



Cultural and Economic Services Committee

Date: 07 September 2020

Purpose of the Report: To update Committee on delivery of Town Centre Welcome Back activity.

Contact Officers: Vivien Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic Services.

Corporate Objective/s	VIBRANCY AND VITALITY OF TOWN AND TOWN CENTRE – To continue to support a vibrant town through partnership working and initiatives including management of the street market, support for local businesses, town and community promotions and town centre enhancements.
Implications:	
Financial	Y Use of earmarked reserves up to £5,000
Risk management	
Operational/service delivery	
Legal/compliance	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should members be minded, the recommendation is:

1.1 To note the report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On 17/04/20, Committee endorsed activities in support of Town Centre businesses (Covid-19 Delegated Decisions). The attached **Appendix A** shows delivery progress on work plan activities.

2.2 The use of the new Town Centre Logo has been gaining traction and has been used on various advertising and promotional communications such as Banners stating that the Town Centre is open for business. For example, it has been added to bus adverts as well as publications such as the updated Town Shopping and Services Directory and Map. Local businesses have also started to use the logo on their web sites.

A short presentation visually documenting the campaign's progress can be seen attached at **Appendix B**.

2.3 The logo was printed onto 500 promotional reusable shopping bags. A small number of shops have been approached with the request to sell them on behalf of the Council. This engages shops in the campaign, reaches customers directly when they may need a bag, and continues the passive awareness of the logo. Income received from the sale of bags contributes to the Mayor's

charities.

- 2.4 Shopping voucher campaign was launched on 1st August and 20 people won £20.00 vouchers (in denominations of £5) to spend in participating Town Centre shops and businesses. At the time of writing this report, 20 local shops/businesses have opted to participate in the scheme. They will be provided with posters to communicate they have accepted the voucher scheme. The vouchers have a spend deadline of 31st October 2020 to support the aim of encouraging people's prompt return to High Street shopping.
- 2.5 At the time of writing the report, the bus advertisements were already in circulation from 1st August 2020 on buses covering 5 different routes around the Town, local villages, Dunstable and Luton inviting people to '@Visit Leighton Buzzard'.
- 2.6 A Children's shop window trail will be delivered by the Council's Event Team during October school half-term.
- 2.7 The Window dressing competition is programmed to take place in the winter to coincide with the natural time for special displays.
- 2.8 The sponsorship of reduced membership for the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) needed access to information that Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) held which would facilitate the method FSB recruited. CBC considered the idea and opted not to go ahead.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The campaign started on social media platforms first and is now moving into the stage for physical delivery.
- 3.2 The original aim was that the plan maintains flexibility in activity and timescales to deliver as no one can predict what will happen. This remains that case whilst it offers a framework of activities to work towards. The activities within the plan replicate proven practices that have and do take place in other centres. There is more of a need for business to engage in shared activities now and this engagement is gaining pace as activities are worked on.

End.