

Meeting Date: 19th July 2022

Public/Private*: Public

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

TOWN DEAL

Good progress continues to be made on the delivery of £19.7m Carlisle Town Deal.

The six business cases that were submitted in March have been approved by Government and will now move into the implementation phase. These are:-

- Carlisle Business Exchange Centre (Citadels Campus) – University of Cumbria
- Lighting Up Carlisle – City Council
- Digital and Community Learning Hub – County Council
- Southern Gateway – County Council
- Project Tullie – Tullie House Trust
- Start with the Park (St Cuthbert's GV) City Council

The seventh business case is being progressed for the Market Hall Project with an extension for submission to Government agreed.

FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

Good progress continues to be made on the delivery of the £9.1m Future High Street Fund.

There are 4 projects in the programme:-

Market Square (City Council / County Council)

- Consultants have been appointed to progress the designs and cost plan for the project – the 1st stage of consultation is running from 11th – 27th July 2022

Central Plaza (City Council)

- The survey required for the site stabilisation works was completed last month – this will inform the next stage, which is identifying the design options for the site stabilisation and the associated costs

Castle Street (Tullie House Trust)

- The Grant Funding Agreement is in the process of being agreed with Tullie House – the next stage for Tullie House to more detailed designs and a cost plan

Devonshire Street (County Council)

- The Grant Funding Agreement is in the process of being agreed with the County Council – the next stage is to develop preliminary designs and a cost plan

CITY CENTRE

- Footfall within the City Centre has picked up during this year, with an increase of 24% in average footfall levels in the last three months
- City Council events such as the Hawker Festival and the Easter International Market have contributed toward this increased footfall figure. The Hawker Festival seeing footfall counts of over 56,000 and the Easter International Market over 78,000
- [As we have seen in the press] confidence in Carlisle City Centre is growing with a number of new hospitality, leisure and restaurant businesses opening recently
- This is reflective of the wider trend of the transition of City Centres to become multifunctional 'hubs' and less retail orientated – something which the City Council is supporting through key regeneration initiatives like Borderlands, Future High Streets Fund, Town Deal and Council-funded programmes like the **City Centre Business Growth Grant Scheme**

BUSINESS GROWTH GRANT SCHEME

- This grant scheme, funded by the City Council, ran during the last financial year and is aimed at businesses looking to occupy vacant premises within the City Centre
- The grant has supported businesses in the form of a capital grants between £2,500 – £5,000
- The scheme has been very successful, with six businesses supported operating within the retail, leisure and entertainment sectors - with the allocation fully committed
- Due to the success of the scheme the City Council has allocated a further £40,000 to the scheme for this financial year to continue this assistance to local businesses, reduce the number of vacant properties and support the transition of the City Centre

ST CUTHBERT'S GARDEN VILLAGE

Work on the St Cuthbert's Local Plan continues at pace with the evidential commissions due to report this Summer.

Following extremely positive feedback from Government's Office for Place to our Project Plan, the consultant appointment team is now in place to progress the St Cuthbert's Design Code for completion in May 2023. This Programme includes engagement with local communities and the Members Advisory Group.

Sharpe Pritchard and 31Ten Consulting were selected from a very competitive field to undertake the Stage 1 Financial and Legal Options Appraisal for the new long term delivery vehicle. They both have extensive experience of supporting Councils.