

# 'Shop Local' Campaign

## Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

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North Tyneside Council

# Background

- Covid 19, the subsequent period of lockdown and the introduction of social restrictions has had a huge impact on businesses in HAL, events, personal care and non-essential retail.
- Footfall in town centres has reduced due to closures and advice on social restrictions.
- Vacancy rates have fluctuated and seem to have stabilised in some areas but the churn of tenants could cause some concern in survival rates and longevity.
- Shopping behaviours have transitioned quickly to digital with the rise of Click and Collect and large online companies offering quick delivery options.
- Clear that as social restrictions are relaxed continued Borough wide support is essential for the survival of our small local businesses and to support the recovery of town centres.



# Current Activity



- Currently the Borough has a local campaign called Buy Local North Tyneside.
- An initiative successfully born out of lockdown and a product of the three town centre Chambers and Newcastle Building Society coming together, supported by North Tyneside Council and the North Tyneside Business Forum.
- Website that acts as a directory and mostly digital campaign activity, incl 25 videos and a Facebook page with 987 followers. Supported by roundabout advertising and a substantial flyer drop to residents.
- Campaign has run its course, business engagement levels with the brand have dropped and there's recognition it is time to increase efforts that surpass the capabilities of BLNT.



# What's Next?

# TOTALLY LOCALLY

- After consultation and discussion with the Town Chambers, the BLNT team, the NT Business Forum and a presentation from Totally Locally creator it was agreed that efforts should be channelled into promoting this brand as a successor to BLNT, against an agreed set of objectives to work towards.
- Totally Locally is a grass roots campaign, built on the ethos that anyone can use it and it surpasses structures. Inclusive in nature, it allows all businesses to get involved respective of sector, whether they are service led/goods led or part of a Chamber.
- It offers a Borough wide solution with a free of charge brand that already has market traction both nationally and internationally with some existing local take up.
- There is a suite of free downloadable marketing materials like posters and a number of well-established events like fiver fest available for use.
- Likelihood of £50k funding from NoTCA Recovery and Innovation Places fund to help support activity and roll out.



# Business-led Approach

- It's important that a campaign of this nature is business led to ensure we have full engagement and therefore impact.
- Campaign will be fronted and coordinated by the NT Business Forum to reflect its Borough wide coverage, but supported by NTC, in terms of resource.
- Three Steering Groups will be set up reflecting location, Coast, Riverside and West, but they will open to all businesses who want to get involved. Chaired by the Forum and with Chamber representation.
- Social media handles will be set up to help promote the band and key messaging but avoiding a dedicated website.
- Working with other Council departments like Tourism and Events to maximise potential to increase footfall for the benefit of local businesses.



# Activity

- The Steering Groups will decide activity utilising the £50k budget (pending approval of application.)
- Examples could include:
  - Digital marketing tools – videos, graphics, blogs, vlogs.
  - Provision of physical marketing material like posters, flyers etc and a residents drop.
  - Events: markets, seasonal events, promotional activity like fiver fest.
  - PR /Comms both local and national to promote visitor destination.
  - Specific schemes: town vouchers or multi shop loyalty cards.



# E-Commerce Platform

- An individual but interlinked workstream from the on the ground campaign work.
- The provision of an E-Commerce platform where local businesses can sell their goods and services under a local banner of North Tyneside.
- At its simplest it will be a Shop Local E Commerce platform with Click and Collect options and individual delivery arrangements.
- At its most sophisticated it will provide consolidated delivery options that can combine orders from multiple shops in particular geographies and deliver via sustainable electronic bikes and vans.



# E-Commerce Platform

- Funding application is being considered for CONTAIN funding which will provide up to £100k for the first year including platform development, set up and promotion, as well as business subscriptions and the consolidated delivery operation.
- Provides an inclusive way for all residents and visitors to shop locally in light of Covid risk and potential impact on public confidence to physically attend the shops.
- Open tender process to select provider, a number of potential suppliers have been identified: Totally Locally, Shopappy and Love Where You Live.
- Key element for award will be sustainability of the platform past the first year and careful consideration to the cost to customers and businesses following first year subsidies.

# Next Steps

- Campaign Work
  - NTBF Management Group to agree involvement in fronting Totally Locally campaign, imminent.
  - Set up and promote the three Steering Groups, planned for second week in August.
  - Secure funds, expected by end of July.
  - Agree activity plan/budget and launch campaign.
- Local E Commerce platform
  - Secure funds, imminent.
  - Develop and advertise specification, end of July.
  - Review submissions and award contract by September.
  - Launch in time for Halloween/Christmas.

