

	<p><b>Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee</b></p> <p><b>7 September 2015</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Burnt Oak High Street Fund</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Commissioning Director – Growth and Development</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>Burnt Oak</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>None</p>
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<p><b>Summary</b></p>
<p>In December 2014, Barnet Council submitted a bid to the GLA for their High Street Fund (HSF). HSF is the latest in a series of funding rounds, which started in 2011 with Round One of the Outer London Fund (successfully secured for Chipping Barnet) and Round Two of the Outer London Fund (successfully secured for North Finchley and Cricklewood), aimed specifically at helping London’s high streets to grow and become more vibrant.</p> <p>The GLA have given in-principle approval for a contribution of £269,048 toward a suite of projects costed at £617,464 for LBB to fund improvements in Burnt Oak Town Centre. The funding will be used toward testing new ideas and achieving quick wins for the local community and businesses in Burnt Oak Town Centre. The outcome of this testing period will inform the creation and implementation of a town centre strategy.</p> <p>The main aims of the project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve local coordination;</li> <li>• encourage residents and businesses to live, work, shop, play and invest in the area;</li> <li>• discourage anti-social behaviour;</li> <li>• create a positive and inviting image for Burnt Oak by capitalising on the town centre’s assets; and</li> <li>• strengthen the community’s existing economic assets while expanding and</li> </ul>

diversifying its economic base

## Recommendations

### That the Committee

1. note the successful application for funding and agree the Burnt Oak High Street Fund project (valued at £617,464).
2. approve the spending of £348,416, to be used to match £269,048 of Mayor of London's grant money to deliver the High Street Fund project in Burnt Oak Town Centre, subject to signing of a Grant Agreement with the GLA.
3. delegate to the Commissioning Director, Growth & Development, the authority
  - to develop the detail of the Burnt Oak Town Centre Strategy
  - following development to approve the Burnt Oak Town Centre Strategy
  - to approve all matters associated with implementing the Burnt Oak Town Centre Strategyin consultation with the Chairman of the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The London Borough of Barnet was successful in securing £269,048 for LBB from the Mayor of London's High Street Fund to deliver a Town Centre Strategy and a targeted programme of improvements in Burnt Oak Town Centre. The Council has a commitment to match fund the grant by £348,416, of which £160,952 is capital funding, and £187,464 is revenue funding.

## 2. ENTREPRENEURIAL BARNET

- 2.1 Entrepreneurial Barnet 2015-2020<sup>1</sup> sets out Barnet Council and its partners' commitment and key actions to support the economy by focusing on enabling small businesses to succeed, and encouraging thriving town centres that people want to live, work and invest in.
- 2.2 Entrepreneurial Barnet includes specific proposals relating to assisting town centres to respond to the challenges and opportunities associated with national trends like increasing use of internet shopping, growth in socially-focused town centre activities, and a growing population. This will ensure that scarce public resources can be used in a way that maximises returns to local businesses and the public purse. This can be achieved through a targeted programme of investment that contributes toward the overall vitality and safeguards the distinctiveness of our town centres.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:e326f566-5394-4a68-921c-5fee57541c9a/Entrepreneurial%20Barnet%202015-2020.pdf>

### **3. BURNT OAK HIGH STREET FUND PROJECT**

#### **3.1 Rationale for Investment**

3.1.1 The project seeks to reintroduce and enhance the distinctiveness of Burnt Oak, while enhancing the town centre's resilience and ability to capture the benefits of growth from the wider Colindale area.

3.1.2 Some of the initial issues identified in Burnt Oak are:

- Inconsistent demand patterns (due to changing demographics)
- Poor marketing and untapped potential for growth
- Lack of place-based SME networks
- Lack of existing frameworks to secure training and apprentice opportunities from SMEs locally
- Maintenance gaps relating to the public realm
- Underutilisation of local heritage and distinctive characteristics
- Inappropriate shop fronts for heritage context of the buildings
- Poor public realm image at the gateways to the town centre (i.e. at tube stations)
- Poor signage and wayfinding
- Anti-social behaviour and perception of insecurity

3.1.3 The proposals aim to actively address these problems - seeking to transform the quality of the public realm, the wider perceptions of the area and promote Burnt Oak as a means to help catalyse economic growth, development and inward investment – while protecting and enhancing the Burnt Oak's distinctive character to ensure it remains an important asset in the community and a sustainable location for enterprise, retail and leisure activities.

