

23 February 2015

Business & Town Centres Committee

Economic Development Update Report

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 Low Carbon Grants for Business, Future Business Support Events and the Economic Development Graduate Internship.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That members note this report and the progress made on key initiatives.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 This report provides an update on various areas of the Economic Development activities of the Council.

Low Carbon Grants for Business

- 3.2 This is an ERDF EU funded programme, delivered by Groundwork on behalf of a number of local authority areas in Essex including Brentwood. The aim of the programme is to reduce the carbon footprint and improve business productivity. It is open to SMEs with grants of £1,000 available for small efficiency projects to improve lighting, ICT, fuel efficiency, heating, cooling or reduce waste and water use. Larger projects costing more than £4,000 can apply for a 30% grant.
- 3.3 Brentwood continues to work successfully with Groundwork in promoting the programme. On the 29 January 2015, the Economic Development Team attended award ceremonies for grants in the Borough to Three Little Piggies Cafe and to Schwartz Printing Ltd. £1,000 was awarded to Three Little Piggies Cafe towards a display fridge and chest freezer and £7,127 was awarded to Schwartz Printers Ltd towards lighting, double glazing and insulation. This has enabled t hree Little Piggies Café to reduce CO₂ emissions by nearly 4 tonnes per year and overhead cost by £450 per

annum. Schwartz Printing will reduce CO₂ by over 7 tonnes per year and overhead costs by over £1,500 annually.

- 3.4 To date a total of £52,285.00 of low carbon grant funding has been awarded to 10 businesses in Brentwood, £35,651.10 of which has been claimed. The remaining £16,633.90 is on target to be claimed by Brentwood businesses before April.

Pro-Actions Business Event

- 3.5 A free business briefing on Business Planning – Making your Business Grow, will be held on 25 February 2015 9am to 12.30pm at The Town Hall, Brentwood.
- 3.6 This will be the second in a series of free briefings that are being planned in partnership with Pro-Actions Ltd, business coaching experts. The briefing will outline the steps that businesses can take to make business planning effective for them and provide an opportunity for networking. The event will also provide an opportunity to introduce Brentwood Borough Council's Economic Development Team and our work to support businesses and key priorities.

Business Speed Networking Event

- 3.7 A Business Speed Networking Event is being planned for 18 March 2015 at the De Rougemont Manor Hotel. The event will be held early evening and will provide a forum to enable businesses to pitch to one another, network and facilitate opportunities for trading whilst supporting the local supply chain.
- 3.8 Sussex Business Bureau has been selected as the preferred supplier to deliver this event following a thorough tender exercise. Sussex Business Bureau has a good track record of delivering successful events across the South East of England. The event will be promoted via the Business Directory, PR and through partners such as Brentwood Chambers of Commerce, Pro-actions, Federation of Small Businesses and Renaissance Group who will be sponsoring the venue for the event.

Economic Development Graduate Internship

- 3.9 Working with the University of Essex, the Economic Development Team has successfully secured a graduate internship for 3 months. The post is funded by the University of Essex Graduate Internship Scheme.

There was a limited timescale to secure this internship with the University so to ensure this the recruitment for the role was undertaken during the last two weeks of December 2014 and first week in January 2015. We are delighted to announce that Susan Adetiloye, commenced employment with us on 19 January 2015 as Economic Development Assistant. Susan will support and assist on a variety of projects, but in particular the Business Directory and the Business Support Events during her three month internship.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 Different options for delivery are considered when scoping and developing economic development proposals and where necessary a recommendation for the preferred option provided.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The recommendations above are to support and drive forward the Economic Development Strategy and enable delivery of associated thematic priorities.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The Draft ED Strategy 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 Implementation of some of the thematic work areas will require support from the ED budget (£28k for 2014/15, including £15k reserves) and possible additional support from the Renaissance Group and their associated budget.

8.2 The current profiled ED budget and committed allocations for 2014/15 is:

Economic Development Budget- G408		28,000			
Projects	Activity Code	Budget Allocation	Actual to date	Remainder to spend	Notes
Cross rail Economic Impact Study	1058	3,517	0	3,517	Awaiting invoice
Business Event October 2014		960	960	0	Invoices received
Business Pop-up banners		209	209	0	Invoice received
Business Directory/CRM Phase 1		6,150	6,150	0	Invoice received
Business Directory/CRM Phase 2		6,664	0	6,664	To be commissioned
Visit Essex Annual Membership		1,500	1,500	0	Invoices received
Visitor Website		6,000	0	6,000	To be commissioned subject to budget from 2015/6 for apprenticeship
Artist Studios feasibility Study		1,000	0	1,000	To be commissioned
100 Business Speed Networking Event		2,000		2,000	To be commissioned
		28,000	8,519	19,481	

8.3 To deliver the ED Work Plan, some of the initiatives may require support from external funding partners such as:

- SE LEP (Single Growth Fund, and EU funding)

- Essex County Council – ED and infrastructure funding
- Essex Employment and Skills Board (Essex County Funding)
- Visit Essex
- Invest Essex
- EU/DEFRA funding – LEADER
- EU ERDF funding – Low Carbon
- BDUK – broadband funding

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312860; Christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

8.4 None

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

8.5 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

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Anne Knight

Telephone: 01277312607

E-mail: anne.knight@brentwood.gov.uk