

**23 February 2015**

**Business and Town Centres Committee**

**Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group Workplan Update**

*Report of:* Gordon Glenday, Head of Planning

*Wards Affected:* All

*This report is:* Public document

**1. Executive Summary**

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

**2. Recommendation that Members:-**

- 2.1 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 **Local Trade Clusters**  
Work has continued on the setting up of local business trade clusters to provide greater representation and access to bid funding for traders in all retail sectors of the Borough. A new Shenfield Central Cluster has received strong interest from businesses and a meeting to form the group with agreement to terms and conditions is planned by mid February.

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 (under formation);
- iv. Upper Shenfield (formed and up and running);
- v. Central Shenfield (under formation);
- vi. Ingatestone (formed and up and running)
- vii. Hutton (under formation)

### **3.3 Environmental Audit and Public Realm**

#### **3.3.1 Town Centre Signage**

Malcolm Lane Signs have commenced work to update and refurbish the directional finger post signs in Brentwood Town Centre to make it a more welcoming and easy to navigate environment for residents and visitors.

#### **3.3.2 Multi Storey Car Park Signage**

Essex Highways have started work on designs for new and improved signage to the Multi Storey Car Park. Once approved, designs will be sent for first costing estimates.

#### **3.3.3 Grit Bins**

A request has been made for Hutton shopping parade and others around the Borough to consider the purchase and replenishment of grit bins through Renaissance Group bid funding. Renaissance Group has been asked to recommend the shopping parades where bins should be installed, together with the contact details and commitment of the shopping areas for their upkeep. This will follow consultations via the cluster leads and on the Renaissance Group website and talks with the Depot about gritting procedures. A final decision will be made by the Brentwood Local Highways Panel in conjunction with Essex County Council.

#### **3.3.4 Damaged Railings**

Following further requests, Essex County Council have agreed to repair or replace the buckled railings at the corner of William Hunter Way and Ongar Road, which are unsightly and potentially hazardous.

#### **3.4 Crown Street Community Market**

The Crown Street Cluster has decided not to implement a full market until planning permission is granted. To date, plans are being drawn up in readiness for a planning application.

### **3.5 Project Planning**

A project planning meeting was held in January with the cluster leaders and members to review and evaluate 2014 projects and plan cost effective events, campaigns and promotions for 2015. A provisional 2015/16 budget is being drawn up to reflect this in addition to business and environmental support and which is subject to the March budget setting. Funds allocated at cluster group level and centrally will be shown in the budget workplan reporting for 2015/16. There is to be a greater focus on economies of scale for projects across the different clusters where possible, to support the Visit Essex campaigns and to maximise the use of free PR, social media and the website.

### **3.6 Bid Funding Applications**

Bid funding applications have been approved for an Ongar Road/ Brentwood Theatre Cluster Easter Egg Hunt. Renaissance Group sponsorship funding was also agreed for the De Rougemont Manor venue hire and refreshments for the 18th March Business Speed Networking event.

## **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**

Allocation of the remaining £53,556 balance for 2014/15 is still in progress as bids continue to be submitted for this financial year and evaluated for agreement.

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 has provided funding of £30,000 during 2014/15 to the Renaissance Group (revenue). Future funding will be subject to the budget setting process which will be concluded in March.
- 8.2 The Town Centre Development Coordinator is the lead officer who supports the BB Renaissance Group

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer**

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- 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

- Appendix A - Budget Workplan 2014/15

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