

**Meeting Minutes: Roman Road Implementation Group**

**Location: Room 57, Level 5 Anchorage House**

**Date: 9am, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

<b>Attendees</b>		
Cllr Josh Peck	Deputy Leader, LBTH	JP
Penny Alexander	Partnership Solutions	PA
Chris Horton	Town Centre Project Coordinator	CH
Jill Embleton	Empty Properties Officer	LH
Lorna Hughes	Neighbourhood Manager	LH
Cecilia Clarke	Communications Officer	CC
Marissa Hernandez	Planning Policy Officer	MH
Chris Chubb	Group Manager LETS Teams	CCh
Gavin Dooley	Lap 5 & 6 Director	GD
Jonathan Arnold	Business Manager, Corporate Property	JA
Juanita Haynes	Information and Equalities Team Leader	JH
Margaret Cooper	Head of Transportation and Highways	MC
<b>Apologies</b>		
Sue Hinds	Access to employment Manager	SH
Toks Osibogun	Head of Corporate Property Services	TO
Cllr Mark Francis	Lead Member for Development and Renewal	MF

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions/ apologies/matters arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP asked all attendees to introduce themselves and describe their role with the Council</li> <li>Previous Meeting Minutes (8<sup>th</sup> April, 2009). No changes were asked for.</li> <li>JP asked GD whether he had obtained information on the opening date for the new Iceland Store. GD confirmed that the latest information he had received was that it would be opening the end of August 2009. He confirmed that Skillsmatch would be looking to ensure that Borough residents were linked into the new job opportunities created through the scheme.</li> <li>JP asked CC whether or not a budget had been located for the promotion of the Farmer's Market. <b>Action:</b> CC to follow up</li> </ul>	CC
<b>2</b>	<b><u>Town Centre Spatial Strategy Update</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MH confirmed that a number of high level issues relating to the TCSS had been discussed at DMT, and that the views of RRIP had been considered. MH also confirmed that, separate from this, a meeting took place between Counsel and Owen Whaley to take forward specific recommendations with regard to Roman Road. This included a discussion on what the level of need is for town centre creative and community use within Roman Road and how this need might be assessed.</li> <li>MH confirmed that there would also need to an assessment of how temporary these uses would be and whether it was the right approach to encourage interim uses.</li> <li>JP stated that there was a need to evidence what community and creative uses would bring to Roman Road Town Centre and whether this was the right approach.</li> <li>JA asked what the reasons are for shops being empty at Roman</li> </ul>	CH/MH

