

Report to Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny
Committee



Date of Meeting	18th September 2019
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Business, Skills & Employment
Report Author	Susan Ayres
Public/Private Document	Public

Town Centre Management Companies - 2019/20 Grant

Executive Summary

1. Rochdale Council has Grant Funding Agreements with both Rochdale Town Centre Management Company and Middleton Town Centre Management Company for 2019/20. The Agreements for these discretionary grants detail the activity which the grant funding will support, the conditions attached to the award of the grant and monitoring requirements.

Recommendation

2. That members review and note the information in the report.

Reason for Recommendation

3. Progress towards targets contained within the grant funding agreements between the Council (Economy Directorate) and external organisations are to be reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny meetings once a year.

Key Points for Consideration

4. Town Centre Management Companies have been established across the UK for over 20 years. Their principal aim is to promote the viability and vitality of town centres through active partnerships of the public/private and voluntary sectors. Each town centre and their needs and opportunities are different and therefore structures, aims and objectives and governance are unique to each town.
 - 4.1 The financial information below provides members with awareness of the complete financial contribution to the companies from the Council in 2019/20. Both Town Centre Management Companies are funded on the basis of project plans which outline activities and outcomes which were negotiated at the beginning of the year. Both companies are responsible for liaison with town

centre businesses on behalf of the council, event organisation and promotion of the town centres. Payment is quarterly in arrears on receipt of a monitoring return. In addition to the 2019/20 grant, both companies have grant funding from the council for specific activity such as events, subject to funding being available.

Rochdale Town Centre Management Company (RTCM)

Since April 2019, RTCM is now trading as Rochdale BID (Business Improvement District) following a successful ballot of town centre business and organisations. This generates £195,780 in a levy on top of business rates paid by town centre occupiers of properties with a rateable value of over £12,000. The Council's levy payment for 2019/20 is £36,264. This is the largest levy payment in the town centre and contributes to a overall budget of £215,780 for the BID in 2019/20.

To support the BID in its early stages, it was agreed to provide transitional support for the first year (2019/20) via a grant. In 2020/21 the Rochdale Riverside development will be complete and generate additional levy payments of £60k.

Councillor Brett represents the Council on the Company Board.

Council financial support

- Grant from Economic Affairs - £ 47,655
- Grant for up to 50% of the costs of 2019 Street Eat - £10,000
- Grant to support the Early Evening Economy prior to Rochdale Riverside opening. This was awarded in 2018 but the balance of £31,684 is remaining for 2019/20
- Use of the JC Decaux/Council advertising boards to earn income - £12,759
- Contribution of £10,000 to the Time Machine event in May 2019 involving Town Hall consultation exercise.

Quarter 1 claim for the Economic Affairs Grant

- Amount approved from the claim = £5,097
- The grant funds 20% of the two members of staff plus 20% of the Ranger to be recruited in September and 100% of an apprentice to be recruited later in the year.
- Activity included:
 - Visits and support to 5 new and relocating town centre businesses
 - Monthly walkabouts with Environmental Management to highlight particular issues such as street cleansing
 - Use of all social media channels to promote events and offers. This quarter had a 6.6% increase in Instagram followers.
 - CCTV reviewed daily and issues, trends and concerns raised with partners. A particular issue this quarter has been the visibility of CCTV in a certain location which needs foliage cut back.
 - Co-ordination of Pubwatch meetings and follow up action

involving all town centre pubs and bars, GMP and RBC Licencing.

- Reporting of faults to the Street Lighting Team and discussion about opportunities to improve street and Christmas lighting.
- Q1 progress towards annual targets in the project plans

Communication and Business Liaison	Yellow
Environment	Green
Safety and Security	Green

- Activity is yet to start on the proposed customer service excellence award and new business crime prevention schemes

Early Evening Economy Board Q1 activity:

- Market research and analysis undertaken by Fast Web Media
- Easter Ale Trail – Several visitors from outside the borough with some from Halifax and Darlington. Good feedback from the town centre bars.

Street Eat Grant

- Event held on 25th and 26th May
- Estimated attendance was 3000 over 2 days involving 10 local businesses. The evaluation, feedback and publicity was positive.

Middleton Town Centre Management Company (MTCM Co)

Council financial support

- Grant from Economic Affairs - £31,500
- Grant from Middleton Township - £10,000
- Grant from Middleton Township for the Christmas Lights Switch-on event - £3000.

Quarter 1 claim for the Economic Affairs Grant

- Amount approved from the claim = £7,875
- The grant funds 100% of a part time role.
- Activity which in this quarter is aimed at young families included:
 - Events to attract shoppers to the town centre:
 - 2 Brass Band Saturdays each attracting 50-70 additional town centre visitors
 - Easter Extravaganza involving 152 children in a Easter Treasure Hunt around market stalls and traders with additional entertainment – Punch & Judy, face painter and magician. The event had good pre and post event coverage on social media, online and printed press (Rochdale Online and Middleton Guardian)
 - 'One Great Day' event jointly delivered with Middleton Shopping Centre to raise money for a local children's charity. This involved Link4Life and a local children's theatre workshop and flash mob.
 - In Bloom – MTCM produced packs for the judging about the

town centre, it's floral displays, town centre events and Middleton's heritage

- Planning for events in Q2 – Oktoberfest and Christmas Lights Switch-on began.
- Social media promotion of the town centre with boosted facebook advertising and sharing to other pages such as Old Middleton, New Middleton and Middleton Shopping Centre. New visitors to the town centre identified as a direct result of online promotion. Use of 'like' and 'share' competitions.
- Q1 progress towards annual targets in the project plan

Events	
Social media	
Business Liaison	

Alternatives Considered

That members are not provided with this information and therefore are unable to scrutinise performance.

Costs and Budget Summary

5. The budget for 2019/20 for the 2 Town Centre Management companies is within the Economic Affairs 2019/20 budget.

Risk and Policy Implications

6. No risk or policy implications arise from this report.

Consultation

7. Not required – Report for information only.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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8. Grant agreements and Q1 monitoring returns	Economic Affairs, Floor 3, Number One Riverside
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