



**Resources and Public Realm  
Scrutiny Committee**  
5 September 2017

**Report from the Strategic Director of  
Regeneration and Environment**

For Information

**Follow Up Review on Brent High Street Initiatives**

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report contains:

- An analysis on how have the town centre managers performed since being appointed
- An analysis of how the Digital High Streets project is performing.
- A report on how uniformed litter patrol officers are performing after being brought in-house.

1.2 A visit to high street(s) with managers to see how they work was requested by the scrutiny panel. The panel chose Harlesden as their preferred location and the visit is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> August.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Not applicable.

**3.0 Town Centres progress update – first three months**

Recruitment

3.1 2 Town Centre Managers started their jobs on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Grace Nelson was recruited internally to be the Town Centre Manager for Harlesden and Willesden Green, and Rubina (Rubie) Charalambous was recruited externally to be Town Centre Manager for Wembley and Ealing Road.

3.2 Employment, Skills and Enterprise are still recruiting for the third Town Centre Manager (for Neasden and Church End). The role has not yet been appointed to, due to candidates not meeting the required standard. Recruitment will be complete by the third week of September, if a suitable candidate is found.

### Stakeholder engagement

- 3.3 Town Centre Managers have written a 12 month plan for each Town Centre (taking us to May 2018) in consultation with ward members, business representatives and relevant council services. See Appendix 1 – 12 month plans.
- 3.4 Draft, longer-term investment plans (included in the Cabinet report of 24th April 2017) are being developed further alongside key stakeholders in each town centre, including businesses, residents and Ward Members. Some shorter-term action contained in the draft plans have already been taken forward (for example, identifying gaps in current business support delivery that could be plugged through external funding for the council to commissioned services).
- 3.5 The Town Centre Managers have offered to meet with all relevant ward members. A ward members' engagement session, to work alongside the Town Centre Managers to clarify the shorter and longer term plans for each Town Centre, was planned for 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017 but has since been rearranged to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017. In the meantime all ward members have seen the appended 12 month plans and have fed back with changes where relevant. Regular walkabouts will be arranged with ward councilors, and the Town Centre Managers provide an email update every two months.
- 3.6 Town Centre Managers have met with all existing businesses partnerships in each town centre and identified and met with other key external stakeholders to understand their work and the scope and nature of their vision. Meetings are booked with remaining individuals.

### Business Partnerships

- 3.7 Engagement with already established business partnerships is critical to the development and delivery of the 12 month plans and longer term investment plans. In the priority town centres this includes the Ealing Road Trader's Association (ERTA), Wembley High Road Business Association, and via the Harlesden Business Association.
- 3.8 The feasibility of a Business Improvement District (BID) - or multiple BIDs - is being considered for Wembley and Ealing Road, which if viable would enable a self-run and funded entity to support the town centres, working in partnership with the Council. The starting point will be to consider the potential of a BID that encompasses Wembley High Road, Wembley Park Drive, Ealing Road, and Wembley Park (in partnership with the developer, Quintain).
- 3.9 Work is also underway to support smaller or less established partnerships:
  - 3.9.1 Engagement has taken place with Harlesden Business Association, working with a community business champion. There has been a boost recruitment in the Business Association, with membership recently reaching 220 having been at 40 the previous month – as it has been for two years.
  - 3.9.2 Work is taking place to support the Willesden Town Team, established in 2012. The Town Centre Manager has started to identify key individuals from within the business community who will help to develop the group. The local plan consultation process will include a section on creating a vision for the area and will help to engage more businesses.
  - 3.9.3 Neasden has a small but empowered Business Association that the new Town Centre Manager will seek to grow when they arrive. Church End currently has no

business partnership in place but this will be a priority of the new Town Centre Manager when they start.

