

## ASSEMBLY

4 December 2013

<b>Title: Small Business Friendly Borough Award</b>	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
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<b>Accountable Divisional Director:</b>	Jeremy Grint, Divisional Director Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Accountable Director:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Summary:</b> Earlier this year the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham won the overall award of 'Best All Round Small Business Friendly Borough' at the inaugural Small Business friendly Borough awards. The awards were run by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and London Councils. This report provides the background to the awards and why the Council won.	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>  The Assembly is asked to note the award.	
<b>Reason(s)</b> The award is welcome recognition of the Council's efforts in supporting small business growth which is an essential element of 'Maximising growth opportunities and increasing the household income of borough residents'.	

### 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The inaugural Small Business Friendly Borough Awards were held at the CBI Conference Centre (Centrepoint) on the 5 September 2013. The awards were a joint initiative between the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and London Councils (with media partner London 24). The two parties came together recognising that close engagement between small businesses and Councils is vital to ensure small business friendly policies.
- 1.2 There were four categories: procurement, supporting local trade, cutting red tape and the top prize of small business friendly borough. Councils had to submit detailed entries providing evidence of how they met the criteria. Over two thirds of London Boroughs submitted an entry. LBBDD submitted for the overall and procurement awards.

- 1.3 The awards material states “This award commends Councils for successfully implementing wide-ranging policies to support and develop the local micro and small business community.”
- 1.4 The Leader of Merton Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis (who worked for the Federation of Small Businesses for many years) presented the award and highlighted how LBBB has addressed the challenges of the decline in manufacturing by developing the Single Programme in conjunction with businesses to provide a strong and comprehensive programme of enterprise and business support. **Appendix 1** is London Councils' briefing note about the awards.
- 1.5 The support the Borough currently offers includes:
- A business start up and business support service run through the Barking Enterprise Centre. This offers free advice, support and workshops to entrepreneurs living in the borough and free support to existing businesses.
  - A Business Relationship Manager (reduced from two) who visits businesses giving a wide range of support and encouraging local employment/apprentices where relevant.
  - Supply chain support to encourage firms to win contracts.
  - Supporting a number of retail and industrial business forums/partnerships
  - Annual Business Awards showcasing the Borough's business base and helping businesses promote themselves.
  - Networking activity for businesses to engage with each other, the Council and other stakeholders to help boost trade.
  - A Greening business project helping businesses save money through reducing energy and waste.
  - Inward investment support for businesses looking for premises.

Many of these are set out in the **Appendix 2** leaflet and on the Bold and Dynamic website – a dedicated website for business support and inward investment for Barking and Dagenham ([www.boldanddynamic.co.uk](http://www.boldanddynamic.co.uk)). With reduced funding the extent of these activities will be significantly curtailed in future years.

- 1.6 In addition the Council actively engages with the private sector through a range of ways - through the private sector led Skills, Jobs and Enterprise Board, through the Cabinet Member for Regeneration's regular Roundtable events with the Chamber of Commerce, through the various retail and industrial area forums and the Barking Town Team and through the one to one support offered by the Business Relationship manager.
- 1.7 The Council has promoted the award win through the LBBB, Bold and BDE websites, Facebook and twitter together with a BOLD newsletter. There has been coverage in the B&D Post, East London Advertiser and through the London 24 webpages.
- 1.8 Alongside the win the Borough's businesses have had further success in recent months. Abigail Shillingford of <http://amustnaturals.com> who was “highly commended” in the micro business category in the Borough's own 2013 Business awards was invited to the Prime Minister's office in recognition of her business success. She is a resident of the borough, a Barking Enterprise Centre start up and

assisted by the Council's Business Relationship Manager. Also Roof Ltd, who won Business of the Year at our 2013 awards, have won The Crystal Award for Sustainable Innovation in Business at the East London Chamber of Commerce and Industry/Docklands Business Club Business awards. Barking and Dagenham businesses were extremely well represented at the awards helping further showcase the borough as a good place to do business.

## **2. Consultation**

- 2.1 The Skills, Jobs and Enterprise Board have discussed a similar report and will act as further ambassadors promoting the Borough's achievements.

## **3. Financial Implications**

Implications completed by: Phil Horner, Principal Accountant

- 3.1 The costs involved in achieving this award were met from existing Regeneration and Economic Development Budgets.

## **4. Legal Implications**

Implications completed by: Eldred Taylor-Camara, Legal Group Manager

- 4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:**

None

### **List of appendices:**

Appendix 1: Leaflet for businesses in the borough setting out support available.  
Appendix 2: London Council's Briefing Note for the Awards