

1 July 2015

Economic Development Committee

**Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2015/16
Workplan**

Report of: Gordon Glenday, Head of Planning and Development

Wards Affected: All

This report is: Public document

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2015/16 Workplan of projects and initiatives including an illustration at business trade cluster level.
- 1.2 On the 4th March 2015 Council approved the budget for 2015/16. At the 10th June Ordinary Council an amended budget report was presented but there was no change to the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group budget allocation.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2015/16 Workplan be agreed.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group (BB Renaissance Group) revised Terms of Reference agreed at the 16 July 2014 Business and Town Centres Committee set out the need for closer consultation with the Borough's retail areas to encourage their initiation of bid funding for projects, the more efficient use of resources, communications via the new website and budgetary control. This was to facilitate the Group's vision to initiate, support and co-ordinate collective decisions to improve the environment and public realm of the shopping areas, maximise footfall and tourism, sustain economic growth and improve customer satisfaction.

Included in the Group's remit is also to help with the support and development of the Borough's traders and businesses in cooperation with Economic Development and in partnership with external organisations. Examples of this are BB Renaissance Group support for the free Pro- actions briefings, Business Speed Networking Event and the feasibility study for the Business Incubation Centre.

3.2 Local Trade Clusters

Work has continued on setting up local business trade clusters to provide greater representation and access to bid funding for traders in all retail sectors of the Borough. The new Shenfield Central Cluster was formed in February 2015 with 25 members and the new manager of Tescos Local is keen to support the cluster as part of their local community initiatives.

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

- i. Crown Street/Roper's Yard (formed)
- ii. Brentwood Town Centre East End/Ongar Road (formed)
- iii. Brentwood Town Centre West End (under formation)
- iv. Upper Shenfield (formed)
- v. Central Shenfield (formed)
- vi. Ingatestone (formed)
- vii. Woodland Avenue, Hutton (under formation)

3.3 Environmental Audit and Public Realm

3.3.1 Town Centre Signage

Malcolm Lane Signs have completed work to update and refurbish the directional finger post signs and noticeboards in Brentwood Town Centre to make it a more welcoming and easy to navigate environment for residents and visitors. Due to the project finishing after the 2014/15 financial year, the £9k capital and revenue spend has been allocated to the 2015/16 budget.

3.3.2 Multi Storey Car Park Signage

The agreed designs and estimates from Essex Highways have still not been received. The estimated figure for these costs has been carried forward to the 2015/16 budget with inflation.

3.3.3 Environmental Audits

Gerry Bender has been appointed as a member of BB Renaissance Group's Street Audit team to work alongside Michael Hardy. Regular reports for

Brentwood Town Centre issues are published on the BB Renaissance Group website www.brentwoodrenaissance.co.uk and there has been a request to also review Shenfield.

3.4 Crown Street Community Market

Mike Allen of Essex Farmers Markets has agreed to implement a small monthly Saturday market, as a monthly market does not require planning permissions, subject to approval by Essex Highways to the layout of stalls within the precinct area. This will be a craft/artisan style of market which will also be alternated with an antiques market.

3.5 Teenage Market

Sue Page of Crown Street Cluster and in her capacity as schools coordinator for Brentwood Chamber of Commerce has offered to help Mike Allen of Essex Farmers Markets to approach schools with a view to establishing a teenage market by the early autumn term 2015 with the inclusion of local students.

3.6 Economic Development Business Support

BB Renaissance Group is supporting the promotion and venue costs, where applicable, of the Business Training Taster Workshops delivered by Pro- actions and some cluster member businesses have benefitted from attending these briefings.

BB Renaissance Group has approved bid funding for half the costs of the feasibility study for the viability of Brentwood Business Incubation Centre, as stated in the Economic Development Projects and Initiatives Report. This helps to fulfil some of the group's main aims to help grow the local economy, provide business support and training in the Town Centres.

3.7 Project Planning

A second project planning meeting was held recently with the cluster leaders to continue to plan effective events, campaigns and promotions for 2015 within the allocated cluster budgets. A good example of this was the Shenfield Easter Bunny Hunt which resulted in increased footfall, business awareness and competition entry levels at a cost to Renaissance Group of £235. Please note all bid funding applications are subject to 20% self funding by the cluster businesses.

Officers are working closely with BB Renaissance Group businesses to support and facilitate cost effective initiatives across all retail areas of the Borough given the increasing challenges facing retail on the High Streets.

