renaissance Group Chair as requested at the Business and Town Centres Committee Meeting 16 July 2014.

## 5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To update the Committee on progress of the BB Renaissance Group Workplan and budget to provide greater transparency, access and accountability for the Group.

## 6. Consultation

- 6.1 All bid funds undergo appropriate scrutiny and accountability and require approval by the majority of members and by an authorised signatory, i.e. the Chair and Head of Service. For high profile projects, agreement is also obtained from Brentwood Borough Council Members.

## 7. References to Corporate Priorities

- 7.1 The BB Renaissance Group Workplan supports the Council's Corporate Priorities for:

***A Prosperous Borough-*** Promoting a mixed economic base across the borough, maximising opportunities in the town centres for retail.

## 8. Implications

### Financial Implications

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

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Brentwood Borough Council currently funds Renaissance Group £30k (revenue) as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 8.2 The Town Centre Development Coordinator is the lead officer who supports the BB Renaissance Group

### Legal Implications

**Name & Title:** Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

8.3 None

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

None

**10. Appendices to this report**

Appendix A - Workplan 2014/15

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