

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
AND SCRUTINY SUB-
COMMITTEES**

Date of Meeting: 7 October 2014

Subject: Town Centre Regeneration – Impact of the Outer London Fund in Harrow.

Responsible Officer: Caroline Bruce

**Scrutiny Lead
Member area:** Cllr J. Anderson
Cllr P. Osborn

Exempt: No

Enclosures: GLA Regeneration Committee,
Background Charts & Data,
Regeneration Works

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report provides the information submitted to the GLA Regeneration Committee on 13 December 2013, together with the background data. That information together with the Scrutiny Report on the 17 September 2013 on the District Centre provides a background to the direction of travel taken to regenerate the Harrow town centre and the district centres.

Recommendations:

The lessons from the submissions to the GLA Regeneration Committee are noted.

Section 2 – Report

This delivery of the OLF programme and regeneration of Harrow Town Centre helps the Council deliver its corporate priorities to make a difference for business, and make a difference for communities.

In 2011, and 2012 Harrow Council underwent a competitive process to secure £2,615,185 in funding through Round 1 and Round 2 of the Outer London Fund. The money was respectively for North Harrow District Centre (£360,400) and Harrow Town Centre (£496,000), and Round 2 funding for Harrow Town Centre (£1,758,785). The Round 1 funding for both areas shared some common themes; marketing and promotion, involvement of young people, events, the development of town centre management and partnerships.

The Round 2 funding was used to develop a Business Improvement District in Harrow Town Centre, provide match funding to the improvements in St Ann's Road and Havelock Place, and to the creation of a Town Park and Performance Space / Café in Lowlands Recreation Ground.

A report to Harrow Council's OSC in September 2013 outlined the impact of regeneration in North Harrow and whether those lessons could be transferred to other district centres.

The GLA Regeneration Committee invited Harrow Council and Brent Council to discuss the Outer London Fund on 13 December 2013. Harrow's submissions are enclosed. Those submissions outline how OLF was used, which aspects of the programme were successful, what had gone less well, the application process, support from the GLA, and what happens next. The accompanying charts show jobs created, vacancy rates events held, and public realm improvements. The report and attachments provide OSC the same opportunity as the GLA Regeneration Committee to comment on the regeneration of Harrow Town Centre.

In addition to the attached reports, the OSC may wish to note that the public realm improvements in St Ann's Road have enhanced drainage and improved the ease of cleaning. The granite materials were chosen for their durability, low maintenance costs and ability to bear vehicular traffic. The removal of the steps outside St Ann's Shopping Centre has improved accessibility, and the removal of the clutter in St Ann's Road has improved sightlines and the visibility of St Georges Shopping Centre. The attached paper "Regeneration Works" presents a visual demonstration of the improvements.

There has been progress since the report to the GLA In December 2013. This has included businesses voting "Yes" in the ballot for a Business Improvement District (BID) in December and creation of a BID in April 2014. The report to the GLA

Regeneration Committee stated that the Town Park and Performance Space will not be completed “in this financial year” (2013/14). The GLA subsequently agreed to carry over underspend from 2013/14 into 2014/15 to enable the completion of the Lowlands element of our regeneration programme. The work in Lowlands is now moving at pace and is on course for completion of the park and performance space / café in February 2015.

The Performance Space and Café will provide opportunities for learners to gain real experience in marketing, finance, events management, catering, and the performing arts. This in turn will support the council’s commitment to create apprenticeships and jobs for 500 young people.

The experience of the OLF programme has shown that events have been a successful tool to attract visitors and increase footfall in Harrow Metropolitan Town Centre. This is visually demonstrated in the attached “Regeneration Works” document taken at the November 2013 switch on event. The staging of dance, music, and drama at Lowlands provides a new tool to increase footfall and spend in the Town Centre, supporting businesses, safeguarding jobs, and helping create new jobs.

The end of the OLF programme will only signal the end of an early phase of the regeneration of the town centre. The council has submitted further bids for funding to the New Homes Bonus and Housing Zones to accelerate the implementation of the Area Action Plan and deliver new homes and jobs for Harrow.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Mark Billington, Head of Economic Development and Research, tel 020 8736 6533

Background Papers: OLF prospectus, GLA Grant Agreement, Submission GLA Regeneration Committee.