

10 March 2016

Economic Development Committee

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

Report of: *Gordon Glenday, Head of Planning and Environmental Health*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public document*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2015/16 Workplan Budget and progress on projects and initiatives. On the 4th March 2015 Council approved the budget for 2015/16.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Note the updated Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group 2015/16 Workplan Budget (Appendix A) and progress made on projects and initiatives.**

3. Introduction and Background

This report provides an update on Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group (BB Renaissance Group) projects and budget for 2015/16.

3.1 Local Trade Clusters

Work has continued to complete the set up of local business trade clusters in Brentwood Town Centre to provide greater representation and access to bid funding for traders in all retail sectors of the Borough.

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 (formed)
- iii. Brentwood Town Centre West End (under formation)
- iv. Kings Road (formed)
- v. Warley Hill (under formation)
- vi. Upper Shenfield (formed)
- vii. Central Shenfield (formed)
- viii. Ingatestone (formed)

The new Kings Road Brentwood Cluster has been formed under the leadership of Verde Vintage Boutique and their courtyard cluster of specialist independent shops. They held a successful first event with a Christmas Market in the courtyard on 12th December 2015.

BB Renaissance Group management are still in discussions with businesses on the High Street including Fat Face to establish a Brentwood Town Centre West End cluster or possibly for the Town Centre clusters to cover wider areas. Warley Hill are still trying to establish a cluster through the manager of the Four Vintners to reach the minimum cluster formation requirements of 6 businesses.

3.2 Environmental Audit

Gerry Bender and Michael Hardy continue to monitor and report on Town Centre issues which are published on the BB Renaissance Group website www.brentwoodrenaissance.co.uk The new Street Inspector has agreed to help monitor and address issues raised by the audit and support any specialist cleaning requirements for the public realm.

3.3 Economic Development Business Support

BEST Growth Hub

Following the establishment of the new BEST (Best of Essex, Southend and Thurrock) Growth Hub to support and advise businesses, BEST and their Brentwood Area Business Navigator have offered free diagnostic help to businesses and a series of free workshops during February and March at the Hutton Community Centre and Ingatestone and Fryerning Community Centre.

The workshops are being promoted to cluster members as well as the business directory contacts.

3.4 Project Updates and Planning

3.4.1 Christmas Events

BB Renaissance Group supported Christmas events across the Borough through cluster activities and bid funding. Positive feedback was given from all the cluster groups taking part including Brentwood Lighting Up, Shenfield Christmas Fayre and Ingatestone Victorian Evening.

The Upper and Central Shenfield clusters raised considerable funding from private sponsorship to support the event and hire of an ice rink enabled by the full road closure. They estimated 4,000 visitors attended the event and it served to help boost the Christmas trading period for businesses following the event. Crown Street also secured private sponsorship for a Selfie Booth social media kiosk which proved a successful attraction in the street for visitors.

3.4.2 Medieval Market Charters

Work is being finalised on the reproduction of Brentwood's 1227 and 1252 Market Charters. The project to present an English language translation of the charters has been jointly sponsored by Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group, the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce and Essex Farmers Markets. This follows a three year research programme undertaken by Clive Othen to retrieve the charters during his tenure as chairman of both the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce and Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group

The translation of the charters from Medieval Latin was carried out by Dr Jennifer Ward, local historian and medieval history academic. Patricia Lovett MBE, calligrapher, was commissioned to design and script lifelike copies of the original charters. This has been presented on vellum calfskin representing materials used at the time.

Two display cases will show each of the charters and the third will contain a citation describing the history of the charters and description of the 13th century tools and materials used to inscribe them. The presented charters will support the history and tourism offer for the Borough, provide business support for a regular market/fairs located in Brentwood and offer an educational history project for schools.

3.4.3 Project Planning 2016

Officers and BB Renaissance Group Management are working closely with cluster leads to plan and facilitate cost effective campaigns, events and promotions across the Borough to achieve economies of scale and joint publicity. These are financed by a minimum 20% contribution from businesses and the increasing support of private sponsorship.

Following the successful sponsorship of the Selfie Booth for Brentwood Lighting Up, Crown Street are planning a spring time event featuring the photo booth with contributions for its use going to one of the Mayor's chosen charities. It is also planned to offer the Easter Egg Hunt in the Brentwood clusters to encourage families to visit the businesses taking part. Shenfield are also planning to establish the Summer Jazz on the Street as an annual event.

Allocated project funds are stated in the Workplan Budget Appendix 1.

3.5 Bid Funding Applications

3.5.1 Brentwood Art and Tree Trail

Funding of £2250 was approved towards the project management and marketing costs of the 8th Annual Brentwood Art Trail as part of the Essex Summer of Art. This county-wide cultural promotion attracted over 72,000 visitors and generated £1.3m in revenue for the Essex economy in 2015.

The project is being managed and promoted by Laurie Edmonds of Local by Social. Brentwood Borough Council, Brentwood Arts Council and Essex County Council are supporting and contributing to the event and funding is being sought from private sponsorship.

The Art Trail provides an opportunity for local visual artists to be showcased in local venues, primarily independent shops and cafes as well as parks and visitor sites throughout the Borough. The event also includes a School's Exhibition in Brentwood Library and a series of guided tours.

An exciting new environmental element will be included this year through the Council's arboculturalist who is commissioning a sculptor to create three pieces of outdoor artwork using fallen trees in Warley, Hutton and Ingatestone. The designs of the sculptures will be done by local schoolchildren via a series of interactive workshops.

The Essex Summer of Art is to be launched for the first time in Brentwood at the Hardy Amies Design Centre, Brentwood School, in early June.

3.5.2 Shenfield Easter Egg Hunt

A bid for £400 was approved for a cost effective family fun activity which requires them to engage with the businesses in Shenfield. All participating businesses will decorate and display Easter eggs in their shop window. Families will complete an entry form after locating the eggs and prizes are awarded to the winning entries within different age groups.

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 £25,433 revenue and £8,885 capital have been allocated to date for 2015/16. Allocation of the remaining £31,319 revenue and £38,837 capital 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 Budget.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 All bids are subject to appropriate scrutiny and accountability and require approval by a majority share of the BB Renaissance Group members and by authorised signatories, 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 Vision for:

- Economic Development*** - Promoting a mixed economy focusing on retail and other commercial opportunities.
- Work with partners for better engagement and understanding of business needs

8 Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar, Financial Services Manager

Tel & Email: 01277 312 860 ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk

- 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: Daniel Toohey, 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 A Budget Workplan 2015/16

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