BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council:
Monday 23rd January 2017

Agenda Item: 5

Report of the
North Area Council
Manager

Priority: NAC Economic Regeneration
Project Development: Small Business Surgery and Peer Support Proposal

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the North Area Council on the development progress of the small business development surgeries model.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Area Council note the progress to date for this project.

3.0 Background

3.1 Vibrant economies engender healthy communities where residents enjoy a high quality of life. They contribute to economic security through access to living-wage jobs, stable employment and help to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community as well as the prosperity of the local economy.

3.2 The North Area Council agreed to the business case presented at the April 2016 Area Council Meeting. Subsequently the Area Manager and Area Chair Cllr Leech met with Adrian Waite and Kevin Steele from BBIC to discuss a survey to establish local business development needs. This was agreed at the Area Council meeting on the 25th July.

3.3 BBIC conducted a small business survey during August 2016 funded by the North Area Council. They presented their finding to the Area Council in September 2016. 44 businesses were visited and the survey focussed on business planning, marketing and business goals. 64% of the businesses had never received any business support and didn't know that there was any available. This showed that only 23% of business surveyed had current business plans. It also showed that word of mouth and social media were the most popular marketing methods.

3.4 The report contained recommendations for advice surgeries and peer support groups.

3.5 On the 9th November the Area Manager and priority working group representatives attended a meeting at BBIC to discuss how the project could be tailored to meet the needs of the local community and be successfully promoted throughout the North Area.

3.6 The Area Council agreed to proceed with the partnership project working arrangement with BBIC. The North Area's commitment includes up to £5,000 investment to assist with set-up costs and the delivery of a marketing plan.

3.7 The priority working group met again on the 12th December. The ward representatives agreed to assist the marketing campaign by including A5 leaflets as a supplement to their ward information papers. They also agreed to leaflet the high street business in the economic community hubs.

4.0 Service to be delivered

Surgeries – Provision of Business Support Clinics or Business Surgeries at BBIC (offering an initial free 30-45 minute consolation). The surgeries will take place between 17:00 and 20:00 on a fortnightly basis. Appointments will need to be pre-booked.

Networking Workshops –
Businesses would also be signposted towards a variety of monthly networking workshops being held at the BBIC. These will include the following:-

- Marketing Group – self-help peer group established, to discuss effective marketing strategies in small businesses including actual case studies of successful projects. This would need to include some support for starting to use social media;
- IT Group – self-help peer group established to discuss the effective implementation and use of IT within a small business;
- First Friday Breakfast Networking – a general networking group for residents of the BBIC, associated partners and invited guests;
- Crafty Biz Network – currently based at the BBIC and offering support primarily to part time businesses, many of whom are craft-based. This includes a monthly evening workshop and networking group.

5.0 Target Group

The target audience will be small business based within the North Area who have not previously received Enterprising Barnsley support and that have been trading for less than 2 years. If attendees can be referred to an Enterprising Barnsley Programme this will happen as a matter of course. If it is more appropriate for the business to be supported via Launch Pad the business will be signposted.

6.0 Next Steps

6.1 Project timeline to be defined in partnership with BBIC.

6.2 The marketing plan would need to be designed and agreed by the working group.

6.3 The working group will continue to work with BBIC during the 6 month exclusive pilot period.

6.4 It is anticipated that for the service to be used to its full capacity, may take up to three years. It is recommended that the Area Council commit to supporting the service provision for up to two years however the cost of the financial commitment would be reduced after the initial outlay, due to one-off start-up costs. A total of £5,000 has been committed.

Officer Contact:	Tel. No:	Date:
Rosie Adams	01226 773583	9th January 2017