

**26 March 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**

This report provides an update on the Pro-actions Business Planning Workshop, the Brentwood Borough Council Business E-newsletter and the Brentwood Business Speed Networking Event

**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.

**Pro-Actions Business Event**

3.2 A free business briefing on Business Planning – Making your Business Grow, was held on 25 February 2015 9am to 12.30pm at The Town Hall, Brentwood. This was the second in a series of free briefings planned in partnership with Pro-Actions Ltd, business coaching experts.

3.3 The briefing outlined the steps that businesses can take to make business planning effective for them and provided an opportunity for networking. The event also provided an opportunity to introduce Brentwood Borough Council's Economic Development Team and our work to support businesses and key priorities.

3.4 The marketing of the event was supported by the Council's business directory and was attended by 16 businesses. From the 13 evaluation sheets all attendees rated the event as very good or excellent. 100% rated the content, presentation and delivery as very good or excellent. All attendees expressed an interest in one or more of the future events that

we are planning and 12 of the 13 businesses providing feedback stated that the briefing would be helpful for the future of their business

### **Brentwood Borough Council Business E-Newsletter**

- 3.5 The first edition of the Brentwood Borough Council Business E-Newsletter was issued on the 26 February 2015. This is an online newsletter that will be produced by the ED Team on an adhoc basis when there is significant news and information on business support events and projects that we wish to communicate to businesses.
- 3.6 The newsletter was sent out to the 1186 businesses with email on the Brentwood Business Directory and to key business groups and partners. It includes information on the Brentwood Business Speed Networking Event, the Get Your Business Online for Free Event, Essex Means Business: Project Europe Conference, Free Mentoring & Training for Start-Up SMEs in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector and Digital Skills for Growth Programme.
- 3.7 The newsletter includes a link for businesses to provide their feedback and ideas for future editions and an opportunity to register to be included on the Brentwood Business Directory. This feedback will be monitored by the ED team and appropriate action taken. As the Business Directory grows the reach of the newsletter will extend.

### **Business Speed Networking Event**

- 3.8 A Verbal Update will be provided on the outcome of this event at the Committee Meeting.

## **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 recommendation is to note the progress on key ED initiatives and projects since the last Committee meeting. The initiatives support and drive forward the Economic Development Strategy and enable delivery of associated thematic priorities.

## 6. Consultation

- 6.1 The ED Strategy successfully underwent public consultation.
- 6.2 Key partners and business groups for each thematic work area are 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:** Chris Leslie, Financial Services Manager (S151 Officer)

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312542; chris.leslie@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	Commissioned 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	6,064	To be commissioned
Visit Essex Annual Membership		1,500	1,500	0	Invoices received
Visit Essex Volume and Values Report		600	600	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	1000	0	Commissioned
100 Business Speed Networking Event		2,000	1,000	1,000	Commissioned
		<b>28,000</b>	<b>11,419</b>	<b>16,581</b>	

8.3 A request has been made to the Finance Team to carry forward budget from 2014/5 into 2015/6 for £2,500 of the £6,000 allocated for the Business Directory Development; £6,000 allocated for the Visitor Website Development and to honour the existing commitment of £3,517 for the Crossrail Economic Impact Study. Therefore there is a total request of £12,017 of 2014/5 ED budget to be carried forward into 2015/6.

8.4 To deliver the on-going ED Work Plan, future 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 312774; Christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

8.5 None

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

8.6 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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