#### **3.2 Objectives**

3.2.1 The key objectives of high street investment for Burnt Oak will be to:

- Improve the entry experience into the Town Centre, via Burnt Oak Station and Watling Avenue
- Increase the inherent capacity within the Town Centre to ensure businesses have the right skills and approach to capitalise on future housing and economic growth in the area
- Enhance the resilience and adaptability of the Town Centre by encouraging diversity and highlighting existing strengths
- Ensure that Burnt Oak retains its unique identity and promotes this to encourage more people to live, work in and visit
- Enhance the physical, social and economic character of the high street by ensuring the appearance of shop frontages and products/services are

carefully curated and designed to draw greater numbers of people to the Town Centre

- Improve the attractiveness, feel and functionality of the high street through targeted public realm and greening to encourage more residents to visit and spend time and money in their high street while discouraging anti-social behaviour through the activation of forgotten spaces
- Ensure that apprenticeships and other training opportunities are made available within our high streets for local residents, particularly young people
- Empower local groups to be confident and well-linked into local community and business networks to ensure they are able to provide stewardship and secure the legacy of investment in the area

3.2.2 This proposal meets the following fund objectives:

3.2.3 **Proactive stewardship:** Fundamental to this project will be engagement with local business, residents, community organisations and other key stakeholders. We will work closely with these individuals and groups with the intention of strengthening existing and creating a joined up Business/Community forum (and/or Town Team). This forum will help to steer local improvements and act as a channel through which the Council can communicate with the wider community. As in Cricklewood, Edgware and North Finchley, this model has been adopted successfully where similar projects have already been delivered. In each instance, the Town Team has become an important voice in the local community with the ability to influence future policy decisions affecting the town centre. A Town Team is an organisation which is governed by local traders and businesses, landlords, service providers and Council representatives whose aim is to develop a vision and strategy for the town centre to ensure high streets as sustainable and continue to provide a relevant offer in the future. The Town Team model provides an opportunity for different local stakeholders to come together, to collaborate and to make decisions affecting the longevity of the high street.

3.2.4 **Greater activity:** We have learned from our previous projects that organising events and community forums can have a very positive impact in Town Centres, creating a buzzing atmosphere that transcends cultural and language differences, gaining greater buy-in from local stakeholders. We want to use these in Burnt Oak as a means of bringing together residents, shopkeepers, retailers and budding entrepreneurs who, as a result of their diverse backgrounds and language barriers, have not done so previously. Furthermore, we will address issues with anti-social behaviour by bringing activities to forgotten areas of the high street, such as alleys and implementing measures like improve lighting and CCTV monitoring to discourage this behaviour.

**3.2.5 Accommodating growth:** Although Burnt Oak is currently excluded from the Colindale Area Action Plan, there is an opportunity for Burnt Oak to test new ideas and establish guidelines to shape growth and future improvements in the area, including any potential development sites. These opportunities will play a major role in the future of the area, and could bring about exciting changes and opportunities for local businesses and residents. On a smaller scale, Burnt Oak has a diverse range of business types and tenures – with businesses that have been established in the area for decades, to businesses that started in the past six months. Currently, improvements and growth happens on an ad hoc basis, with businesses investing in their own enterprises with little regard for the impact of these changes on the high street, leading to a disjointed street scape. The provision of design assistance and guidance will help address this issue, as well as help businesses – large, small, old, and new – better respond to changing market demands.

