

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 1st March, 2012
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment
SUBJECT: Portas Pilots
WARD(S): Mersey

1. **PURPOSE**

To seek authority to make a bid to Government, for Runcorn Town Centre be nominated as a Portas Pilot Town Centre, to assist in the regeneration of the Town Centre and supplement the current proposals to identify a development partner.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council bid to Government, for Runcorn Town Centre be made a Portas Pilot Town Centre

3. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The concept of forming a Town Team to improve town centre locations was included within The Portas Review in December 2011. This idea was included within three of the twenty-eight review recommendations of The Portas Review:

- Put in place a Town Team: a visionary, strategic and strong operational management team for high streets.
(Review Recommendation 1)
- Town Teams should focus on making high streets accessible, attractive and safe.
(Review Recommendation 10)
- Run a number of High Street Pilots to test proof of concept.
(Review Recommendation 28)

The Town Team would focus on driving innovation and improvement in the way the high street is managed, develop a strategic and collaborative approach, and be made up of a wide range of local interests including

landlords, retailers, local authorities and local communities.

Further information is contained in the attached Appendices

3.2 Application and Funding

30th March 2012 is the closing date for applications.

Twelve pilots will receive grant funding; with a maximum allocation of £100,000 per Town Team.

The total funding pot is £1m, which means the average funding allocation is just over £83,000 per "Town Team".

Funding will be paid through s31 un-ring-fenced revenue grant and paid directly to the local authority.

Funding will be awarded to partnerships in England that demonstrate the best fit with the selection criteria.

3.3 Bidding Criteria

The selection of the pilots will be based on the following criteria:

- Pilot areas as a whole will represent all classifications of retail centre (market towns, villages, large towns, new towns, coastal towns and suburban areas).
- They will also be spread geographically and include centres of varying socio-demographics.
- Pilot areas will need to have transformational vision and the backing to make it a reality. The lead partner will need to be able to communicate this vision and demonstrate support from the local community and local partners.
- Pilot areas will need to have commitment to the Town Team approach from retailers, landlords, the local authority and the local community. Commitment could be demonstrated by local businesses match funding investment in the area or by a number of landlords and businesses becoming part of the Town Team.

Resources will be allocated on a value for money basis so areas need to be able to demonstrate the potential for improvement.

Key priorities will need to be outlined to include the most innovative ideas

that will have maximum impact and could be replicated elsewhere

3.4 The Process

An Application Form must be completed.

In support, a supporting video must be submitted which is short, concise and not professionally made.

Applications must be submitted on or before 30th March 2012.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

If successful the application will assist in the future regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

If successful the application will bring additional resources to assist in the future regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre. There will be a marginal cost in making the Bid. This will be met from existing resources.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

If successful the application will assist in the future regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre, create a vibrant town centre, support new employment and secure existing employment. It will also assist with the urban renewal and environmental improvement of Runcorn Town Centre.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

If unsuccessful the ability of the Council to support the regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre and the associated benefits will be more difficult to deliver.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

It is proposed to work with the local community and local businesses to deliver the Bid.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The Bid must be submitted before the 30th March 2012

**10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.