



Report to

Council

Meeting Date: 8th November 2022

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Economy, Enterprise & Housing Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Marilyn Bowman**

INVESTMENT ZONE INITIATIVE

The Government has set out plans for Investment Zones, aimed at driving growth and housing delivery. Investment Zones will benefit from variety of tax incentives, planning simplifications and wider support for the local economy.

County Councils have been invited to submit Expressions Of Interest (EOI) for Investment Zones. These EOIs need approval in principle from local planning authorities, district councils and other key stakeholders.

Carlisle City Council has been working closely with Cumbria County Council on their EOI, which was submitted on 14th October. No date has been provided on when feedback on applications will be received, but Government has stated that further information to areas will be issued at the earliest possible opportunity.

RURAL STRATEGY

- The development of a rural strategy and action plan for the Carlisle district is progressing well
- A Member workshop was held on 3rd November to review the work so far and provide input. This will all be fed into the final document
- The strategy will be ready by the end of this year

MARKET SQUARE PROJECT

- Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council are working together to deliver an improved public space within the Green Market and Old Town Hall area that will be funded by the Future High Streets Fund
- Carlisle residents and businesses will soon be asked to have their say on some concept ideas for the space and a consultation is planned before Christmas

- This follows on from the stage-one consultation that was held in the summer, which asked residents, businesses and visitors the issues with the area and what they would like to see in the space and the things it could be used for

CITY CENTRE BUSINESS GRANTS

- A pilot City Centre Grants Scheme with £40,000 funding from City Council budgets was trialled last year
- The aim of the fund was to support the city centre, by providing grants to new start-ups or existing business re-locating to Carlisle from outside the area taking up vacant units
- To date this grant has supported nine businesses across a range of sectors, all of which are still active and trading
- Given the success of the scheme, it is being relaunched with a further £40,000 of Council funding and will be extended so that it supports shopping areas outside of the city centre - in the neighbourhood areas across the city and those in the market towns

CITY CENTRE PERFORMANCE

- Two key vacant properties in the pedestrian area of the city centre have recently been occupied
 - o Candy World on Scotch Street – an American sweet shop
 - o Bob and Berts on Scotch Street – an Irish café chain
- The occupation of these units is very encouraging and is an indicator that Carlisle City Centre continues to attract new operators, despite difficult trading conditions for the high street.

ST CUTHBERT'S GARDEN VILAGE

Work on the St Cuthbert's Local Plan continues at pace. Following on from winning the RTPi (Royal Town Planning Institute) North West Award for Excellence in Technology this Summer, it was confirmed this week that the St Cuthbert's Garden Village interactive 360-degree virtual exhibition and promotional video have been shortlisted as a finalist within the same category for the prestigious National RTPi (Royal Town Planning Institute) Awards in November.

Homes England have confirmed it will continue to fund the CSLR until the end of December 2022 and continue to support the County Council to procure the contractor to build the road.

CARLISLE AMBASSADORS

Since the successful meeting of Carlisle Ambassadors held at the Civic Centre on 7th July 2022, the membership has continued to grow with the number of businesses now at 411.

The latest meeting took place at Carlisle Racecourse on 11th October 2022 with the theme of Skills, Recruitment and Retention. Twenty business showcase stands filled the Bell's Hall and circa 170 delegates attended on the day. The 400th member was presented with a certificate at the start of the event; followed by speakers from Cartmell Shepherd

Solicitors, Capita (now WSP) and Thomas Graham who shared their experience and knowledge on securing the skills, recruitment and retention in their sector. The regular major projects update from Jane Meek provided businesses with the latest on Borderlands, Towns Fund and St Cuthbert's Garden Village as well as an outline of Carlisle's Investment Plan for allocation of funds from the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The next meeting of Carlisle Ambassadors will take place on Thursday, 1st December 2022 and will be themed 'Customer Experience / Customer Service'. Ambassadors have already signed up for showcase stands in anticipation.

In other news, Carlisle Ambassadors have been nominated for the In-Cumbria Business Awards and confirmation was received in early September that the initiative has been shortlisted as a finalist under the 'Flying the Flag for Cumbria'. The awards ceremony will take place on 24th November 2022 at The Halston, Carlisle.

ACCOMMODATION FOR EX-OFFENDERS / PRISON LEAVERS

Carlisle City Council has been successful in being awarded £50,000 (2022/2023) from DLUCH (Department of Levelling Up, Communities & Housing) to provide direct interventions to support a minimum of 40 ex-offenders / prison leavers to access longer term housing solutions and tenancies within the Private Rented Sector. At the end of Q2 (six months) we have successfully supported 32 individuals as part of this project, 11 of which are female.

ROUGH SLEEPER INITIATIVE 2022 - 2025

Carlisle City Council have been successful in being awarded £1,947,941 (2022/2025) from DLUCH (Department of Levelling Up, Communities & Housing) to continue to deliver a range of personalised bespoke countywide interventions to meet the needs of rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, ranging from off the street interventions, access to accommodation pathways, to longer term recovery and tenancy sustainment support interventions.

HOUSING

New CO requirements for landlords have come into force on **1st October 2022**, both social and private landlords will be expected to have CO detectors fitted in every room with a fuel burning appliance. The only exception to this are rooms where the only combustion appliance is a gas cooker. The enforcement of these regulations is contained with the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy and the same penalty policy will be applied from 2020 for any landlord in breach of the legislation.