#### Coordinating council services

- 3.10 The Town Centre Managers have spent a significant amount of time establishing working links with relevant council services including: Regeneration, Transport and Highways Infrastructure, Environment Improvements and Public Realm, Parking and Lighting, Community Protection, Capital Delivery, Transport Planning, Planning policy, Planning Enforcement, Regulatory Services, Brent Connect, Communications, School Improvements, Business Rates and Air Quality.
- 3.11 Current council service performance measures have been collated for each town centre, which will enable the Town Centre Managers to monitor progress on a monthly basis in each priority Town Centre. The information monitored will include ASB rates, waste collection rates, recycling rates, car park usage figures, schedule identifying trees which require maintenance, number of non-compliant estate agents boards across Town Centres.
- 3.12 To support more coordinated communication with businesses and stakeholders, frontline information relevant to businesses is being gathered from council services, for example:
- Waste collection schedule for each Town Centre;
  - Patrol times of the Enviro-crime team;
  - Timescales of capital works and information about the end use;
  - Current regulatory cases relating to businesses in town centres.
- 3.13 Services will nominate key contacts for Town Centre issues such as noise, illegal rubbish dumping, regulatory services, licensing, ASB issues, emergency planning, environmental improvements, parking and lighting. This approach will be streamlined when new Neighbourhood Managers are appointed in the coming weeks as the council's adopts a more widespread area-based model for the delivery of its key environmental services. The connection between the Town Centre Managers and the local Neighbourhood Manager, representing all Environmental Services, will be a key new relationship.
- 3.14 In addition to the coordination of services and communication with businesses, value-adding projects have also been identified in partnership with other council teams:
- Parking: Park Mark accredited which means all council run car parks will have an accreditation (approved by a partnership including the Metropolitan Police) which is recognised nationally;
  - Regulatory: Helping regulatory services identify estate agents in breach of the required standards by taking photos of 'for sale' boards and sharing with colleagues;
  - Information: Production of car parking leaflet for businesses in Wembley High Road and Ealing Road to give to customers, so that existing space is better utilised.

#### Projects and funding

- 3.15 The Brent Business Board are currently working on a marketing strategy and implementation plan for key localities within Brent: Wembley, Harlesden and the 'South East' (comprised of Willesden, Kilburn, Kensal Rise and Queens Park). The Town Centre Managers have a role in shaping this work to raise the profile Brent businesses.

- 3.16 The Town Centre Manager for Willesden and Harlesden has just submitted an expression of interest for the London Mayor's Good Growth Fund. In Willesden the expression of interest is for a capital investment pot to develop workspace, community and leisure facilities, for which community groups can submit ideas. In Harlesden the bid is phased and includes capital improvements to the shop fronts and public realm in phase 1 and rethinking uses of council owned assets in the area within phase 2.
- 3.17 External funding has been identified that will be used for:
- High Street 'health checks' which will provide us with the baseline data needed to measure longer term progress, updating from the most recent data collection in 2013;
  - Seed funding/sponsorship for one off Town Centre events/initiatives run by business associations and/or community;
  - Footfall counters pilot in Wembley and Harlesden to test effectiveness over one year, before considering roll out to other High Streets;
  - 'Costar' commissioned for one year to provide database of nationwide property and real estate information. This will assist with matching vacant units to interested business. Should we spot any properties that have been authorised to be on the market, CoStar will add them to their database.
- 3.18 An application has been put in for neighborhood CIL funding for footfall counters over 3 years and promotional material to market the priority Town Centres.
- 3.19 The Town Centre Managers have also managed to secure additional quick wins in their respective Town Centres, for example:
- 3.19.1 Community engagement with Keep Wembley Tidy and other highly engaged residents, to build trust and provide reassurance and visibility locally;
  - 3.19.2 Establishing a project with Anglia Ruskin University examining multiculturalism and belonging within Harlesden and Ealing Road;
  - 3.19.3 Sharing information on business support i.e. raising awareness of training to make the most out of Small Business Saturday;
  - 3.19.4 Sharing information about Discretionary Rates Relief;
  - 3.19.5 Informed relevant local residents to apply for Love Where You Live grant;
  - 3.19.6 Town Centre Manager met with Police, who agreed to attend business association meetings to talk about crime hotspots and test their reaction to potential solutions.
  - 3.19.7 Responding to businesses on longstanding queries (such as why railings have been removed);
  - 3.19.8 Communicating with a key private sector partner to secure funding for a leaflet for Wembley Park Drive.