Please see below for table of proposed projects. Allocated project funds are stated in the Workplan Budgets Appendix 1 and 2.

Project	Actions	Dates	Clusters
Brentwood Art & Heritage Trail (NB Community Event)	Help to support this Borough wide Community Event by displaying posters, tweeting and signposting customers to the 25 independent shops and businesses taking part with displays by local artists, many of which are cluster members	29 June-12 July	All
Independents Day (No longer supported as a national event)	Celebrate the Borough's strong offering of independent shops and attract shoppers and visitors through entertainment plus offers and promotions to feature as ads in Gazette double page spread subsidised by Renaissance Group. Includes editorial of case studies through Gazette interviews. Campaign on independents agreed starting 1 July edition.	4 July	Brentwood, Shenfield Upper and Central
Town Centre Ambassadors	Suggest volunteers eg 6 th form students to help guide visitors to attractions, points of interest and shops in and around the Town Centre. This was evidenced as a successful initiative at the Future High St Summit Conference as offered by eg Belper, Leeds, Wimborne. Training, safeguarding, branding and promotional materials required	Commence late August/September	Brentwood
Crown St Market	Mike Allen of EFM has sourced stalls for a monthly Saturday craft/artisan market and alternating antiques market. As monthly, planning permission is not needed.	Monthly Sats TBA Start Date	Crown St
Brentwood Festival	RG have offered to subsidise individual or shared market stalls at the festival to capitalise on high attendance/footfall.	17-19 July	All
Summer Jazz on the Street	Collaborative bid from both Shenfield clusters approved to hold first Summer afternoon Music Event in Central Shenfield up to the library with live bands, jazz, bbq's, buskers, paella & prosecco etc An Ingatestone summer festival/event was also proposed for review by their cluster members	28 June	Shenfield Upper and Central Ingatestone

Summer Fashion Show	Gemma Collins suggested event for Crown Street. We are arranging a meeting with Crown Street and Ropers Yard clothes shops to form a project team and reviewing other independent shops across the Borough to encourage them to take part	Late August/ September	Crown St and All
Pro-actions Free Business Briefings x 4	Support for free morning business briefing taster workshops on topics including Marketing and Social Media; Growing Your Business; Improving your Sales and Time Management. Town Hall Committee Rooms are used to host the briefings.	Sept. and November 2015. January and March 2016	All
Halloween Event	Possible Easter Bunny type shop hunt eg for a pumpkin Scope idea for a Shenfield paper plane making/flying family event if low cost indoor venue available	31 October	All
Lighting Up Brentwood Shenfield Christmas Fair Victorian Christmas Evening	Community Events team have started regular Brentwood and Shenfield event planning meetings. Brentwood and Shenfield Clusters will support this with entertainments, markets and activities in Crown Street, Ongar Road and Shenfield. Ingatestone have submitted a bid to cover 80% of Victorian Evening costs	28 Nov. 29 Nov. 4 Dec.	Brentwood Shenfield Ingatestone
Small Business Saturday	Consider an alternative date to the national event, eg January 2016, as it falls the weekend after Lighting Up when Town Centre quiet, or consider a local version of Black Friday.	5 December	All

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 In addition to the budget for 2015/16 of £20,000, the Council resources the delivery and support for this plan. Various options will be considered when scoping and developing the projects to ensure best outcomes and value for money.

4.2 Current Budgetary Position

Committed and projected spend to the value of £39,022 revenue and £25,700 capital have been allocated to date for 2015/16. Allocation of the

remaining £39,752 balance will continue throughout the financial year as bids are submitted and evaluated for agreement.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

For the Committee to agree the 2015/6 BB Renaissance Group Workplan

6. Consultation

- 6.1 All bids are subject to appropriate scrutiny and accountability and require approval by a majority share of the BBRG 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 Plan

- 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: Chris Leslie, Finance Director

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- 8.1 Brentwood Borough Council has provided funding of £20,000 during 2015/16 to the BB Renaissance Group (revenue) agreed as part of the budget setting process on 4th March 2015. Future funding will be subject to the budget setting process which will be concluded in March 2016.
- 8.2 The Town Centre Development Coordinator is the lead officer who manages and coordinates the BB Renaissance group.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer

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8.3 None

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

8.4 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 1 Budget Workplan 2015/16
- Appendix 2 Cluster Level Budget Workplan 2015/16

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