

Meeting Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Leader's Portfolio Holder Report –  
Councillor John Mallinson**

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## **BORDERLANDS INCLUSIVE GROWTH DEAL**

### **Programme**

At the programme level, the Borderlands partners continue to progress the work required to reach Full Deal. This involves the production of:

- the business cases for all projects and programmes
- a collaboration agreement
- a communications protocol and
- monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Work is also being undertaken to support the case for additional investment to be allocated to the Deal - to respond to the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the Borderlands area.

A proposal document is in the process of being prepared that will outline the economic case for this additional investment – that will be submitted for consideration in the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review.

### **Carlisle Projects**

Good progress continues to be made on three Carlisle projects - Carlisle Station Citadels and Caldew Riverside:

- The detailed business case for seeking £20m investment from the Deal to deliver the improvements to the railway station project has now been submitted to Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). An investment decision is anticipated next month

- The detailed business case for a new campus for the University of Cumbria on the Citadels site continues to progress. The identification of a preferred option for the site in terms of the mix of uses, the amount of floorspace and layout is the current focus. A submission to MHCLG in December has been targeted
- Proposals for the development of the Caldew Riverside site continue to be progressed. A detailed remediation appraisal and feasibility study has been completed - which has provided a more accurate figure for the costs of cleaning up the site and viable redevelopment options. This work has been used to secure £1million from the Towns Fund Accelerated Capital Grants programme – which will fund the remediation of the site and this will commence this financial year

## **CARLISLE AMBASSADORS**

Carlisle Ambassador members continue to meet weekly via Zoom. Recent speakers included, Andy Fearon of Carlisle Vineyard Church speaking about wellbeing and mental health; Steven Robinson, Regeneration Manager for Carlisle City Council speaking about the Town Investment Plan and Town Deal; Darren Horne, Carlisle College 'How to communicate like a Ninja' and Mark Modena of Winning Moves on how digital technology navigate current business challenges and help your business. These meetings continue to engage Carlisle businesses in learning through sharing best practice and support each other to be more resilient, especially important in the current circumstances.

**Membership:** Despite lockdown, we are still receiving requests from businesses keen to join. In August membership was 214, since then the membership has continued to grow with now over 250 members. Most recent to join include PMS Fabrication, Topps Tiles, Lakeland Commercial Finance and World Group.

Members continue to spread the positive messages about Carlisle with their recommendations to others bringing enquiries from Lancashire and the Midlands.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Newsletter:** The regular 'e' newsletter continues to be popular with content put together in collaboration with Economic Development and Communications colleagues in the City Council.

**Website:** With all the new members, updates are being made on a regular basis to ensure our newest members are on the directory. There are resources available on the site including images, branding toolkit, information on past projects and events, overviews of past meetings, the e newsletters are also available for people's reference.

## **PROJECTS**

**Young Carlisle Ambassadors:** this project is now starting up again with a date booked for an event in the City Centre next year on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Working closely with

Carlisle College has enabled us to recruit new members to the Committee and the potential for young people to work on elements of the event as part of their work experience or portfolio development. Our next Young Carlisle Ambassador's Committee will meet in November. Meanwhile, Carlisle Ambassadors continue to work closely with Carlisle College on their Apprenticeship programme and with Cumbria Careers Hub to help make that connection between young people and the world of work.

**Business Support:** one to one and group catch up sessions with Carlisle Ambassador members has resulted in feedback from over 40 Ambassadors on the kinds of support businesses would benefit from in the recovery phase as they come out of COVID19 lockdown and open up again. The 'Small Business Support Carlisle' established at the end of May by Michelle Masters is supported by several Carlisle Ambassadors. Membership is now in the order of 2,900 micro, small and medium Carlisle businesses an increase of 500 since beginning of September.

**Business Support Signposting:** All contacts with businesses provide opportunities to signpost to the sources of help available e.g.: Chamber of Commerce; Digital Cumbria; CLEP, Carlisle City Council's Business Support (Economic Development), Britain's Energy Coast Business Cluster, Federation of Small Businesses. We continue to work closely with these partners to support our local businesses.

**Carlisle Ambassador Mentor Programme:** established earlier this year is still going really well and received some positive feedback from businesses taking part. This has been a member only benefit to date, but Carlisle Ambassadors are monitoring capacity in order to help more businesses. All mentors are volunteers and the businesses are very much valuing this support.

### **Central Plaza**

The work to progress plans to redevelop the site continues and an updated appraisal hotel scheme has been prepared that includes further feasibility work and construction costings.

This demonstrates a new hotel is deliverable but a with viability / gap funding requirement of around £5.5 million. This project - and this gap funding ask - has been included in the Council's Future High Street Fund (FHSF) bid. Putting the scheme through the FHSG also enable the Council to use the £2million expenditure on the site as co-funding (as the Council has effectively funded demolition element of the proposed scheme).

We expected a funding decision on the FHSF later this year and this will inform the next steps with the redevelopment of the site.

### **COVID-19**

The Council has stepped up its response to the Covid-19 emergency through the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum (CLRF) as its subgroups are reformed to tackle the second wave.

The Health Protection Board and Strategic Recovery Co-ordination Group continue to meet as part of the overall partnership structure.

A Task and Finish Group has completed its report on managing 'concurrent' events, in preparation for this winter. The learning will be presented to the CLRF Executive on 20 October.

#### **UPDATE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS**

We continue to support the countywide communications response to the Covid-19 emergency, including the promotion of government support schemes and public information. Work also continues on key projects with communications support provided to the Town Investment Plan, St Cuthbert's Garden Village and Borderlands projects. This includes the use of virtual exhibitions.