**3.2.6** The funding will be used toward testing these new ideas and achieving quick wins for the local community and businesses. The outcome of this testing period will inform the creation and implementation of a town centre strategy. The main aims of the project are to:

- improve local coordination;
- encourage residents and businesses to live, work, shop, play and invest in the area;
- discourage anti-social behaviour;
- create a positive and inviting image for Burnt Oak by capitalising on the town centre's assets; and
- strengthen the community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base

### **3.3 Activities**

**3.3.1** The activities and estimated timescales to be carried out to achieve these aims are:

- a) **Support the establishment of a town team/local forum (by December 2015):** Local coordination is essential to ensure not only an accurate reflection of local needs, but also to ensure ownership and legacy of the programme of improvements. While Love Burnt Oak currently addresses the needs of the local residents, it has little involvement with the business community. The town team/local forum will aim to establish these links and give local residents and businesses a forum to connect, share, exchange and help one another. This group will play an active role in consultations, shaping the branding

strategy for the Town centre and provide on-going support and presence in the town centre.

**b) Town Centre Strategy (draft by December 2015, final by March 2016):**

Initial consultation with businesses and local residents has highlighted issues around anti-social behaviour, feelings of insecurity in the area, low awareness of community events and lack of local ownership of the place. In addition, we identified a range of business support needs and businesses that are currently struggling to diversify and adapt to changing demands. This initial surveys period will identify the causes for these issues, inform a draft Town Centre strategy, and provide a series of recommendations for testing and quick wins in the area.

Following a period of testing and quick wins, a final town centre strategy will recommend ways to improve and promote the town centre, including a list of prioritised investments, and recommendations of how proposed development can help contribute to the success of this high street. This strategy would be closely linked with on-going work in the wider Colindale area, and will also involve joint working with LB Brent and LB Harrow. The Strategy will also address the issue around areas that should be protected/provided or re-located, as might be the case with the existing market and car park. This is needed to address the future needs of the area, and to appropriately mitigate any negative impacts from growth while preserving the Town Centre's heritage and identity.

**c) Implementation:** this would be carried out in two phases:

Testing and quick wins (September 2015 – March 2016): In order to inform the town centre strategy, we must find out what works in Burnt Oak. This phase will include working with the Town Team to deliver quick projects to improve the overall image of the town centre, increase community involvement, improve the perception of safety, increase local buy-in and establish a local identity for Burnt Oak. This may include:

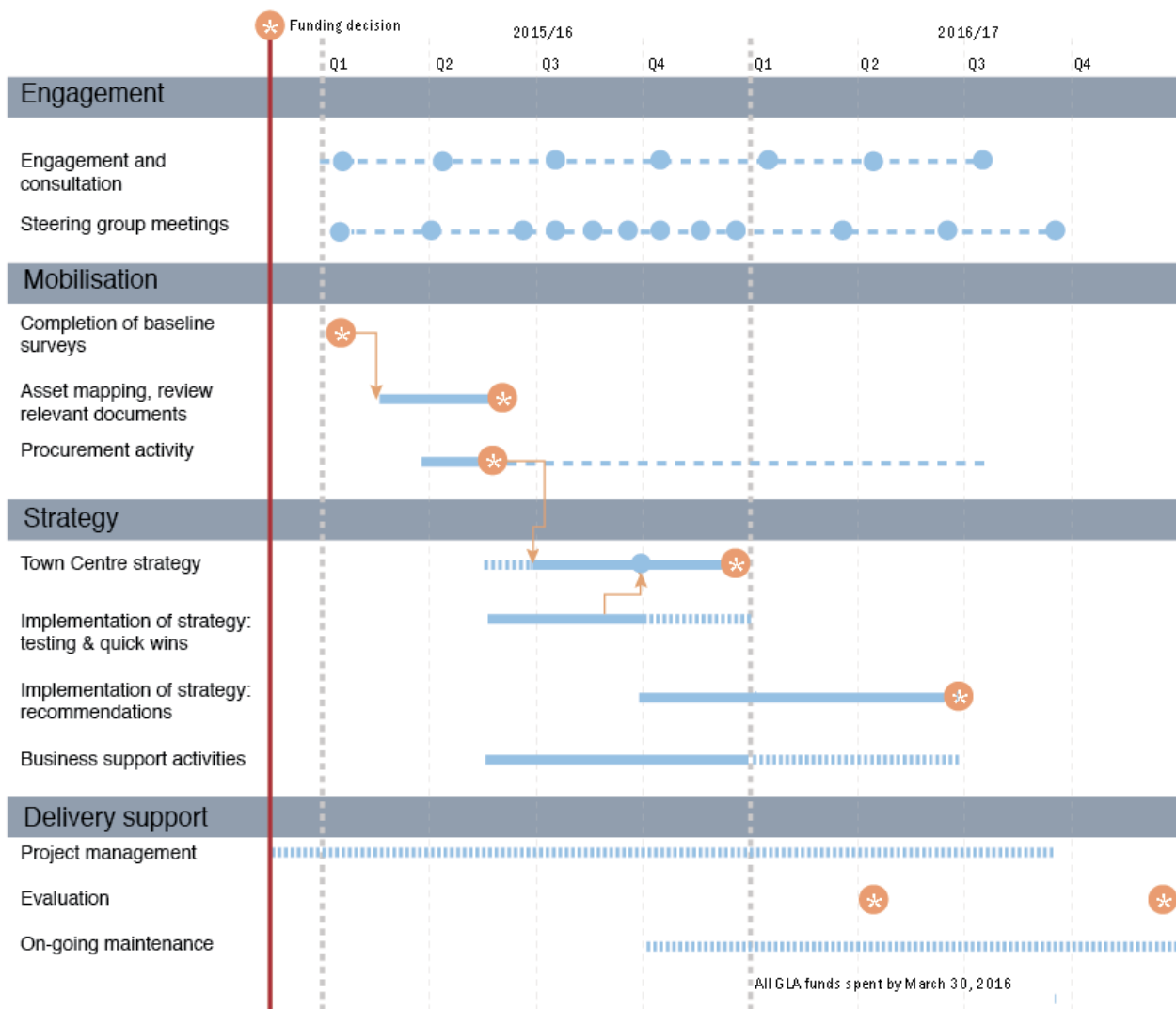
- pop-up shops and events to activate of forgotten spaces,
- community/business directory,
- Signage and wayfinding to key locations in the town centre, such as the Burnt Oak Leisure Centre, Silkstream and Montrose parks (which are due to get a revamp and provision of cycle routes as part of the Colindale Regeneration), Burnt Oak Market, and other key areas nearby;
- test locations for cctv/lighting,
- enlivening the high street at off-peak times,
- support for existing businesses (e.g. identifying the local market),
- marketing and visual merchandising,
- support for new entrepreneurs (e.g. seminars on business plans),

- networking events

Realisation of strategy (January 2016 – September 2016): The town centre strategy will list longer-term improvements, as well as provide the final steer to realise projects which may include:

- De-cluttering and highway improvements
- Shopfront improvements
- Permanent alley and forgotten spaces improvements, including CCTV and lighting
- Match funding for shop improvements
- Telephone box removal/relocation
- Additional signage/wayfinding required
- Greening (e.g. feature tree near station, hanging baskets/planters)
- Town Centre fund to provide on-going support and help businesses improve their shop fronts and visual merchandising, as well as give seed funding and support to new businesses.

