

<p align="center"><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Economic Regeneration Housing and Arts Policy and Accountability Committee</b></p> <p align="center"><b>1 November 2016</b></p>	
<p><b>HIGH STREETS REVIEW</b></p>	
<p><b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development Councillor Andrew Jones</b></p>	
<p><b>Open Report</b></p>	
<p><b>Classification - For Policy and Accountability Committee Review and Comment</b></p> <p><b>Key Decision: No</b></p>	
<p><b>Wards Affected: All</b></p>	
<p><b>Accountable Director:</b> Director for Strategy and Growth, Jo Rowlands</p>	
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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This paper looks at the council's work to revive borough high streets, particularly North End Road and Bloemfontein Road.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the PAC review the work which has been taking place and make comments as it feels necessary.

## 3. CONTEXT

- 3.1. The borough has three town centres, four key local centres (East Acton, Askew Road, North End Road, and Fulham Road), 16 neighbourhood parades and six satellite parades<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.2. High streets provide a significant contribution to the business rate base, draw in footfall and spend, offer retail choice and satisfaction, and create employment opportunities. Nationally, there is much debate about failing high streets, empty shops and the changing nature of retail.

<sup>1</sup> As identified by the Core Strategy, Local Development Framework October 2011,

- 3.3. The borough's high-street vacancy rates are currently 8.5 per cent (9.5 per cent is the London average). Town centre vacancy rates vary between 5.6 per cent in Shepherd's Bush<sup>2</sup> and under 10 per cent in Fulham. The overall borough retail vacancy rate is similar to the regional average at around 10.5 per cent<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.4. The key challenges facing our high streets can be summarised as:
- Multiple ownership of shopping streets, with a range of leaseholders and freeholders
  - H&F can only affect rents on the properties it owns and the Council has only a handful of retail units in the key high streets.
  - Less than 3 per cent of the Council's retail portfolio is vacant and only two units are not under offer.
  - Rateable values for retail units rose 31 per cent after the government's 2010 revaluation. The government's next revaluation is due in 2017, when further rises are expected.
  - Competition continues to grow from internet shopping, shopping malls and large supermarket chains
  - There are significant numbers of betting, pawn and loan and charity shops
  - National government planning policies/proposals make change of use and permitted development from business to residential easier.

#### **4. REVIEW OF ACTIVITY**

The ERHA PAC previously requested the council to extend its support for two high streets in the south and north of the borough, North End Road and Bloemfontein Road

##### **4.1. North End Road**

- The Council owns eight units in this road and they are all let.
- Over the past year, we have seen new business investment (eg Jaffa Bakehouse), a reduction in vacancies and churn and no new betting shops.
- Following the ERHA PAC on 17 September 2014, the Council established a North End Road Action Group (NERAG) of residents, stallholders and businesses, open to all.
- NERAG decided as a first step to raise the profile of the road, create a sense of optimism and sense of potential, and encourage start-ups by holding regular traffic-free markets.
- Five such markets have been held: a Christmas market on 6 December 2014, a Summer market on 27 June 2015, Christmas markets on 28 November and 12 December 2015, and an Autumn market on 8 October 2016. A Christmas market will be held on 3 December 2016.
- Among many other activities, NERAG has curated the stalls and has designed marketing material.

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<sup>2</sup> Westfield is included in this figure.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Local Data Company, April 2016. Figures have been provided (on a quarterly basis) by Local Data Company and they show amongst others retail vacancy rates, independent premises, and churn. Note that office premises were not included in LDC figures.

- The traffic-free markets have hosted up to 150 stalls and attracted 10-15,000 visitors each.
- They have created more than 600 opportunities to trade; encouraged young entrepreneurs (schools and college selling their products from stalls); led to new permanent traders in the market and new borough businesses; and built wider interest in the road.
- They have been supplemented by Love your Local Market days on 21 and 28 May and flanked by a social media campaign (1,000 followers for Facebook “North End Road”; @NrthEndRdMrkt).
- A new “trade for a tenner” campaign is running to encourage start-up stallholders.
- New research shows that 40 per cent of North End Road shoppers spend between £10 and £25 every time they come and 54 per cent of shoppers shop in the road more than once a week.
- North End Road has been included in the potential Fulham Business Improvement District (BID)<sup>4</sup>.

#### 4.2. **Bloemfontein Road**

- The Council owns 15 units in this road. Fourteen are now let and the remaining one is under offer
- Responding to the needs of local residents, the Council has converted No. 75 into Hub@75, a foodbank that also hosts CAB and legal services. The Council enabled refurbishment through its contractor Amey as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programme, and is funding a Centre Manager, a CAB adviser, advice from H&F Law Centre and some foodbank running costs through the Third Sector Investment Fund.
- In anticipation of the longer-term redevelopment of White City, Mitie has carried out a condition survey which identifies internal works to shops.

### 5. **POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 5.1. The PAC may want to consider the success of activity to date, future plans for North End Road to stimulate the market and business footfall, and measures to stimulate footfall in other borough high streets.

### 6. **CONSULTATION**

- 6.1. The Council has undertaken regular meetings and consultation with NERAG on all aspects of the regular and extended market. We also surveyed shoppers, businesses and residents in December 2014, June 2015 and May 2016 regarding North End Road, its regular market and its extended market.
- 6.2. The Council and Mitie have undertaken regular meetings and consultation with Bloemfontein Road businesses.

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<sup>4</sup> A BID is a business-owned, led and funded company set up by a democratic ballot of eligible businesses.