

Meeting Date: 15th July 2014

Public/Private*: Public

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local Plan

Analysis of the representations received in response to the Preferred Options Stage Two consultation is now nearing completion, beyond which the Plan can consequently be refined where necessary to respond to comments made. Efforts associated with identifying the need for changes resulting from the introduction of the new National Planning Policy Guidance, and changes to permitted development rights, also remain ongoing, but should be completed by mid July.

In terms of formalising such refinements to the Plan, the intention is to start engaging the Member Steering Group from the end of July onwards. Such a process has worked well to date in debating and agreeing policy direction and is anticipated to add similar value moving forward.

In terms of the evidence supporting the Local Plan, the receipt of the City Centre Masterplan is imminent. Following consultation on this the strategic approach to planning for retail within the Plan can be finalised, as too can the specific allocations required to meet future retail needs. Consultation on the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is to be undertaken in tandem with that on the City Centre Masterplan, with the SHLAA constituting a technical assessment of the potential of land to accommodate future housing growth. Consultation on the SHLAA is generally being approached from the perspective of acting to validate the robustness of technical information already held for sites, as opposed to seeking further land for inclusion within the Plan at this late stage or views on preferences between sites.

Remaining on the issue of housing growth, the opportunity is also being taken to commission a short refresh of the key outputs of the Council's housing needs and demand study. This will ensure that the housing target in the publication draft of the Local Plan is based on the most up to date demographic and economic projections. This work is expected to be completed prior to the end of July.

The timescales for progressing the Local Plan remain unchanged from those last communicated, with the next milestone being consultation on a 'publication' draft of the Local Plan in January of next year (2015). Adoption of the Plan is still anticipated to be in early 2016.

City Centre Masterplan

Officers are due to take receipt of the final draft version of Masterplan this week (that commencing 16th June), with a view to reviewing the content and agreeing with the appointed consultants any necessary changes prior to the 1st July.

Following a presentation to and consideration by JMT, the draft Masterplan will be subject to a four week period of public consultation commencing in mid July.

Following the close of consultation on the Masterplan comments received in response to it will be used to help refine the final version. The final Masterplan and comments received will then be used to inform relevant aspects of the emerging Local Plan, including the strategic retail approach and allocations.

HOUSING

Homeless Strategy

Consultation with Key partners on Carlisle's Homelessness Strategy 2014-19 has begun which will be published at the end of this year. A series of workshops and sessions are planned in order to shape the key priority areas identified with representatives from all statutory, voluntary and community sectors with an interest in homelessness issues. The key priority areas are:

1. Appropriate Accommodation & Support Pathways
2. Multiple Excluded Homelessness & Rough Sleeping
3. Increase & improve positive outcomes for young people experiencing homelessness
4. Prevention of homelessness

Homeless Services:

Since 1st April the homeless service has made 24 homeless decisions and accepted a full statutory duty to 4 households; in addition 28 households were prevented from becoming homeless; with 25 households being assisted with homeless / housing advice.

Hostel Services:

Since 1st April the hostel services has successfully assisted 12 households to move on positively; 50% of which were to independent tenancies; 25% to longer term supported housing; and 25% returning to family / friends over an average length of stay of four months; with 33% receiving initial follow on support for up to 8 weeks.

Two residents were supported to take part in a 'pop up kitchen' as part of the Meals Direct project currently being delivered within Water Street. The residents volunteer within the project, cooked and served meals to customers within the Old Fire Station. In addition a joint project between Carlisle City Council, Cumbria Probation, Sustainable Carlisle and Ways to Welfare to create a community garden and growing group within the grounds at Water Street began over the Easter weekend and is now well underway.

An integrated preventative initiative focused has been established between the hostel and welfare advice services in Water Street through the development of a weekly community welfare advice drop in surgery; which is open to both residents of the scheme and those residing within the local community.

Homelife Carlisle

Homelife were commended at a ceremony at the House of Lords as part of the National HIA Awards for their work in integrating services with Health and Social Care. We were pleased to be recognised given how relatively young we are as an HIA. The Community Neighbours programme now has 52 volunteers and 39 partnerships and was recently featured on BBC Radio Cumbria as part of Volunteers Week. The clip, which includes an interview with a volunteer and a client, can be found at:

<https://soundcloud.com/carlisle-council/community-neighbours-bbc-02-june-14-low-mono-16-bit>

Landlord Accreditation

On 20th May 2014 a launch event took place at the University of Cumbria to officially launch Cumbria Landlord Accreditation Scheme (CLAS)

The new scheme which Carlisle City Council have joined alongside four of the other Cumbrian District Councils, will see the start of a new relationship with local landlords and the National Landlords Association (NLA), who CLAS is partnered with to run and administer the scheme.

Existing accredited landlords are being asked to transfer to the new CLAS scheme before the 1st October, when the previous scheme will officially end.

Landlord Accreditation will now be obtained by landlords through the National Landlords Association. The private sector team are working closely with landlords to assist them in transferring over to the new scheme, providing information through social media, local press, the City Council's website and targeted mail shots.

Cluster of Empty Homes

The target is to have 45 empty properties re-occupied by March 2015. To date 43 grants have been approved of which 27 have been completed and are now tenanted. We are on target to deliver 45 properties by December 2014.

Portfolio Holder's Meeting

The Director of Economic Development and myself recently met with Cllr Clare Feeney-Johnson, Cumbria County Council Cabinet Member for Environment and Angela Jones Assistant Director Environment and Regulatory Services who has responsibility for Planning Services to discuss how we can work better together, particularly on Planning matters. It was a very useful meeting and I look forward to working more closely with them in the future.