

Meeting Date: 6<sup>th</sup> March 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**

A six-week period of public engagement is underway on the scope of a St. Cuthbert's Local Plan and a vision for the new development. The engagement is running parallel to one by Cumbria County Council seeking views on two route options for a potential new Carlisle Southern Link Road.

The engagement runs from 26<sup>th</sup> January until 9<sup>th</sup> March. Over 1,000 people attended drop in events at the Racecourse on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> February and in The Lanes Shopping Centre on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> February. An event was held at the Racecourse on 8<sup>th</sup> February for regulatory stakeholders and specific interest groups.

Further engagement activities are planned, including focussed stakeholder workshops, engagement with youth organisations and potentially schools as well as Members. An online questionnaire is also available.

Further information is available on the recently launched St Cuthbert's website [www.stcuthbertsgv.co.uk](http://www.stcuthbertsgv.co.uk).

## **AFFORDABLE AND SPECIALIST HOUSING**

The “Demonstration Project” scheme at Beverley Rise, Harraby, received full planning permission at January’s Development Control Committee. The scheme will provide 40 new 2 & 3 bedroom affordable rented family houses, while simultaneously providing practical onsite training opportunities for students from Carlisle College.

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

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017:

- Made 111 statutory homelessness decisions; and accepted a full homeless duty to 23 households
- Provided housing and homelessness advice to 715 households
- Prevented or relieved 395 households from experiencing homelessness
- Accommodated 136 households in temporary accommodation; 115 households departed, of which 76 were supported to move on positively within an average of 7 weeks
- 31 households were accommodated who were fleeing domestic violence and 24 were supported to move on to safe and secure longer-term accommodation within an average of 7 weeks
- Processed 70 low cost housing applications, of which 30 were approved
- Processed 12 applications to the Carlisle Deposit Guarantee Scheme, of which 10 were approved
- Assisted 4 household with arrears, and 20 households with rent in advance payments
- Achieved benefit gains of £1,096,259.80

The service has recruited, inducted and trained additional staff members to the Homeless Accommodation Service in the run up to reopening the men's scheme at John Street. In addition, the new two year externally funded Prevention and Crisis Support Team members are now in post and working to establish the service locally to assist people at risk of or affected by domestic / sexual abuse or who are vulnerable to all other forms of exploitation.

The service is also making preparations to ensure that we are able to meet the legislative changes required as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, due to be enacted

on 3rd April 2018. Awareness sessions were arranged for stakeholders and Members which took place in February.

## **CENTRAL PLAZA**

Following a partial collapse of a chimney on the Central Plaza, Building Control have had no alternative but to partially close off West Walls Road on public safety grounds. Building Control have been working closely with a contractor in order to prepare a viable scheme to remove the danger and re open the road as soon as practicable.

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

There has been interest in the available space within the building following the withdrawal of the University at the end of December. The Regeneration and Strategic Asset Investment Services teams have been working together to secure suitable tenants. Lease agreements for several of the spaces are currently being finalised.

The Regeneration team has submitted an outline business case to the European Regional Development Fund to use the BIC as an incubator 'hub' for businesses in the creative and digital sectors. The project would enable the provision of mix of shared and self-contained workspaces, ICT equipment and bespoke business support.

## **CITY CENTRE PUBLIC REALM**

The installation programme for the 30 fingerpost directional signs and 11 information hubs across the city is now nearing completion and will conclude this month. They have generated a lot of interest and there has been a very positive reaction to them from residents, businesses and visitors in terms of their design and content.

## **HOUSING**

**Empty Properties:** - There are approximately 240 long term empty homes in Carlisle. The City Council's Empty Homes and Grants Officer is actively identifying and tackling long term empty homes. The post is working with a range of services and agencies, using a mixture of persuasion, advice and enforcement to bring properties back into use. The Empty Homes and Grants Officer is also working closely with the Homelife Home Improvement Agency to assist residents staying safe and warm in their homes.