### 3.4 Programme for delivery

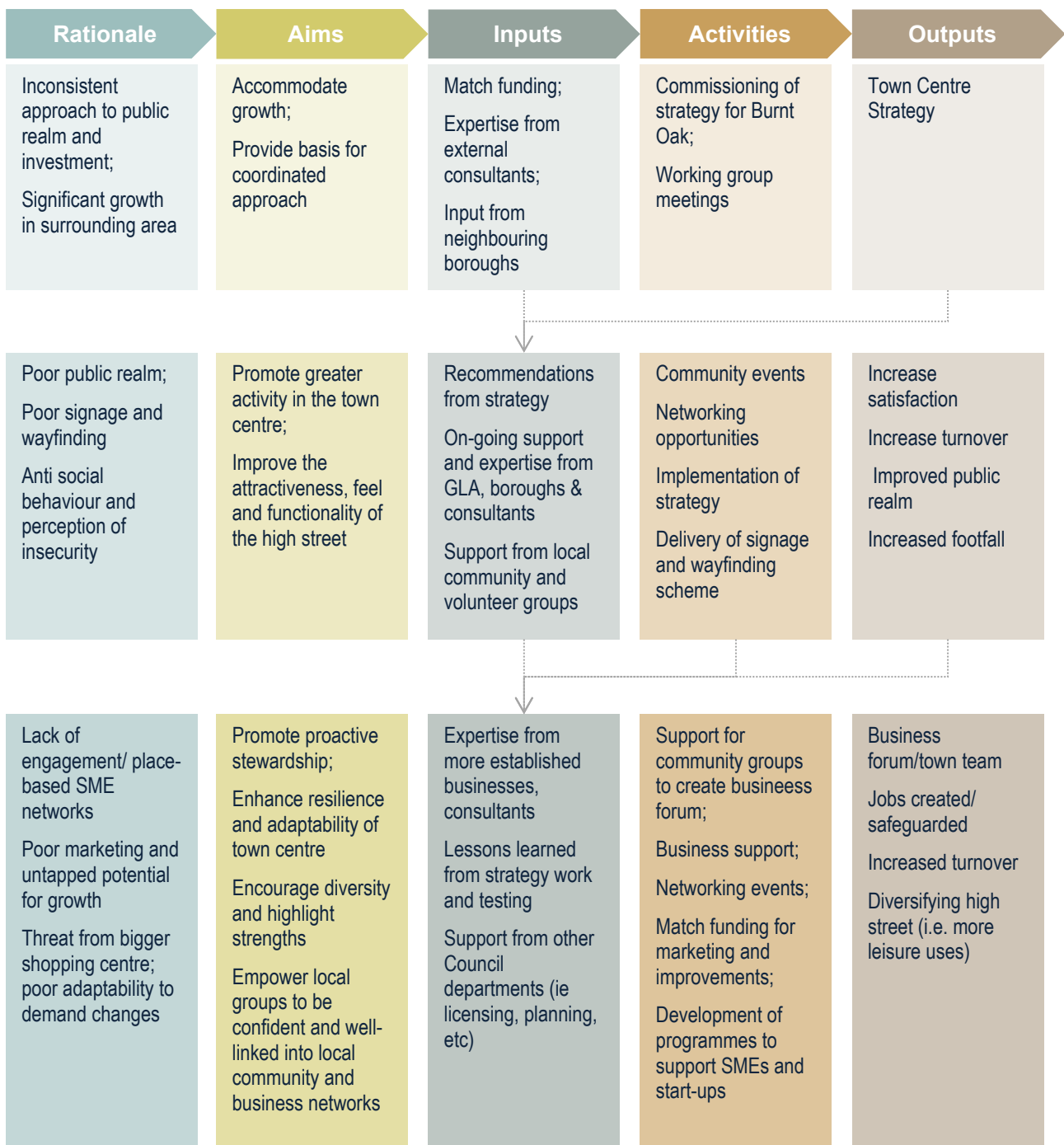


3.5 The desired **project outcomes and benefits** are as follows:

Benefit	Activity	Output	Outcomes
Improve local coordination and promote proactive stewardship	<p>Create joint steering group with local community, neighbouring boroughs and Colindale project</p> <p>Establish a local business forum and/or town team</p> <p>Development of a Town Centre Strategy</p>	<p>Number of community groups supported: At least 1</p> <p>Business forum / town team created: 1</p> <p>Town centre strategy adopted: 1</p>	<p>Increased participation and collaboration</p> <p>Improved understanding of the Town Centre's needs</p> <p>Increased investment into the Town Centre</p>
Create a positive and inviting image for Burnt Oak by capitalising on the town centre's assets	<p>Development of a town centre identity</p> <p>Implementation of strategy, including testing of new ideas and 'quick wins' projects</p>	<p>Town Centre brand</p> <p>Marketing and promotion activities</p> <p>Signage and wayfinding</p> <p>Public realm improvements</p>	<p>Increase in footfall</p> <p>Increase in satisfaction</p> <p>Reduced rate of anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Improved perception of safety</p>
Promote greater activity in the Town Centre and encourage residents and businesses to live, work, shop, play and invest in the area	<p>Consultation with local groups and businesses</p> <p>Delivery of engagement events</p>	<p>Number of community events held: 2</p>	<p>Increased awareness of town centre events and offer</p> <p>Increased use of local parks and green spaces</p>
Strengthen the resilience of existing businesses while expanding and diversifying its economic base to accommodate growth	<p>Networking meetings between local businesses</p> <p>Delivery of business support initiatives</p>	<p>Number of networking events held: 2</p> <p>Number of businesses supported: 15</p> <p>Jobs created/ safeguarded: 5</p> <p>Number of new start-ups: 1</p> <p>Number of apprenticeships created: 1</p>	<p>Shared learning</p> <p>Enhanced up-skilling through shared learning and collaboration)</p> <p>Increased turnover</p> <p>Career progression for employees (longer-term)</p> <p>Increased GVA</p>



