

Report to:

**Council**

Agenda  
Item:

10(b)(iv)

Meeting Date: 09 January 2018

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder's Report –  
Councillor Heather Bradley**

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## **ST. CUTHBERT'S GARDEN VILLAGE**

Stage 1 Masterplanning has now commenced with the appointment of Gillespies Urban Design Consultancy supported by Hemingway Design to assist in this process. The focus of this work will be developing a vision for St. Cuthbert's and concept options which will help to narrow down precisely where development will occur.

The first public engagement on the garden village will commence in late January, at which time a dedicated St. Cuthbert's website will be launched. The consultation will coincide with consultation by Cumbria County Council on route options for a new Southern Link Road, which is an integral part of the Garden Village.

Separately the City Council has been awarded an additional £275,000 capacity funding to support and advance the planning of St. Cuthbert's. This follows a competitive bidding process with the City Council being awarded the joint highest amount nationally.

## **FELLFOOT FORWARD LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME**

The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership, of which Carlisle City Council is an active member, has recently been successful in securing a £162 000 grant to fund an exciting landscape partnership scheme. The grant followed a bid made to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), as part of a competitive process nationally, and which involved detailed scrutiny and site visits by the Heritage Lottery Fund Board.

The funding is for the development phase of the project, with the total cost of the scheme set at £2.9 million. The bid has been made for an area straddling the boundary between the districts of Carlisle and Eden, (encompassing an area from just south of Brampton, with the River Eden at its western edge and the Pennines to the east, down to Melmerby in Eden District).

The bid focussed on the relative remoteness of the villages and hamlets in this area, and the opportunities to support skills and knowledge based training, with emphasis on the heritage of the area. Wide public and partner consultation was undertaken to inform the bid, and the feedback from the consultation showed that local people felt strongly that there were opportunities to conserve the landscape and geology, historic environment and cultural history of the area.

The next stage of the project is to develop specific projects to deliver the aims of the scheme.

## **BOTCHERGATE HERITAGE ACTION ZONE**

The Council received confirmation from Historic England that our bid for Heritage Action Zone status has not been selected to take forward. The principal reason cited was that the bid did not meet as many of the Historic England regional priorities as the other shortlisted scheme. Despite being unsuccessful the Council were commended on the way in which the Botchergate/London Road bid was developed and presented.

A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Townscape Heritage Initiative for Botchergate has been twin-tracked in the event that the Heritage Action Zone bid was unsuccessful. This was successfully submitted on 8 December and includes some projects that were contained within the Heritage Action Zone:

- A commercial frontage improvement scheme along Botchergate and London Road.
- Public realm improvement works at Christchurch Gardens, which is located between Botchergate and Lancaster Street.
- Restoration and reuse of the Dyas Block, which comprises of the terrace of commercial properties 149-159 Botchergate.

## **CARLISLE BUSINESS INTERACTION CENTRE (BIC)**

Arrangements for the transfer of the Business Interaction Centre back to the Council from the University took place in late December.

The Regeneration and Strategic Asset Investment Services teams have been in dialogue with existing and potential new tenants of the Business Interaction Centre in order to maximise occupancy and revenue. The Council intends to let sufficient space to cover operating and maintenance costs, whilst continuing to provide a hot-desking and shared office facilities for freelancers and small businesses.

A project for the Business Interaction Centre to be relaunched as an incubator 'hub' that will provide flexible workspaces and support for freelancers and small businesses within the creative and digital employment sectors is now being actively progressed. An expression of interest for ERDF funding was submitted in November 2017, with a decision due this month.

## **AFFORDABLE AND SPECIALIST HOUSING**

The Council has been holding a six-week consultation on the Affordable and Specialist Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which ends on 15 December. The Supplementary Planning Document adds additional context and clarity to Local Plan policies HO 4 – Affordable Housing and HO 10 – Housing to Meet Specific Needs. Two consultation events have been held, including a session targeted at the Council's local Housing Association partners.

Once the consultation responses have been reviewed the Supplementary Planning Document will then be going to Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel and back to Executive in the new year.

## **HOMELESS, PREVENTION AND ACCOMMODATION SERVICES**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> November the Homeless, Prevention and Accommodation Services:

- Made 90 statutory homelessness decisions; and accepted a full homeless duty to 20 households
- Provided housing and homelessness advice to 627 households
- Prevented or relieved 300 households from experiencing homelessness
- Accommodated 131 households in temporary accommodation; 106 households departed, of which 68 were supported to move on positively within an average of 7 weeks
- 16 households were accommodated who were fleeing domestic violence and all were supported to move on to safe and secure longer-term accommodation within an average of 6 weeks
- Processed 64 low cost housing applications, of which 24 were approved
- Processed 10 applications to the Carlisle Deposit Guarantee Scheme, of which 8 were approved
- Assisted 3 households with arrears, and 18 households with rent in advance payments
- Achieved £884,323 in benefit gains

## **FLOOD GRANT APPLICATIONS**

As of the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017 the City Council completed 954 flood grant applications. During November 2017, the Housing and Pollution Team attempted to contact all of those households who had an approved grant to ensure the works and invoices were in to the City Council by 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017.