

TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

An opportunity has arisen to appoint a Town Centre Manager for Braintree, Halstead and Witham town centres, reporting to the Head of Enterprise, Culture and Leisure.

The retail environment in each of these locations has a unique identity and character and provides a focal point for businesses, residents and visitors. The Town Centre Development Manager will be responsible for promoting and maintaining the vitality and viability of the three towns. Braintree District Council is looking for candidates who have the drive and skill to maximise the potential of each of these towns and to drive initiatives forward in conjunction with our partners.

This is a 12 month temporary position. A key aspect of this role will be to balance the needs of local businesses and residents whilst recognising the unique challenges each town centre provides.

PURPOSE

To ensure that Braintree District's town centres are economically prosperous, dynamic and forward looking for growth, whilst highlighting the unique character of each centre.

Working within the Enterprise, Culture and Leisure department at Braintree District Council the aim will be to deliver strategies which increase the number of visitors to the towns. To support the network of existing town centre partnerships, to work with all stakeholders to encourage more activity and improve the retail and leisure offering in the town centres, and to identify and best use resources available to deliver this activity.

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

- To develop relationships with local retailers and any potential new businesses looking to locate.
- To promote the three town centres as vibrant places for local residents to shop.
- To develop other attractions within the realm of the town centres in addition to retail
- To identify 'unique selling points' for each town.
- To identify funding opportunities for town centre activities.
- To enhance the public/private/voluntary sector partnership across all town centre areas.
- To organise town centre events, marketing and promotion in conjunction with culture and tourism teams.
- To manage and administer the Town Centre street markets, identify opportunities to increase footfall and ensure quality.
- To engage in the licensing of street traders and concessionaires in the town centre, to add to the vibrancy of the area.
- Review town centre furniture and look for opportunities to improve the built environment.
- Review and monitor impact of parking policies on each town centre
- Contribute to major regeneration projects in the town centre vicinity.

OUTCOMES

Retail

- Reduction in the number of vacant retail sites.
- A 'local business perspective' for growth and improvement; an understanding of the challenges facing the retail community in each location.
- Improved retail offer through monitoring of retail development proposals.

Market Trading

- Improved appearance and positioning of market stalls
- Improved quality of products and continual monitoring of merchandise.
- Diversification of the market offering, including specialist markets.

Environment

- Enhanced facilities for shoppers and visitors.
- A welcoming approach and sense of arrival in the town centres.
- Improved furniture and lighting in the town centres.
- Improved vibrancy of the town centre areas.
- Improved atmosphere 'after hours' and reduction in fear of crime.
- Co-ordinated themes by area, such as signs and colours.

Tourism and Leisure

- Development of an evening economy in Braintree.
- Cultural events and local activities organised in conjunction with the Tourism and Culture departments at Braintree District Council.
- Traders involved in cultural events and street events.
- Tourism and cultural information is readily available to all visitors from a number of points.
- Calendar of events published.

Commercial and Business

- Early warnings for any businesses who are struggling in the current climate.
- Links established to BDS and the business support services they provide to help local businesses to set-up, innovate and grow.
- Monitoring of commercial retail development proposals to improve inward investment into the district.

Residents

- Re-vitalised town centres.
- Synchronised activity across the district.
- Improved customer service and shopping experience through customer service training.
- Parking schemes monitored and reported on to the local authority.
- Residents are involved and their opinions heard, on the development of the town centres
- Improvement of living spaces above shops, identification of funding opportunities to help improve these spaces.

Advocacy

- Delivery on relevant actions in the District's Economic Development Action Plan.
- Good market intelligence on the performance of the town centres.
- Monitoring of key performance indicators agreed for each town centre.
- Funding opportunities identified for town centre development initiatives.

ROLE REQUIREMENTS

Skills and abilities

The post holder will be self motivated, task orientated and with a passion to succeed. They will have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, tact and diplomacy, project management experience and ideally have an insight into marketing. The ability to juggle a variety of tasks and work well under pressure is also key.

The post holder will need to manage activities in line with budgets, to identify funding opportunities, and to manage and support the raising of additional funds to support initiatives, events and promotional campaigns.

Ability to work within a team and alongside partners is essential . Key partners identified include:

Braintree District Council
Essex County Council
Economic Development & Transportation Partnership Board
Essex Police
Braintree, Halstead, Coggeshall and Witham Chamber of Trade Associations
Town Centre Strategy Groups
Federation of Small Businesses
Farmers markets
Town and Parish Councils
Rural Communities Council Essex (RCCE)
Commercial property agents and landlords
NABMA – National Association of British Market Authorities
ATCM – Association of Town Centre Managers

Experience and Qualifications

Experience in the following areas would be desirable:

- The ability to work with Council officers and Members and to focus on Council priorities
- Negotiation with and motivation of others as well as demonstrating initiative.
- The ability to manage the conflicting demands of a varied workload and the ability to plan projects and put them into effect.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills, innovation, creativity, political and media awareness
- At least 3 years of dealing with competing priorities and pressures ideally with a good understanding of the commercial and retail environment.
- Appropriate professional qualifications in the area of town centre management, retail management or marketing.

Braintree District Council
Head of Enterprise & Leisure
20th August 2009