Figure 1 below outlines the logic chain for the project's activities and outputs:



#### 4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Shopping habits are changing in Barnet largely as a consequence of rapid demographic changes, increasing competition from online retailers, out of town shopping centres and the proximity to central London. These have all combined to necessitate the Council to provide greater support to local businesses within its town centres to enable them to adapt to changing

market conditions and take advantage of the opportunities that the growing borough economy presents.

- 4.2 It is a requirement of the Grant Agreement that all grant funding is spent by 30th March 2016. Grant funding will be predominantly used toward the development and testing of the Strategy recommendations, which are programmed to complete before the March deadline (see section 3.4). A proportion of the Council match funding will be retained to continue implementation of the Strategy beyond the March 2016 date.
- 4.3 Implementation of the proposals via the Grant Funding provided via the Mayor of London's High Street Fund will provide additionality in the following:

**Scale:**

- The proposals build on the good work that is already being done in the Town Centre by existing community groups and through other on-going projects in the area.
- A more localised approach will result in better outcomes for local residents and businesses, providing better value for money.
- The proposals include support for existing and new businesses with items such as design assistance, seed funding for expansion, business support to help understand emerging markets and strategies – these are all areas that would otherwise not be addressed by existing funding and local groups.
- An amount of funding has been earmarked to support the delivery of community events and involve vendors on the high street to ensure on-going support after the funding ends. A proportion of Council Match funding will be held back to support on-going initiatives and events for a further six -nine months.

**Quality:**

- Local co-ordination will facilitate multiple agencies and neighbouring Boroughs to work toward the same goal of creating a high well-being local high street, and assemble the appropriate human and financial resources to implement and sustain high-quality improvements for the town centre.
- Funding provides the opportunity for Burnt Oak to set the benchmark for a high-quality way finding strategy for the wider area.

**Timing:**

- The Town Centre Strategy will set the benchmark for future improvements which may come as a result of developments in the area, in addition to guiding future investment requirements that appropriately address local issues.
- Investment in the area to support existing businesses by providing the tools and improved understanding to be better prepared for upcoming growth in the area.

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 5.1 It would be possible to allow market forces and disjointed strategies by each of the neighbouring Boroughs to drive improvements in Burnt Oak Town Centre, however this would be a missed opportunity to join up on-going initiatives and enable a place-based approach to Burnt Oak Town Centre. This could result in diminished economic growth for the area.

## **6. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 6.1 Should the Committee approve the proposal, implementation of activities set out in the Burnt Oak bid document will commence.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **7.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 7.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-20 states that the Council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to ensure that Barnet is a place:

1. of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life
2. where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure
3. where responsibility is shared, fairly
4. where services are delivered efficiently to get value for money for the taxpayer.

The work in Burnt Oak town centre will help meet these objectives by supporting local businesses by improving the town centre environment, encouraging local residents and community groups to take more control of their local area, and to improve the overall health and well being of local people.

- 7.1.2 The project also supports the Council's Entrepreneurial Barnet Strategy 2015-2020, particularly Theme B, which is focused on "Making Barnet a great place to live, work and invest."

### **7.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 7.2.1 The costs pertaining to the delivery of the Burnt Oak High Street Fund Project, including project management, are covered by the Mayor of London's High Street Fund grant and the Council's match funding.

