

THE EXECUTIVE

14 JUNE 2005

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

REGENERATING THE LOCAL ECONOMY CROSS-CUTTING BEST VALUE REVIEW: QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN		FOR INFORMATION
<i>This report is for the Executive as it deals with issues of a strategic nature.</i>		
Summary This is the fourth progress report on the implementation of the Regeneration Best Value Review Improvement Plan.		
Recommendation The Executive is asked to note this report.		
Reasons Implementation of the Improvement Plan is critical to the Community Priority of Regenerating the Local Economy.		
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1. Background

1.1 This quarterly progress reports provide updated information on the Best Value Review Improvement Plan, which the Executive agreed on 17th February 2004. The attached matrix (Appendix A) reports on progress towards each of the Implementation Plan's twenty targets. The Plan is monitored and kept up to date through the Regeneration Board and administered through the Regeneration Implementation Division (RID).

2. Achieving Step Change

2.1 Primavera programme management software has been purchased and will be installed in the next few months.

2.2 Consultants have been identified to work up a Marketing and Communications Strategy for Barking Town Centre (BTC) and arrangements are in hand to identify a suitable lobbying company for the Borough's regeneration programme.

2.3 Good progress has been made in marketing, publicity and consultation with the local community, including an Equal Opportunities Impact Assessments (EOIA) on Barking Town Centre which is now complete. The next EOIA will focus on the

Economic Development Strategy to consult local people on their views and to take the strategy forward.

2.4 The BTC marketing event held on 21 March proved a great success with over 100 developers attending. Speeches from Lorraine Baldry, Chair of the Urban Development Corporation, Keith Hill MP, Minister for Housing and Planning, Rob Whiteman and Margaret Hodge MP were presented to the audience.

2.5 A funding strategy to enable the Council to maximise its resources to secure external funding has now been developed and a database of funding opportunities is in the process of being set up.

2.6 The Minister for Housing and Planning also visited Barking in March to inspect Government Funded regeneration projects.

3. Education

3.1 A working group is meeting on a regular basis to determine a range of information, advice and guidance services that will be available at the new Lifelong Learning Centre.

3.2 Strong regional and national lead continues in promoting learning within the workplace through its 'Growth Through Learning' and 'Get At Work' programmes. The key findings of this programme have been presented to the Princess Royal as an example of effective practice.

3.3 The initial curriculum framework has been completed for the Lifelong Learning Centre to include Skills for Life, ICT courses and progressive qualification pathways to undergraduate level in key public sector areas. Residents will be made aware of the courses and qualifications available through publicity material and leaflets currently being designed. A website is to be developed to link training to key providers in the area.

3.4 A successful Careers Fair was held in March at The Broadway, focusing on career opportunities in health and social care sectors. A further event for cultural and creative industries will be planned in the autumn.

3.5 To improve information sources to young people from the comfort of their own home and from school, a web based career education and guidance resource is being introduced. The resource, a programme known as 'Fast Tomato', contains a rich source of information on courses offered at GCSE and post-16 level and weblinks to all Further and Higher education providers both locally and nationally.

3.6 The 'Wiring up the Gascoigne' programme's initial phase has been completed and a celebration event was held in April for those residents that participated to mark their achievements.

4. Jobs and economy

4.1 The Economic Development team are working towards developing Business Improvement Districts in the industrial area and the town centre.

- 4.2 A procurement event was held in February 2005 under the Building East programme. To help develop the ability of local businesses to compete for regeneration construction contracts an initial event was held at CEME in December and two further events in February of this year.
- 4.3 With the success of Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) funding, a 3 acre Environmental Technology Resource Centre for London (ETRCL) site with an adjacent 3.44 acres of land was purchased. A new Business Plan is being commissioned and a preferred developer for the ETRCL is underway.
- 4.4 Details of the first phase of the Industrial Infrastructure project was finalised and works to site began in April, which is essential for inward investment into the borough.

5. Transport

- 5.1 The Consultation Draft Local Implementation Plan (LIP) and consultation strategy have been agreed by the Executive and consultations will be underway in the summer.
- 5.2 ODPM funding has been secured to construct a new Interchange at Dagenham Dock. This will link C2C, Docklands Light Railway (DLR), ELT (East London Transit) and local bus services for the Dagenham Dock Sustainable Business Park, the new community at South Dagenham and the existing population in Dagenham.
- 5.3 Consultation on ELT is due to start late Summer 2005 led by Transport for London (TfL). To assist with the lobbying of the first phase of the ELT a Consultant is due to be appointed in May/June.

6. Housing

- 6.1 The joint English Partnership/LBBD study of affordable housing provisions across the borough is now complete and the production of a housing regeneration strategy for Barking Town Centre will be submitted to the Executive in May.

7. Financial Implications

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

8. Consultation

- 8.1 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 on 24 May.

Background Papers

- Regeneration Best Value Improvement Plan
- Regeneration Best Value Improvement Plan: Progress Report June 2005