	<p>Road. CH confirmed that the feedback from letting agents had been that there were a number of reasons for this including parking, the scale and dimension of the units themselves, the condition of the properties and lack of public transport connectivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GD stated that it would be important to look at what uses are required and how these uses can be actively delivered. CH asked JA what property services position was on the high number of empty retail properties within Roman Road Town Centre. JA stated that the Council did not own properties within Roman Road Town Centre and that therefore had fewer powers to effect the situation than would otherwise be the case. JA stated that one option would be to purchase the leases for properties with Roman Road but that there would be significant costs attached to this.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b><u>Business Improvement Districts</u></b></p> <p>PA highlighted the following to all attendees, setting out the way in which BIDS operate and have been delivered in town centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Business Improvement District is a partnership between a local authority and the local business community to develop projects and services that will benefit the trading environment within the boundary of a clearly defined commercial area.</li> <li>BIDs allow businesses in a defined area and business sector(s) to vote on which additional services they want to invest in, to improve their trading environment</li> <li>The vote is open to tenants - if a majority, both by number and by rateable value, approve the proposal, all ratepayers will contribute through their business rates</li> <li>BIDs give local businesses the power to effect changes that will benefit them in their local community. Improvements may include extra safety/security, cleansing and environmental measures, improved promotion of the area, improved events, and greater advocacy on key issues, but the legislation does not put a limit on what products or services are provided</li> <li>Businesses have the opportunity to agree on the projects for which they are contributing and to vote in a ballot on the amount of money they are prepared to raise, enabling them to become involved in the administration of the schemes themselves</li> <li>BIDs are operated by not-for-profit partnership organisations</li> <li>The interests of large and small businesses are protected through a system which requires a successful vote to have a simple majority in both votes cast and rateable value of votes cast</li> <li>Businesses must be able to sustain the additional cost - if they are not viable the BID levy raise enough income to make it a worthwhile venture</li> <li>Once voted for, the levy becomes mandatory on all defined ratepayers and is treated as a statutory debt</li> <li>The plan voted for has a lifespan of 5 years and further proposals will have to be reaffirmed through a vote</li> <li>Local Authorities play an important facilitating role and in particular are charged with legal responsibilities, including the provision of the ratings data to calculate the BID levy, the collection and enforcement of the BID levy via a ring-fenced BID Revenue Account that is then passed straight to the BID company, the organisation of the formal BID ballot, and the preparation and commitment to the baseline service agreements.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CH asked whether or not there had been any development in relation to ensuring that freeholders as well as leaseholder pay into the scheme. PA stated that there had been and that she was hopeful that there would new legislation on this issue.</li> <li>▪ JP stated that whilst he did not think Roman Road Town Centre was ready for a BID at this present stage, but it was interesting to know how they worked for future reference.</li> </ul>	
4	<p><b><u>LETS Team Update</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CCh confirmed that following a recent graffiti audit for the whole of the Roman Road, his team had received the required disclaimers from the owners of the respective properties at Roman Road Town Centre.</li> <li>▪ He also highlighted that there had been a particular problem at Roman Road with regard to fly-posting and that this had been acerbated by a number of travelling circuses. CCh confirmed that a number of these had since been removed. JP noted that he had noticed that a number of fly-posters had been taken down.</li> <li>▪ <b>Action:</b> CCh stated that the LETS department were drafting a strategy with regard to Graffiti and that he would be in a better position to brief the group on the future.</li> <li>▪ CCh advised that was also a problem with the number of businesses who do not have contracts with Veolia and are dumping waste. In response to this, he stated that his team are ensuring that S34 notices are made.</li> <li>▪ Other initiatives include ensuring that trade waste is no longer visible on the streets and that a new sack collection service is introduced. This would be the same sack collection service that is currently applicable to residential waste storage. CCh confirmed that issue of waste collection is still a significant issue.</li> <li>▪ GD asked CCh whether the issue of street washing was being adequately addressed at Roman Road Town Centre. MC stated that Veolia did a deep clean for Brick Lane. JP asked whether or not the same service could be provided to Roman Road. <b>Action:</b> MC and CCh agreed to look into the delivery of deep clean and magicote of Chrisp Street Town Centre.</li> <li>▪ CCh is also looking at addressing the unsightliness of litter bins and indicated that his team would be looking into the feasibility of painting them.</li> </ul>	<p>CCh</p> <p>CCh/MC</p> <p>CCh</p>
5	<p><b><u>Shop Local</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LH confirmed that the Shop Local Project would include the provision and distribution of a booklet three times a year which would contain useful information about the shopping 'offer' at Roman Road Town Centre. This is only one part of the project which aims to promote the centres unique selling points.</li> <li>▪ The booklets are to be informed by the traders and will be produced by Angel, a specialist communications consultant. There will also be a website and a range of stickers, leaflets, badges, etc.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP stated that he would like to see the most recent branding for the next meeting.</li> </ul>	
6	<p><b><u>Traffic and Highway Projects in the Pipeline</u></b></p> <p>MC confirmed the following in relation to existing and proposed projects for Roman Road:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OPTEMS funding (OPTEMS = Section 106 funding for transport impacts of the Olympic Park) is requested to assist with improving the junction at Tredegar Road A12 with enhanced pedestrian/ cycle links with the signalization of the main junction and an associated bid for signalling the adjacent mini roundabout at Fairfield Road to assist pedestrian crossing movement.</li> <li>Another OPTEMS bid will be made for a traffic study of the Bow area. If it receives sufficient funding this study will be delivered in the next year. Unlocking current traffic management to reducing traffic flow on St Stephens Road and other routes would be considered a priority as part of this work and it could also inform the infrastructure proposals in the F1sh Island masterplan.</li> <li>Improvements to the Bow interchange are planned as part of the High Street 2012 project. This would focus on Cycle and pedestrian improvements at junction along A11–A118 (both sides) to improve connectivity. This work will be put forward as an OPTEMS bid shared between LBTH, TFL and LBN.</li> <li>Connect 2 funding will assist with ensuring improved connectivity from the Meath Gardens bridge currently under construction across the Grand Union Canal and through Haverfield Road. This will create greater connections both into Roman Road Town Centre and on to St Stephen's Road from Bethnal Green.</li> <li>It is proposed that OPTEMS funding will assist in improving accessibility and connectivity in and around the Olympic area and that this could include ensuring greater connection between the Greenway and Victoria Park, and Hackney Wick station to Victoria Park.</li> <li>The Victoria Park Masterplan recognises the need for access improvements to the park and this is to include improved pedestrian and cycle access. This would complement Green Grid planning. The key improvements are targeted at Grove Rd, St Stephens Rd and Cadogan Terrace.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Empty Residential Properties at Roman Road Town Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JB confirmed that there are currently 13 empty residential properties within the boundaries of Roman Road Town Centre that are empty. The council is able to support the refurbishment and general improvement of empty properties and there are presently grants available at the rate of £15,000 for studio flats and up to £35,000 for 2/3 bed flats.</li> <li>CH stated that he and JE had taken an informal audit of the empty residential properties on Roman Road and that they would link this information in to the shop front improvement programme.</li> <li>Further to this, CH stated that both he and JB had observed that where there was an empty residential property above a shop there was invariably an empty retail property.</li> <li>CCh asked whether or not there was a waste provision requirement to the improvements made to empty residential properties. JE stated that there was not. CCh stated that he would like this to be explored in order that waste collection/storage services can be</li> </ul>	

	improved. <b>Action</b> CCh and JE and CCh to discuss further within implementation contex	CCH/ JE
8.	<b><u>Development Implementation Update</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CH confirmed that the tender process for The Roman Road Skills, Advice and Training Project is underway</li> <li>▪ CH confirmed that funding for the Shop Front Improvement scheme had been secured and that he was in the process of talking to the legal team on final improvement and that subsequently information would be put on the web. A flyer was also to be produced and will be presented through the Roman Road Implementation Group</li> </ul>	
9.	<b>AOB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LH informed the group that a petition had been received with regard to street drinking and that LBTH were working with the police and community safety teams to address the main issues. JP stated that it was important that this was followed up to allay resident and shop keepers concerns.</li> </ul>	