

## THE EXECUTIVE

23 NOVEMBER 2004

### REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

<b>BEST VALUE REVIEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN: SECOND QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT</b>		<b>FOR DISCUSSION</b>
<i>This report presents quarterly progress, against the Best Value Review Improvement Plan, as requested by the Executive on 17 February 2004.</i>		
<b>Summary</b>		
<p>This is the second progress report on the implementation of the Regeneration Best Value Review Improvement Plan. The key conclusions are:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Regeneration “Vision” has now been adopted and circulated. The Regeneration Implementation Division (RID) has relocated to Crown House.</li><li>• Success in attracting funding from the Sustainable Communities Fund of £10million and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of £300 thousand to build on existing and new projects and initiatives.</li><li>• Good progress on developing a funding strategy to enable us to maximise our resources to secure external funding;</li><li>• Good progress in marketing, publicity and consultation with the local community, including an Equal Opportunities Impact Assessments on Barking Town Centre. We have established an internal working group to develop protocols for community engagement with the Urban Development Corporation (UDC).</li></ul>		
<b>Recommendation</b>		
<p>The Executive is asked to discuss these findings and to agree the report.</p>		
<b>Reasons</b>		
<p>Implementation of the Improvement Plan is critical to the Community Priority of Regenerating the Local Economy.</p>		
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## 1. Background

- 1.1 The quarterly progress reports provide updated information on the Best Value Review Improvement Plan, which the Executive agreed on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2004. The attached matrix reports on progress towards each of the Implementation Plan’s twenty targets. The Plan is consistently monitored and kept up to date through the Regeneration Board and administered through the RID.

## **2. Achieving Step Change**

- 2.1 A Business Plan and Programme Management software to track project status for the Barking Town Centre and manage linkages between projects is close to completion. RID will enable CPO powers to be used in support of regeneration activities and increase levels of survey work to support statutory plans and policies. We have agreed the "Vision" for Regeneration, which is now fully incorporated into our objectives.

## **3. Education**

- 3.1 The restructuring of the life long learning division has created improved systems for the collection and interpretation of data from learning providers in key areas of recruitment. This allows benchmarking of data against national best practices.
- 3.2 Work will commence on the new Lifelong Learning Centre on the site of the Barking central library in October, which will provide learning opportunities from basic skills to further and higher education. The Broadway refurbishment is complete and will include a centre for the performing arts.

## **4. Jobs and economy**

- 4.1 We have been highly successful in the second round of bidding for Sustainable Communities Fund resources. We have won £10million, which is 20% of the overall budget allocated from the Fund for the whole of the Thames Gateway.
- 4.2 The new Group Manager for Economic Development has been successfully recruited and will commence employment on 1 November. Good progress has been made on Dagenham Dock as a focus for London's environmental technology businesses. A team of consultants have been appointed and will work on the London Riverside Employment Area Signage and Identity Strategy.

## **5. Transport**

- 5.1 Further phases of the East London Transit (ELT) are under active consideration with Transport for London, (TfL) which could also link over the proposed Thames Gateway Bridge and connect with Greenwich Waterfront Transit south of the river. We are also considering with TfL the technical and business case for Docklands Light Railway (DLR) extension to London Riverside. Responses to neighbouring boroughs have been sent regarding the planning application for the Thames Gateway Bridge. The Borough Spending Plan for capital expenditure for 2005/06 is expected in October 2004. Preparation of the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) started in September 2004 and the first draft will be ready by December. There is a higher borough profile with external transport partnerships since commencement of the Group Manager.

## **6. Housing**

- 6.1 We have established the Housing Futures programme to undertake the option appraisal and we will achieve the decent homes target for 24,000 Council homes by 2010. This links to Barking Town Centre regeneration programmes, with a number

of Council housing estates identified for comprehensive renewal to achieve more socially sustainable communities.

## **7. Distinct Environment**

- 7.1 Work has commenced on establishing an Urban Design Framework for the Borough to pull together and guide creation of a distinctive environment. The Barking Code has been developed as a public realm design for Barking Town Centre. This will provide specific guidance on enhancing the public realm and creating a distinct environment. With ODPM funding the first phase is being implemented and the next two phases with detailed design specifications are being drawn up. Three events were held in September to raise awareness of urban design during Urban Design week.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 This is a progress report on the implementation of the agreed Improvement Plan. There are no financial risk or implications for the Council. Finance Department is content with the report.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1 The report was compiled from contributions by officers in: Regeneration and Environment; Education, Arts and Libraries; Corporate Strategy; Social Services; and Housing and Health. It was discussed by the Regeneration Board (TMT and the Lead Member for Regeneration) on 26 October.

## **Background papers**

Regenerating the Local Economy Cross-Cutting Best Value Review, agreed by the Executive 17<sup>th</sup> February 2004 (Minute 288 refers)