#### Next steps

- 3.20 The next steps for each Town Centre are set out in the 12 month plans (appended). The headline actions and milestones are summarised below:

Key achievements by January:

- 3.21 12 month plans for Neasden and Church End complete [assuming recruitment goes to plan].
- 3.22 Health Checks for all Town Centres complete;
- 3.23 Business surveys complete;
- 3.24 Engagement events will be completed. The feedback will be used to shape the action and investment plan for each Town Centre;
- 3.25 Progress with establishing Business partnerships;
- 3.26 Health checks completed providing baseline economic information against which the impact of the action and investment plans can be measured;
- 3.27 Identifying hidden gems of the town centres, to be promoted through press and new marketing materials Brokered a stronger and mutually beneficial relationship to support internal services;
- 3.28 Monitoring of council impact on each Town Centre established and Town Centre Managers sitting on relevant internal working groups;

Key achievements by May

- 3.29 Business partnerships:
  - 3.29.1 A consultant will be analysing BID feasibility (both financial and relational) in Wembley and Ealing Road;
  - 3.29.2 Willesden membership increased;
  - 3.29.3 Neasden membership increased and partnership governance established to ensure growth and sustainability of business association.
  - 3.29.4 Work commenced to establish a partnership in Church End.
- 3.30 A robust database of business contacts for each Town Centre;
- 3.31 Improved communication with town centre businesses to follow up issues and ideas they raise.
- 3.32 Comprehensive information regarding landlords sought where possible;
- 3.33 Marketing and events programme established;
- 3.34 Day to day action to mitigate recurring issues established in Town Centres;
- 3.35 Funding bids made to CIL, Good Growth fund, Tottenham Hotspur and any other sources that become available;
- 3.36 Action and investment plans agreed and progressed by all stakeholders.

## Delivery of 12 month plans - risk analysis and mitigating actions

The complexity and potential breadth and depth of the Town Centres programme requires proactive action to be taken, to manage inherent risks in delivering against the 12 month plans, which is important for council-business relationships.

Town Centre	Risk	Mitigation
All	Longer term progress is sacrificed due to level of resource needed to react to day to day concerns	Focus on longer term Action and Investment Plans  Careful monitoring of amount of Town Centre Managers' time each part of the 12 month plan (and work sitting outside it) is taking up
All	Increase in requests from non-priority Town Centres	Senior Economic Growth Manager has been taking on requests generated through publicity of the Town Centres Programme. This has been manageable to do date but will be monitored to avoid resource being averted from priority Town Centres.
All	Burnt Oak, Cricklewood and Kilburn have been identified as priority Town Centres but do not have a Town Centres Managers and do not have 12 month or action and investment plans.  They will receive the Digital High Streets offer in the next 6 weeks.	Officers from other parts of the council are engaged on specific projects in those areas.  Plans for regeneration need to be created in partnership with neighbouring boroughs, Camden and Barnet.
All	Business groups not at a stage of development that enables them to take action forward themselves, leading to over reliance on council/ Town Centre Managers.	Businesses empowered to own the vision and pragmatic action required to improve their Town Centre (while the council continues to play an important role). Although their impact and added value is clear, Town Centre Managers are facilitators and advisors rather than owners of all ideas/ achievements.
All	Unable to reach consensus on key action in certain town centres with range of stakeholders	Invite wide range of stakeholders to engagement events in September to start building dialogue with the business community and council
Harlesden and Willesden	Good Growth funding not secured	Applications submitted to other funding sources
Wembley and Ealing Road	It emerges that a BID is not feasible in Wembley and Ealing	An alternative partnership arrangement is sought

	Road	
Wembley and Ealing	Sponsorship may not be approved by key external partners	Look at alternative funding sources
Neasden and Church End	A suitable candidate is not found through the next round of recruitment	The post will be readvertised and the programme unfortunately delayed

#### 4.0 Digital High Streets update

4.1 The Pilot phase of the Digital High Streets project ran in Wembley from January 2017.

4.1.1 20 small businesses took part in the pilot, receiving one-to-one coaching and mentoring to help tailor their new skills to their businesses, such a social media and digital marketing.

4.1.2 As well as growing their own businesses, they have together launched [their own website for Wembley High Road](#), helping promote the area itself as a great place to do business.

