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**Report to:** Cabinet                      **Date of Meeting:** 14<sup>th</sup> February 2013

**Subject:** High Street Innovation Fund

**Report of:** Director of Corporate Commissioning

**Wards Affected:** Blundellsands, Church, Manor, Victoria, Sudell, Park, Dukes and Cambridge Wards

**Is this a Key Decision?** Yes      **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** Yes

**Exempt/Confidential:** No

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**Purpose/Summary**

To recommend how the High Street Innovation Fund is allocated across the borough.

**Recommendations**

- (i) To note the current Town Team partnerships that exist within Crosby, Maghull, Southport and Waterloo and their agreed activities
- (ii) Agree that the £100,000 High Street Innovation fund be allocated as follows; Crosby - £17,000, Maghull - £17000, Southport - £49,000 and Waterloo - £17,000

**How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?**

	<b><u>Corporate Objective</u></b>	<b><u>Positive Impact</u></b>	<b><u>Neutral Impact</u></b>	<b><u>Negative Impact</u></b>
1	Creating a Learning Community		/	
2	Jobs and Prosperity	/		
3	Environmental Sustainability		/	
4	Health and Well-Being		/	
5	Children and Young People		/	
6	Creating Safe Communities		/	
7	Creating Inclusive Communities		/	
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy		/	

**Reasons for the Recommendation(s):**

To allow Town Teams to progress with their initiatives and for the HSIF to be allocated across the Borough.

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

The HSIF a £100,000 grant from government allocated to Sefton in March 2012 and has been received by the Council in the current financial year.

In addition to the HSIF Crosby, Maghull, Southport and Waterloo have also been awarded £10,000 each from the Government as part of their Portas Pilots submissions. This funding has also now been received by the Council.

**Implications:**

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

<b>Legal</b> None	
<b>Human Resources</b> None	
<b>Equality</b>	
1. No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Impact on Service Delivery:**

No direct impact on service delivery.

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

A number of discussions have taken place with the Town Teams and other private sector representatives.

The Head of Corporate Finance & ICT has been consulted and comments have been incorporated into the report (FD 2099/13)

The Head of Corporate Legal Services has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD1315/13)

**Are there any other options available for consideration?**

No

## **Implementation Date for the Decision**

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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**Background Papers:**  
None

## Background

- 1 Sefton has a number of key Town Centres and shopping parades throughout the Borough, these centres have an important role to play in Sefton for serving the needs of the local community. They form a focal point for the surrounding area and provide a wide range of services that are accessible to the population, including retail, employment, leisure and education facilities.
- 2 Since the turn of the century, town centres nationally have witnessed high levels of vitality and viability with strong retail sales growth and the implementation of major town centre redevelopment schemes. Therefore, despite the growth of out-of-centre retail development, development activity has been focused within established centres primarily linked to the ambitious expansion plans of national department stores and key retailers. However, the recession has had an impact on consumer spending which in turn has had a negative impact on the vitality of the high street nationally. This has led to an increase in vacancy rates within many town centres in Sefton.
- 3 On 17 May 2011 it was announced that Mary Portas had been asked to undertake a review of the English high street. The report was published on 13 December 2011. The purpose of the Portas review was to identify what the Government, local authorities, businesses and others can do together to promote the development of new models of prosperous and diverse high streets.
- 4 As part of the formal Government response to the Portas review a number of Portas Pilots were announced, at the same time a new package was announced by Ministers. This included A multi-million pound High Street Innovation Fund - kick started by £10 million of taxpayers money focused on bringing empty shops back into use - which, if supplemented by both councils and landlords, could see £30 million going to support new business start-ups whilst bringing empty High Street properties back into use. Sefton received £100,000 from the HSIF.
- 5 After the second round of the Portas Pilots it was announced all unsuccessful Portas Pilots submissions (Town Teams) would also be awarded £10,000 each if backed by their local MP's
- 6 As part of the Portas Pilots submissions Crosby, Maghull, Southport and Waterloo formed Town Teams; all four of these Town Teams have been allocated £10,000 each to help support the high street.

## Town Teams

- 7 All of the Town Teams in Sefton are led by the community and business sector with the Council offering support and the required facilitation. There is a real commitment and enthusiasm from the Town Teams to progress and implement some of the activities that they outlined in their Portas Submissions such as;

8 **Crosby** - Activities will focus on developing the Town Team's aim to re-establish Crosby Village as the heart and soul of its community'. This resource will be used to kick start the process and will concentrate on delivering a marketing campaign to help improve business promotion and attract more people to shop and spend time in Crosby Village. This could include:

- Developing the Crosby Village website - to become both a resource for businesses to market their offer, and for residents and visitors to find out what's on in Crosby Village

- Running local community events in conjunction with other partners to help galvanise interest in the area and encourage more people to visit

- Developing a portfolio of information about Crosby Village to help encourage business interest

9 **Maghull** - Create a dynamic town centre, driven by both the business and the wider community, the initial focus would be based on introducing innovative evidence based solutions that could be replicated in any town. There are several proposed elements related to this project, this could include;

To look at developing an innovative community/business radio and TV broadcasting facility (streamed on the internet)

Have occasional specialist market days/craft and Hornby fairs

10 **Southport** – Implement a Tourism BID in order to deliver the best long-term value for money of the investment. In order to implement a successful BID it is proposed that funding is used for development costs of the BID Development Group, and any remainder for local authority BID start-up costs that cannot be absorbed in any other way by the Council or its contractors.

11 **Waterloo** -. The Town Team wish to have responsibility for delivering best value for money in terms of procurement and for securing match funding as appropriate.

The Team will develop and commission new signage that will enhance the High Street and begin to brand the coastal town of Waterloo as a creative place to visit. Signs will pay particular attention to the town's location, history, heritage and culture within the artwork.

The Team will also develop new ways of working with traders, developing new website and using traders group to mentor new businesses and work collaboratively to share costs deliver projects to support local traders e.g. to sell products on the web, use social media and generally provide support to new and struggling traders.

## High Street Innovation Fund

- 12 It is recommended that the High Street Innovation fund awarded to Sefton Council be used to support the above Town Teams with their planned activities to help revitalise our Town Centres. The following allocation is proposed that would bring best value;

<b>Town</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Crosby	£17,000
Maghull	£17,000
Southport	£49,000
Waterloo	£17,000

- 13 By allocating the above amounts to the Town Teams it will allow partners to create community and economy resilience within the Town Centres, while also allowing the Town Teams to implement a number of their activities. The funding combined with their already allocated £10,000 Portas Pilots monies will allow the Town Teams to plan a sustainable model that will enable them to co-ordinate future activity and map out the future of their Town Centres.