

# REPORT FOR: CABINET

---

<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 March 2012
<b>Subject:</b>	Outer London Fund Round 2 Harrow Town Centre
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andrew Trehern, Corporate Director Place Shaping
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Keith Ferry, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the rationale for entering into an Agreement with the Mayor of London (acting through the Greater London Authority (GLA)) to secure money from Round Two of the Outer London Fund to support Harrow Town Centre

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Agree that Harrow Council enters into a funding agreement with the GLA in respect of Round Two of the Outer London Fund, in order to deliver the programme of improvements for Harrow Town Centre.

2. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Place Shaping, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise, to enter into the funding agreement with the GLA.

**Reason: (For recommendation)**

By entering into a funding agreement with the GLA, Harrow Council will receive a sum up to £1,758,750 for Harrow Town Centre, which will be matched by £300,000 from the council's capital programme.

The funds provide a means to deliver the corporate priority of "Supporting our Town Centre, our local shopping centres and businesses", and to take forward the Core Strategy and emerging Area Action Plan for the Heart of Harrow.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introductory paragraph**

The Mayor of London's Outer London Fund (OLF) is designed to support the development of vibrant centres, with economic and cultural energy. Applications for funding are place specific and can be for a town centre, district centre, local shopping centre, or shopping parade. Round Two OLF programmes must be split between 80% capital and 20% revenue, and include match funding. Harrow Council has been offered £1,758,750, of which £1,366,885 will be capital and £391,900 revenue. Harrow Council has identified £300,000 from its capital budget towards the direct costs of the programme, and section 106 funding to compliment the programme. The programme needs to be delivered between April 2012 and March 2014.

The payment conditions for the Grant require Harrow Council being able to evidence spend in accordance with the application for funds and to report on how the project objectives are being delivered. Payment will be in arrears.

The funds secured will create a town park and create a Performance Space providing new cultural facilities to serve local communities in the Town Centre. The Performance Space will be used to attract people to the town centre through events. The OLF programme will also focus on initiating sustainable town centre management through a Business Improvement District. Finally the programme will support pedestrians and motorists to better navigate through and around the Town Centre through the installation of Legible London signage and Car Park Space Indication Signs.

### **Options considered**

Option A – Accept from GLA funding to support Corporate Priorities, the implementation of the Core Strategy and emerging area Action Plan, and provide appropriate match funding.

Option B – Do nothing, do not provide any match funding and miss the opportunity to bring new investment into Harrow.

## Background

The proposed programme for the Town Centre builds on the aspirations for Lowlands Recreation Ground and Havelock Place detailed in the Area Action Plan for Harrow Town Centre.

The development of the Round 2 bid followed extensive internal and external consultation. External consultation was undertaken with the: Enterprising Harrow Group, Recession Busting Group, Large Employer Network, External Funding Group, the Town Centre Forum, and the Major Development Panel.

In addition, online consultation was conducted via the consultation portal 'Have Your Say'. There are 254 organisations, with an interest in planning or environment issues, registered on the portal database. Each was notified of our proposals for Harrow Town Centre and was invited to make a response.

The funding provided by the GLA will deliver the following

Objective	Impact	Outcome
Create A Town Park At Lowlands Recreation Ground .....	Improved public realm. Create Harrow as a destination for performance. Demonstrate Harrow Council's commitment to the implementation of the Area Action Plan. Unlock the development potential through the creation of the infrastructure for cultural life in the Metropolitan Town Centre.	Increased number of visitors and shoppers. Increased income in town centre retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. Occupation of empty office units. Occupation of empty vacant shop premises. Increased developer and investor confidence. Greater community cohesion resulting from celebration of Harrow's diverse communities, Improved perception of the Town Centre.
To Improve Local Transport Connections, Focused On Measures To Promote Legibility And Ease Of Movement Within The Town Centre	Improved pedestrian and vehicle access in the Town Centre. Greater movement around the town centre and its environs. Improved public realm.	Increased number of visitors and shoppers. Improved perception of the Town Centre.

<p>Build A Sustainable Management, Marketing And Events Structure For Harrow Town Centre</p>	<p>Provide leadership and co-ordination in town centre management. Provide a voice and vehicle for action for the business community. Host events during and after the Outer London Fund funded programme has ended.</p>	<p>Support the creation of a Business Improvement District. Delivery of events in the town centre. Raise additional revenue to deliver additional activities in Harrow Metropolitan Town Centre.</p>
--	--	--

The capital elements of the proposal target early “high profile” interventions that support the emerging spatial vision for the town centre as the “heart” of the borough – and encompass our strategic vision to place the Town Centre as the “capital” of metroland – through the creation of new vibrant, attractive and diverse suite of spaces, supporting a range of commercial and informal activities and uses which create depth and richness to the town centre offer, consistent with its metropolitan status and latent investment potential.

## Current situation

Harrow Council is delivering the Round One Outer London Fund programme for Harrow Town Centre.

Projects delivered to date include

- Festive Lights
- Light installation for Diwali – giant tulip light garden, and light installation for Christmas – giant snowdrops and alliums
- Shop local event
- Installation of banners designed by school children and celebrating the diversity of faith in Harrow
- Launch of Harrow Community Radio on FM to promote the town centre
- Visual Merchandising training to local independent traders
- Web site to promote Harrow Town Centre

The light installations proved popular and received national and local press coverage. At the shop local event, 1,000 bags were given away in an hour. Harrow Community Radio reported the creation of 37 volunteering opportunities, an increased audience (based on social media traffic and increased internet hits) and being a more sustainable enterprise as a result of funding. Praise has been received from schools participating in the design of the banners for the town centre, and the on-going Harrow into Work programme has reported 50 placements. The council is currently planning the implementation of a Dance and Food Festival on 17<sup>th</sup> March, and the launch of a web site to promote the town centre at the end of March.