4.1.3 More than 30 SMEs on Wembley High Road were invited to join the Wembley High Road Business Association.

4.1.4 The pilot, run in partnership with Meanwhile Space and Clockwork City, won a Place West London Award.

4.2 Work then went into scaling up the project and rolling it out in 7 priority Town Centres, aiming to deliver intensive digital skills training and mentoring through a series of workshops and one-one sessions. The project went live in July.

4.3 At the time of writing this report, 30 individuals have been trained across Harlesden, Willesden and Neasden. This breaks down as follows:

Where?	When?	Total trained in this Town Centre	Total trained (cumulative)
Harlesden	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> July	10	10
Willessden	17 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup> July	13	23
Neasden	31 <sup>st</sup> July – 11 <sup>th</sup> August	7	30
Ealing Road	14 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> August	-	-
Kilburn	29 <sup>th</sup> August – 8 <sup>th</sup> September	-	-
Church End	11 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup> September	-	-
Burnt Oak	25 <sup>th</sup> September – 6 <sup>th</sup> October	-	-
The Hyde	9 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> October	-	-

#### 5.0 Uniformed litter patrol officers

- 5.1 On 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016 Brent entered into a 12 month pilot with Kingdom Security to provide on street litter patrols to issue, where appropriate, Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) for littering and other minor environmental offences.
- 5.2 In early 2017 Brent's Cabinet decided that the service should be brought in-house at the end of the contract on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017.
- 5.3 Of the 6 posts, 4 of the existing team chose to transfer to Brent, 1 became vacant and the other opted to remain with Kingdom.
- 5.4 On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017 after TUPE arrangements were finalised the officers were moved onto Brent contracts of employment.

#### Current Operational Position

- 5.5 The team is currently being deployed to specific geographical areas within the borough. This has proved particularly effective in curtailing Paan spitting which has historically been very difficult to tackle. They are also deployed in response to complaints from members of the public, Veolia, as well as requests from Councillors and community groups to provide a high-visibility presence in illegal rubbish dumping hot-spots and to tackle specific local issues such as dog fouling, vermin feeding and other similar environmental issues. An important task is to response to reports of dumped waste flagged by our contractors, Veolia. They have also been involved in community assurance patrols which include weekend and evening work.
- 5.6 On 1st September 2017, the team will be fully equipped with the latest technology which will enable officers to issue on the spot FPN's using mobile phones and portable bluetooth printers. For the safety and security of the officers, new body worn cameras will also be used. The technology provided to support the officers will be the best available in the current market.
- 5.7 Of the 4 Patrol Officer posts, 2 are yet to be filled. The rationale is that these posts will be offered to redeployees, then advertised internally before being offered externally.

#### Deployment

- 5.8 The purpose of the team is currently as follows:
  - 5.8.1 Issuing FPNs for witnessed littering / dog fouling / spitting / bird feeding offences,
  - 5.8.2 Searching waste found dumped for evidence and then to referring this back to the Enviro-Crime inbox for senior members of the team to investigate, and
  - 5.8.3 Preliminary waste management (duty of care) inspections on businesses referring any suspected non-compliance for further investigation.
  - 5.8.4 To engage with members of the public on environmental issues which are affecting their neighbourhoods.
- 5.9 Table 1 (below) provides an example of a typical working week for the team.

