



## Community & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Jackie Roberts  
Town Centre Manager  
Date: 3 February 2011  
Open

### Kidderminster Town Centre Manager – Annual Update Report

#### 1. Purpose of Briefing Paper

- 1.1 This paper seeks to update Members on the work, progress and achievements of the Kidderminster Town Centre Manager over the last 12 months.

#### 2. Background Information

- 2.1 The District Council is currently funding the Kidderminster Town Centre Manager (TCMr) position for 18.5 hours per week for a fixed term of three years from 3rd March 2008-2011 in dual role collaboration with Henderson Global Investors, the Owners of Weavers Wharf. The agreement was due to end on 2nd March 2011 but has now been extended to 31st May 2011.
- 2.2 The concept of town centre management is similar in concept to that of Shopping Centre Management with managers often having responsibility for co-ordinating a range of functions including cleansing; environmental maintenance; events; marketing and promotion; customer service; security; and business liaison. The model is now widespread throughout the UK although to varying degrees with a representative body in the form of the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM).

#### 3. Purpose of Briefing Paper

- 3.1 The following report provides a snapshot of some of the actions undertaken by the Town Centre Manager during the year 2009/10.
- 3.2 Throughout the previous 2 years the TCMr had assessed how embedded and effective the structure and working groups of the Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership had proven to be. An early task during 2009/10 was to assess whether the current business plan and model are fit for purpose or whether a more holistic and visionary strategy is required. From this exercise the TCMr has supported the Regeneration Team to start formulating a town centre strategy and

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reviewed the future/need for Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership in its current format.

- 3.3 Initially the role was operated distinctly independent of the District Council but has increasingly been embedded within the Policy and Regeneration Team of the Council in order to provide managerial and budgetary support and alignment with strategic priorities such as the ReWyre Initiative. This is also in recognition of the leadership and support gap within the Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership itself.

### 4. Key Outputs

- 4.1 A great deal has been achieved over the last 12 months by collaboratively working within the Council and with businesses, general public, police, schools, youth groups and local special interest groups. Landmark projects for the year included:
- Coordination of the Christmas Lights Switch On including the competition, fundraising, co-ordinating Christmas trading hours, advertising and town centre carol service.
  - Publication of the first Town Centre Christmas promotional 'InKidderminster' leaflet which was fully funded from advertising revenue and ran a press campaign to help fund the lights with limited success.
  - The planning and delivery of the first Kidderminster Canal Festival which was held in August 2010 with a three day festival including stage entertainment, a fair, markets and 3 canal boats. Although the event was adversely affected by poor weather and some antisocial behaviour, it was generally regarded to be a success with the trip boat experiencing high visitor numbers and one trade boat (the cheese boat) experiencing record sales. Many attendees have expressed enthusiasm to see the event develop during 2011/12. The principle of the festival aligns closely with the ReWyre regeneration Initiative and also the 'Love your Place' campaign to tidy up the canal corridor in the town. It also linked to the Kidderminster Arts Festival.
  - Planning and delivery of Kidderminster's first Charity Fashion Show at the Town Hall on Tuesday 2nd March 2010 which was well attended and raised £750 for Kemp Hospice. It is hoped the event can be repeated during 2011/12.
  - The year also saw the second publication of the InKidderminster Magazine to promote the town centre.
- 4.2 Other workstreams undertaken by the Town Centre Manager include community outreach and engagement and the following are examples of the type of work undertaken:

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- Following an application through KTCP the Art Festival received a £1,150 grant from Inroads.
  - The TCMr continued to hold youth group/school talks and give support to King Charles Young Enterprise group.
  - An Italian Market was held in September 2010 to raise funds for the Christmas Lights.
  - The TCMr supported Steve Singleton with the Future Jobs Fund recruitment/Town Centre Ambassadors.
  - Support was given to the Youth Liaison Officer with the Community Pay Back Scheme for the young offenders who damaged town centre flowers and property.
  - Following a request from local retailers and along with the Job Centre and Remploy, the TCMr arranged a Recruitment Fair at the Town Hall which was cancelled due to lack of support from the retailers.
  - The Town Centre Manager continued to support the Mayor's Office with arrangement for the Freedom Marches and Town Criers Competition.
- 4.3 Complaints, space management, press liaison, public and business enquiries are also dealt with on a regular basis. During the inclement weather the TCMr did receive complaints from traders and liaised closely with the Council's streetscene team. In this regard, there remains a need to manage expectations amongst the business community of the role and a wider understanding of roles and responsibilities of the TCMr and other local authority departments.
- 4.4 As mentioned in paragraph 2.1 above, the current Joint Venture arrangements are set to remain in place until 31st May 2011. This is to coincide with the planned launch of a North Worcestershire Regeneration service which is currently scheduled to commence on the 1st June 2011. The Town Centre Manager role is planned to be subsumed within that service which will be hosted by Wyre Forest District Council.
- 4.5 In the meantime, the existing TCMr will continue to deliver key projects within the 18.5 hours per week. Specifically this is set to include:
- 1) the planning and delivery of this years Canal Festival which is scheduled for May Bank Holiday to coincide with the AGM of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Society;
  - 2) the next (Summer) edition of InKidderminster; and

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- 3) planning for the Christmas Lights Switch-on 2011/12.

### **5. Options for the Committee**

- 5.1 The Committee may wish to comment on the Town Centre Manager's Annual Report and make suggestions on the work programme.

### **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 The Town Centre Manager will continue with the day to day operation of the role as set out in this paper. The future of the role will be considered as part of the North Worcestershire Regeneration Service and will be subject to further consideration through the conclusion of the Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy review.

### **7. Appendices**

- 7.1 Not applicable

### **8. Background Papers**

- 8.1 Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy & Audit

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