

# APPENDIX G

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 5 JANUARY 2010

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**Title:**

**GODALMING CENTRE MANAGER/PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR**

**[Portfolio Holders: Cllrs Robert Knowles, Stefan Reynolds]  
[Wards Affected: All Godalming, Haslemere, Cranleigh]**

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**Summary and purpose:**

This report proposes a matching funding contribution of £10,000 per annum over two years to employ a Centre Manager/Project co-ordinator for Godalming. The role is to take forward the actions arising from the Godalming Healthcheck and work with relevant partners in addressing issues affecting Godalming as a result of the recession.

**How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:**

The role of the Centre Manager/Project Co-ordinator is to address issues affecting the economic social and environmental well-being of Godalming and its hinterland. Effective outcomes will include this role also contributing to Improving Lives and Value for Money.

**Equality and Diversity Implications:**

The Godalming Healthcheck identified a number of issues where equality of access was important. The actions in the Healthcheck are to ensure that all members of the community can play a full and inclusive part in their community.

**Resource/Value for Money implications:**

The Waverley contribution proposed is £10,000 per annum for two years with funding allocated from within the existing budget for the support for businesses in the recession. This would match-fund a contribution already agreed by Godalming Town Council. In addition, the business community would give funding and time to implement projects. Godalming has suffered more acutely than the other Waverley communities.

Godalming is earmarked funding from the SEEDA Market Towns programme (around £35,000) subject to it having clear priorities and a cross sector partnership in place. This role would help unlock that resource.

**Legal Implications:**

It is proposed that Waverley would be the employer of the Centre Manager/Project Coordinator in the same way that it has for Cranleigh and Haslemere over recent

years. The post would work closely with a new partnership organisation, likely to be a Community Interest Company, who would take forward the implementation of the Healthcheck Action Plan.

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## **Background**

- 1 Waverley has had a successful programme of supporting its market towns over the last decade. This has been focussed on identifying issues of concern to the local communities which has helped release resource from funding partners to implement actions and outcomes that have benefited the local communities. Two of the most recent examples are the Cranleigh Enhancement scheme (investment of over £400,000 including £120,000 from SEEDA) and the Beacon Hill Regeneration project (investment of around £180,000 including £40,000 from SEEDA). In addition, projects developed through the Town Partnerships with support from Waverley's Economic Development Team and the local Project co-ordinators have been recognised as exemplars in Regional and national commendations from SEEDA, Action for Market Towns and BURA (Haslemere Christmas market – Best Business Project 2004; Cranleigh Fly project – Best Youth Project 2004; Best Regional Project – Turning strategy into Action Haslemere 2005; Best National project – Haslemere Rewards Scheme 2006; Commendation BURA regeneration awards and AMT Environment Category - Cranleigh Regeneration project 2007; Commendation for Most Successful Market Towns projects – Haslemere Food Festival and Taste Youth Cafes 2007. The Wireless Godalming project won the Best Business category in the 2008 Regional Market Towns Awards).
- 2 The role of Godalming Centre Manager/Project Co-ordinator is one which both the business community and the Town Council see as essential in addressing some of the key issues affecting the town. Godalming has had particularly acute problems during the economic downturn partly due to its proximity to Guildford and partly due to pressures on rents. Over twenty empty businesses have been identified and Waverley has been working with the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Surrey Highways and Godalming Town Council in trying to address the issue of empty shops and other 'public realm' issues such as the state of the roads, signage and the need to generate footfall. The post will need to be part time in view of the resources available but this will mirror the support available in Godalming and Cranleigh in recent years.
3. The Godalming Initiative operated for a number of years using volunteer effort and was reformed into a wider partnership group to carry out a Healthcheck from 2006 to 2008 in a post funded by Godalming Town Council with some support from Waverley. Now that project has been completed, it is important to move into the implementation phase with a focussed resource to make things happen. One of the key issues is to help increase footfall in the town and the role will work closely with a wider partnership and the Chamber of Trade. The Chamber has increased its membership significantly over the last twelve months and now has almost 100 members and an active committee which is keen to support the project based approach identified. A new partnership committee to take forward the Healthcheck action plan is being

created and is likely to be constituted as a Community Interest Company. The new post would help give capacity to this process.

### **Next Steps**

- 4 Waverley has supported the Market Town Healthcheck process and is keen to ensure that Godalming can win funding from the SEEDA Market Towns Programme designed to help sustain market towns into the future. With Waverley's support the Godalming Centre Manager/Project Co-ordinator can be recruited early in the new year and make a real difference by working with the Chamber of Trade and the emerging Godalming Partnership. The Chamber of Trade has an events group that is working with Waverley and the Town Council to create a programme of events and activities for the year ahead and the Godalming partnership will take forward wider community issues. Experience shows that these roles help to generate capacity and empower local volunteers to make a difference in their local area. The results take time to develop, but generate significant benefit over time.

### **Conclusion**

- 5 The new Town Centre Manager/Project Co-ordinator post will be a key resource in helping address some of the challenges facing Godalming and in helping to move forward the implementation of the Godalming Healthcheck findings. The role will also help sustain a number of Waverley's key corporate priorities and assist service areas deliver their objectives. It is recommended that Waverley plays an active part in making this happen and provides matching funding for two years adding to the contributions already committed by Godalming Town Council.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Executive:

- 1) support the creation of a Godalming Town Manager/Project Co-ordinator post;
- 2) agree to provide funding of £10,000 per annum for two years matching the contribution made by Godalming Town Council; and
- 3) agree that the post would be hosted by Waverley Borough Council.

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### **Background Papers**

Godalming Healthcheck. Available on [www.onetown.org.uk/](http://www.onetown.org.uk/)

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