#### Table 1 – Team Duties



Monday 7th - 11th August 2017					
Monday	Limesdale Gardens+Holmstall Avenue	08:30-09:30	Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	07/08/2017	07/08/2017
	College Road, Kilburn, Jackmans Mews	08:30-15:30	Pigeon feeding, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	07/08/2017	07/08/2017
	Criclewood Broadway, Anson Road, Hassop Road	09:30-15:30	Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	07/08/2017	07/08/2017
Tuesday	Ealing Road, High Road	08:30-12:30	Paan Spiting, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	08/08/2017	08/08/2017
	Monks Park	12:30-13:15	Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	08/08/2017	08/08/2017
	Kingsbury	14:30-16:00	Pigeon feeding, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	08/08/2017	08/08/2017
Wednesday	Wendover Road, Criclewood Broadway	08:30-13:30	Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	09/09/2017	09/09/2017
	Kilburn (Willesden Lane, Waterloo passage)	08:30-13:30	Pigeon feeding, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	09/08/2017	09/09/2017
	Ealing Road	14:30-16:30	Paan Spiting, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	09/08/2017	09/08/2017
Thursday	Kingsbury	08:30-12:30	Pigeon feeding, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	10/08/2017	10/08/2017
	Monks Park	12:30-13:15	Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	10/08/2017	10/08/2017
	Ealing Road, High Road	14:30-16:30	Paan Spiting, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	10/08/2017	10/08/2017
Friday	Kilburn (Willesden Lane, Waterloo passage)	08:30-11:30	Pigeon feeding, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	11/08/2017	11/08/2017
	Ealing Road	12:00-15:00	Paan Spiting, Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	11/08/2017	11/08/2017
	Monks Park	15:15-15:45	Littering, Fly tipping, High Viz Patrol	11/08/2017	11/08/2017

### Performance

5.10 Team performance from 13th June 2017 to 4th August 2017 is summarised in Table 2 (below) with non litter FPN related performance shown in Table 3

Table 2 – Litter Related Performance

Actions	June	July	August
Number of cases sent to W/E inbox	21	262	83
Number of FPNS issued	21	166	32
FPN issued for Spitting	4	40	4
FPN issued for Pigeon feeding	0	0	0
FPN issued for Other	0	13	1
FPN issued for smoking related litter	17	99	14
Cases ongoing	20	109	18
Cases cancelled	0	0	0
Cases - FPN paid	1	31	1
Cases referred to legal	0	0	0

Table 3 – Non Litter Related Performance

Actions	June	July	August
Referred cases sent to W/E inbox	1	94	51
DOC	0	18	17

5.11 It is important to note (in Table 3) that the work the patrol officers refer to the Enviro-Crime in-box (i.e. non litter FPN related) also has additional value both in terms of providing

intelligence, physical evidence and fixed penalty or clear up cost related income for action by Enviro-Crime officers. See Appendix 2 – Case Study.

- 5.12 During June to August 2016 Kingdom Officers issued a total of 1028 litter related FPN's in relation to 219 FPN's issued by officers during the same period in 2017. This difference can be attributed to Kingdom initially providing a team of up to 8 officers in the early stages of the contract, vacancies arising during the transfer of staff, public awareness on littering since June 2016 and an approach that now looks at the broader spectrum of waste related crime – i.e. illegal rubbish dumping.

### Summary & Conclusion

- 5.13 Since the transfer of staff to Brent, developing the operation to fit the Brent model continues to progress at a steady pace. Going forward the focus will be on better integration with the current Enviro-Crime Enforcement Team and other services, adapting their working practices to be more customer focused and adopting a more pro-active approach to finding solutions for issues the team and Veolia come across on the street – see Appendix 3 – Added Value. The team are performing well and have already enhanced the overall performance of the Enviro-Crime Enforcement Team by contributing high quality evidence, referrals of waste related crimes identified while on patrol and meeting with councillors and members of the public to discuss environmental issues affecting them directly.
- 5.14 Support and encouragement has already been received from established community groups such as Keep Wembley Tidy. By continuing to engage with councillors, community groups, businesses and through close co-operation with Veolia the team is expected to become a valued visible enforcement presence thereby continuing to contribute to the overall reduction of waste crime in Brent.
- 5.15 In the coming months once staffing and system issues have been resolved the team will begin focussing on extra duties such as:
- 5.15.1 The deployment of cameras to target waste hotspots,
  - 5.15.2 Issuing FPNs for the breach of Public Space Protection Orders,
  - 5.15.3 Joint on street operations with Veolia, and
  - 5.15.4 Timed waste collection education and enforcement.
- 5.16 Finally, with the anticipated introduction of area based working and the deployment of new Neighbourhood Managers it is expected that the team will compliment this approach by focusing efforts on eliminating engrained local environmental problems.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 None

## **7.0 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 None

## **8.0 Diversity Implications**

8.1 None

**9.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

9.1 None

**10.0 Background Papers**

Cabinet decision – [Town Centres Action and Investment Planning](#)

**11.0 Officer contacts**

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