

Roman Road Town Centre Implementation Group
Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Roman Road Implementation Group
Location: Room 67a, Level 6 Anchorage House
Date: 20th January 2010

Attendees:

Council		
Cllr Josh Peck	Deputy Leader, LBTH	D&R
Cllr Marc Francis	Lead Member for Development and Renewal, LBTH	THP
Sara Gullo	Corporate Communications Officer, LBTH	CC
David Saunders	Head of Market Services, LBTH	CLC
Azizul Goni	Senior Environmental Officer, LBTH	CLC
Jill Embleton	Empty Property Officer, LBTH	D&R
Trevor Rudder	Consultant	Angel
Louise Wallace	Neighbourhood Manager, LBTH	THP
Christopher Horton	Town Centre Project Coordinator, LBTH	D&R
Juanita Haynes	Information and Equalities Team Leader, LBTH	D&R
Margaret Cooper	Service Head – Transportation and Highways, LBTH	CLC
Oliver Davey	Consultant	Urban Initiatives
Ian Hingley	Consultant	Urban Initiatives

Apologies:

Council		
Daniel Fordham	Programme Manager, 2012 Olympics Team, LBTH	D&R
Marissa Hernandez	Principle Policy Planner, LBTH	D&R
Cecilia Clarke	Communications Officer, LBTH	THP

Item		Action
1	<p><u>Introductions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP asked all attendees to introduce themselves and describe their role within the Council. 	
2	<p><u>Shop Local/ Christmas Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LV stated that the Christmas Programme had been a success. The offer to residents included a brass band, a man dressed as Father Christmas, informative hand-outs and a temporary ice-skating rink. Sufficient funding had been secured from a range of sponsors although Old Ford Housing Association had failed to commit financial support. JP asked what the impact of the Christmas Programme had been on general levels of footfall and spend. DS stated that, although these were not officially recorded, the impact was widely believed to have been positive. TR stated that as part of Shop Local bags, stickers and information packs branded under the slogan 'Roman Road – Heart of the East End' had been distributed to 2,000 homes within a one mile radius of the town centre boundary. JP asked TR whether he could have figures for the number of people who were using or who had accessed the Roman Road Shop Local website. MF stated that he had not personally received the Shop Local pack despite living within close proximity of the town centre. CH responded by saying that he would ensure additional estates and housing blocks received this. MF stated that Shop Local needed to have a greater visual presence both within the town centre and the wider area. CH acknowledged this and stated 	CH/TR

	<p>that he was working with Angel Consultants to ensure banners, flags and posters were widely evident within the Bow area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH stated that as part of the original Project Initiation Document he was working with Angel Consultants to ensure a second Shop Local booklet was produced and disseminated. The Project Initiation Document committed Angel Consultants to produce three booklets over the course of the project. JP stated that whilst he acknowledged the importance of being true to the original project plan three booklets was perhaps too many. JP also stated that it was important not to duplicate and send out the same information to residents. • CH stated that he would amend the Project Initiation Document to ensure that only two booklets were produced. He also stated that he noted JP's point with regard to avoiding duplication. • JP asked CH and TR what the progress had been with regards to the customer loyalty element of Shop Local. CH stated that he was working with Angel to produce a customer loyalty card applicable only within Roman Road Town Centre. TR stated that in reality a customer loyalty scheme would be hard to implement in view of the reluctance of some of the traders and shopkeepers to recognise its value. • CH stated that whilst he acknowledged some of the issues that might inhibit effective delivery the customer loyalty scheme was essential to improving footfall and bringing back confidence to the area. CH/TR to recruit at least five shopkeepers and traders to the customer loyalty scheme and to plan design of customer loyalty card. CH stated that the customer loyalty card would be enclosed within the second Shop Local booklet and would be sent to all households within a mile radius of the town centre before June 2010. 	CH/TR
3	<p><u>Roman Road Public Realm Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OD stated that Urban Initiatives had been commissioned to deliver a public realm strategy for Roman Road town centre. The strategy is to be drafted between the period of December 2009 and April 2010. • An execution plan, outlining the stages of delivery, outcomes and outputs had been forwarded to the appropriate officers and had subsequently been signed off. • Further to this, a SWOT analysis, scoping the areas for intervention had also been forwarded to commissioning officers. Moving forward, two scenarios for public realm intervention at Roman Road are to be produced. • The first scenario would look at short-term interventions achievable within a restrictive funding framework. The second scenario would outline interventions possible with a higher amount of secured funding over a longer period of time. • Both scenarios would include detailed schedule of works and overall cost estimates for delivery. A time management strategy is also an integral part of the strategy. • JP stated that there was a very real need to declutter Roman Road. At present, it is characterised by an overabundance of needless bollards, barriers and physical restrictions. IH stated that the strategy would seek to address this issue in detail. • IH also stated that Urban Initiatives had been engaged in similar work with Camden Council and had made massive inroads in simplifying and rationalising street design and public realm. • OD agreed with IH by stating that it was important to try to rationalise what is currently in place and to remove what doesn't need to be there. IH stated that it is recommended to remove unneeded signage, street furniture and bollards as a starting point. • MF commented that it was good to see Cardigan Road included as one of the strategic areas. Further work will be needed to assess the role of the market and its surrounding arterial roads. 	

	<p><u>Roman Road Market</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS stated that Susan Lewis was taking the lead on Roman Road market in her operational remit. At present, the market is only two-thirds full and requires attention. • Two new traders have expressed an interest in locating there. The hours that market traders are currently working are between 10am and 2pm on weekdays and 10am to 4pm on a Saturday. CH stated that operational times for market trading seemed particularly limited during weekdays. • DS responded by saying the reason for short trading hours at weekdays was that enough money was being made within the more specific timeframe. DS stated that he is planning an evening market to deliver products more suitable for professionals working in the area. • MF stated that he was doubtful as to whether an evening market would appeal to this demographic at this time of day. CH agreed with MF stating that most commuters that live in the area do not access the town centre directly. CH stated that there are no significant transport nodes within the town centre and therefore most people use residential roads on their way home from work, rather than the town centre itself. • DS stated that there had been a continental market just prior to Christmas. However, the number of visitors was limited due to extremely adverse weather conditions. It was this market that may be converted to a food-based evening offer. • Currently, the providers of the continental market are interested in trading on Thursdays and working in the evening. The continental market provides 20 stores. DS stated that the market traders and shopkeepers meeting held prior to Christmas, and convened by CH, had been successful. • DS is to employ a graduate within his team to look at inward investment and strategic market improvements. DS informed attendees that the graduate was due to be in post by the 15 February 2010. DS to inform group on the role of the graduate at the next meeting. 	DS
5	<p><u>Development implementation Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH stated that the shop front improvement project had committed £11,250 in funding for the purpose of architects fees and £73,500 for eligible works. The total amount of funding committed was £84,750. • JP asked that he and MF receive a full list of which properties are going to receive shop front grant funding. CH stated that he would ask the officer overseeing this to provide this list but that there may be some sensitivity with releasing this data into a public forum. • CH stated that the implementation of shop fronts followed a long process of design input, planning application consideration and the drawing up of leases. • Vision On have recruited a number of people to their course and have been received warmly by traders and shopkeepers (15 traders and shopkeepers approx) • CH stated that a premises had been booked for the Vision On training that is in close proximity to the town centre. • The purpose of the training is to provide greater awareness of visual merchandising and how to improve the retail offer. 	CH
6	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MF stated that the fact 2 Gladstone Place remained a demolition site was a real concern to residents. CH stated that as far as he was aware Tower Hamlets planners were still discharging the necessary conditions. An update on the site is to be assured for the next meeting 	CH