There was an increase in footfall at both St Georges and St Ann's shopping centres in December 2011 against December 2010.

The successful application to the Mayor will ensure the continuation of events in Harrow Town Centre, and will provide the infrastructure to host music, song and dance from a purpose built performance space in Lowlands Recreation Ground.

This funding will complement the ongoing programme of work planned for in the council's capital programme which includes public realm improvements in College Road, Kimberley Road, St Ann's Road, Station Road, and St Johns Road.

## **Implications of the Recommendation**

### **Resources and costs**

Harrow Council has allocated £2.1m within its capital programme to Harrow Town Centre and, by providing £300,000 from its capital budget to the OLF programme it will secure £1,758,750. The development of a Business Improvement District (BIDs) within the OLF programme will provide a sustainable revenue stream for businesses to control. BIDs typically use their funds to provide town centre management, hold events, and provide additional cleaning and security.

### **Staffing/workforce**

The OLF programme provides funding for a Town Centre Manager, Project Officer, BID promotions officer and project management for the capital projects within the programme.

### **Equalities impact**

An initial equality impact assessment was produced and found no negative impacts. The provision of accessible performance space to all will add to the enjoyment of the public realm. The provision of a BID which focuses on attracting shoppers through events, reducing crime, and improving cleansing will have a positive impact. Evaluation of Under One Sky shows that events and performances can be used to promote community cohesion.

### **Financial Implications**

The council will provide £300,000 from its capital programme towards the project costs of the OLF programme. This will secure up to £1,758,750 in total, of which £1,366,885 will be capital and £391,900 will be revenue. Section 106 monies from Neptune Point will act as complementary spending to the activities funded through the Outer London Fund. This section 106 includes funding for improving the capacity of the bus station, transport surveys and town centre initiatives. It will therefore contribute to activities to improve transport connections. The funding secured from the GLA will compliment capital spend

in the town centre in College Road, Kimberley Road, St Ann's Road, Station Road, and St Johns Road.

The tables below summarise the total project values, funding source and revenue capital split.

	Total project value	Total OLF	Total External	Total Council	Capital				Revenue		
					Total	OLF	External	Council	Total	OLF	External
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Total for all years</b>	<b>2,396</b>	<b>1,759</b>	337	300	<b>1,917</b>	1,367	250	300	<b>479</b>	392	87
<b>2012-13</b>	<b>1,556</b>	<b>1,219</b>	37	300	<b>1,322</b>	1,022		300	<b>234</b>	197	37
<b>2013-14</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>540</b>	300	-	<b>595</b>	345	250		<b>245</b>	195	50

All funding is new with the exception of the Councils capital match capital funding that is part of the 2012-13 Capital MTFs and is subject to Council approval.

## Legal Comments

The funding agreement provides for the monies to be paid to the Council by the GLA on the basis of a grant rather than a loan. The monies are only repayable to the GLA in the event of a breach of the terms of the grant agreement by the Council.

The creation of a BID is regulated by a statutory process set out in the Local Government Act 2003 and is subject to a majority of the affected non domestic ratepayers being in favour of the proposal.

## Performance Issues

The performance measures detailed below are measurable, meaningful and will incur no additional cost. The Pedestrian Count will be conducted on an annual basis as part of the AMR and is a measure of how many people are visiting a centre in a given period. The Reputation Tracker clearly demonstrates how people feel about their town centre. The vacancy rate is a clear indication of the economic health of a shopping centre. The lower the vacancy rate the greater the indication of business interest in an area and its sustainability.

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target June 2014</b>
Pedestrian Count November 2011 Annual measures	1,807,860	1847689
Baseline Reputation Tracker November 2011 Annual Measure	18% Harrow Town Centre improved	23% Harrow Town Centre improved.
Vacancy Rate June 2011 Quarterly Measure	7.29% Combined Frontage Vacant 6.33% Vacant premises	6% Combined Frontage Vacant 5.5% Vacant premises

## **Environmental Impact**

The rationale for Legible London provided by Transport for London states that “Walking can lead to major benefits for the transport system, economy and public health, and predictable, consistent and authoritative public information is the key to building pedestrians’ confidence”.

The report goes on to state that many pedestrian signage systems in central London are incoherent and often confusing. This is certainly the case in Harrow where the college is not on College Road, and the station is not on Station Road. The promotion of walking through the installation of wayfinding signage in Harrow would have a positive environmental impact.

The installation of car parking space indication signs would reduce the “hunting” of parking spaces and direct motorists directly to where there are spaces.

## **Procurement**

The council will use suppliers currently procured through the procurement process. A design competition for the park and performance space will be developed with the GLA.

## **Risk Management Implications**

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? Yes

A separate risk register has been completed and will be included within the Place Shaping Directorate risk register when approval is given for the pilot to be developed.

## **Equalities implications**

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes. Please see the Equalities Impact section above.

## Corporate Priorities

Supporting our Town Centre, our local shopping centres and businesses

### Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 14 February 2012		
Name: Matthew Adams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 8 February 2012		

### Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Alex Dewsnap	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director Partnership, Development and Performance
Date: 27 January 2012		

### Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 25 January 2012		



## **Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Mark Billington, Head Economic Development and Research, TEL: 020 8736 6533.

### **Background Papers:**

1. Round Two Outer London Fund Bid
2. Outer London Fund Criteria
3. Correspondence: Additional Information Harrow Town Centre bid, Additional council costs, Offer Letter

**Call-In Waived by the  
Chairman of Overview  
and Scrutiny  
Committee**

**NOT APPLICABLE**

*[Call-in applies]*