- 7.2.2 The match funding is currently found in the Council's Capital Programme as an approved fund for Town Centres, which was intended to provide match-funding for grant bids. This capital project is funded from the Infrastructure Reserve which in practice means this project will most likely be funded through a combination of New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy funds. Some of the Infrastructure Reserve funds, including New Homes Bonus funds, can be utilised either for Capital or Revenue projects.

### **7.3 Social Value**

7.3.1 The development of specifications for all proposed procurements related to the Burnt Oak High Street Fund project will take into consideration the requirements set out in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which requires the authority to consider:

(a) how what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area, and

(b) how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

It should be noted that such considerations could compromise the Council's ability to maximise the value for money it can achieve, so a balance will be sought wherever possible.

This project will not only improve the economic and social well being of local people and businesses but it will also improve the public realm, encouraging more active and engaged local community groups, and create employment and apprenticeship opportunities for young people.

### **7.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

7.4.1 It is a requirement that the Council enter into a Grant Agreement with the Greater London Authority, which sets out the specific requirements for the Council, as well as the expected outputs and outcomes to be achieved by the project.

7.4.2 There are no further specific legal issues. The proposals are in line with the Localism Act (2011), and particularly the General Power of Competence which is a power introduced by section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 which gives local authorities the power to do anything an individual can do, unless prohibited by law (and subject to public law principles).

7.4.3 Where relevant, specific planning permission will be sought to enable the implementation of specific proposals.

Council Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A – The Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee has responsibility for:

- Engagement with the business community and measures to support local business
- Town Centre regeneration programmes
- Authorising procurement activity within the remit of the Committee and any acceptance of variations or extensions if within budget in accordance with the responsibilities and thresholds set out in Contract Procedure Rules.

### **7.5 Risk Management**

7.5.1 There is a key risk that if the Council is unable to spend all grant monies by the March 2016 deadline, the remaining funding will be lost. Further risks will be identified and recorded in a risk register and escalated as and when this is appropriate.

## **7.6 Equalities and Diversity**

- 7.6.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision-making of the Council. This requires elected Members to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day to day business and that all proposals emerging from the finance and business planning process have properly taken into consideration what impact, if any, there is on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in train.
- 7.6.2 The proposals on town centres are part of the overall Entrepreneurial Barnet approach that the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee approved at its meeting on 15 December 2015. An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken for Entrepreneurial Barnet, the key findings of which were outlined in the paper presented to Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee in March 2015.
- 7.6.3 The proposals will ensure that people in the area, no matter what their background and circumstances, should have equality of opportunity to succeed and gain from the improvements and growth of the economy in the town centre.

## **7.7 Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.7.1 The Burnt Oak High Street Fund project will include extensive consultation with local groups, businesses and residents during the development and implementation of the Town Centre Strategy. The first of these consultations is due to take place in Autumn 2015.
- 7.7.2 A steering group, comprised of representatives from local community and business groups, in addition to representatives from each of the neighbouring boroughs, the Greater London Authority and any relevant services within Barnet Council, will be established to meet on a monthly basis for the duration of the project, to:
- Agree project outputs, design/procurement briefs and evaluate tenders
  - Sign-off the Project Initiation Document
  - Make any project decisions that fall within the scope of the project tolerances (to be defined by the Project Initiation Document)
  - Monitor progress, assess emerging risks and issues, and agree communications to wider community

## **7.8 Insight**

- 7.8.1 Insight data informed bidding process, including data related to town centre vacancy rates, index of multiple deprivation and footfall measurements.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **8.1 Entrepreneurial Barnet 2015-2020 (approved at Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee December 2014):**

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:e326f566-5394-4a68-921c-5fee57541c9a/Entrepreneurial%20Barnet%202015-2020.pdf>

### **8.2 Council Budget 2015/16 Financial Forward Plan and Capital Programme:**

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:473eece6-6c45-47f0-839e-c189a9c82022/Council%20Budget%202015-16%20Financial%20Forward%20Plan%20and%20Capital%20Programme.pdf>

### **8.3 Town Centres in Barnet (approved at Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee March 2015):**

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s21967/Town%20Centres%20in%20Barnet.pdf>