



Overview and Scrutiny Committee
28 May 2008

**Report from the Director of Policy
and Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Town Centre Regeneration Task Group Report

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This is the final report of the task group review of Town Centre Regeneration in Brent. It also includes further information on parking in town centres and a department response to each of the recommendations, as requested by the Committee.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree the recommendations set out in the Town Centre Regeneration report.
- 2.2 That the report is forwarded to the Executive.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 At the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members requested further information on parking in town centres. This is to inform the discussion on the parking recommendation, which is set out in the town centre regeneration task group report. **The report on parking is attached at Appendix A.**
- 3.2 The Committee also asked for a department response to each of the task group's recommendations. This is also included in the appendix report.

The Town Centre Regeneration Task Group Report

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to set up a task group to investigate the council's approach to town centre regeneration and how this could be improved.
- 4.2 The task group's findings aim to inform the new town centre strategy which should be ready by the end of 2008. This will be important in developing a joint council wide approach to town centre management. The strategy will set out recommendations for each of the town centres in Brent.
- 4.3 There are around thirteen town centres in Brent of different sizes some of which border with neighbouring boroughs. The GLA have ranked town centres in London by hierarchy rated according to their size, status, range of shops and the wider facilities that they provide. Wembley and Kilburn are the main centres in Brent. Smaller district centres include Willesden Green and Harlesden.
- 4.4 **Key findings of the task group:**
- 4.5 The Council has two town centre managers who look after Wembley, Willesden and Harlesden. They play an essential role in managing local partnerships, being the first point of contact for their town centre and levering in additional funding for town centre projects. The task group felt that they would benefit from additional support from officers across the council when dealing with environmental issues.
- 4.6 A newly appointed neighbourhood working team will be able to identify town centre issues at the ward level.
- 4.7 There is a key role for the planning department in helping to redefine town centres and identify sites on the edge of the high street, which would be suitable for alternative use such as offices or leisure facilities.
- 4.8 Other challenges affecting town centres include crime and environmental issues such as dumping of large bulky items and litter.
- 4.9 Transportation is a key issue within town centres. There needs to be a balance between parking facilities for short stay shopping and pedestrian concerns that high traffic volumes make centres unpleasant for shopping. Local residents could also be affected by congestion and poor air quality.
- 4.10 The task group's recommendations are set out on page six of the report.

Contact officers:

Phil Newby
Director of Policy and Regeneration
Phil.newby@brent.gov.uk

Stella Akintan
Policy and Performance Officer
Stella.akintan@brent.gov.uk