

Meeting Date: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Economy, Enterprise & Housing Portfolio Holder's Report –  
Councillor Paul Nedved**

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

Once adopted, the St Cuthbert's Local Plan will be the primary document by which future planning applications will be assessed. The Strategic Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide advice and guidance to potential applications that come forward within the Garden Village ahead of the Plan's adoption.

Following consultation on both documents in November/December 2020, those comments submitted to the draft SPD have now be assessed and the necessary amendments made. The final document was subsequently adopted by Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

Work continues to assess those comments submitted to the Local Plan and we are now also pulling together a detailed work programme to deliver a range of supporting evidence to further inform the Plan's formal advancement to its next stages. St Cuthbert's Members Advisory Group has met regularly and is actively involved in the work programme.

Following Cumbria County Council's approval of the Carlisle Southern Link Road in November 2020, a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) inquiry will now commence on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and completion of this road is programmed to be completed in 2024.

### **FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND**

- The Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has confirmed that the City Council has been successful in securing £9.1m from the Future High Street Fund (FHSF)

- The FHSF programme will run for the next three years: starting in 2021-22 until 2023-24
- Carlisle's FHSF programme consists of four projects:
  - Redevelopment of the Central Plaza site
  - Creation of a meeting / events space Market Square (Old Town Hall / Green Market)
  - Environmental improvements / pedestrian prioritisation on Devonshire Street
  - Repurposing of 6 - 24 Castle Street
- The next stage in the process is to commence the next stage of project development and begin to plan for delivery. The City Council will be working in partnership with Cumbria County Council on the development and delivery of the Market Square and Devonshire Street projects

## **TOWN DEAL**

- The Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has confirmed that the City Council has been successful in securing £19.7m from the Town Deal programme
- The Heads of Term offer of £19.7m has been accepted and the next stage is for the Council and the Town Deal Board to confirm the projects to be included in the programme. The MHCLG require this confirmation
- Once the projects and programme for the Town Deal have been agreed, there will be a 12-month period for the production of the business cases required to release the funding for the individual projects

## **PROJECTS**

**Business Support:** The Facebook Group 'Small Business Support Carlisle' was established at the end of May 2020 and is supported by Carlisle Ambassadors. Membership has now exceeded 4,200 made up of small and medium Carlisle businesses. The group provides businesses with a place to find information, share best practice, do business and promote themselves to each other.

### **Buy Local Carlisle Project**

The Buy Local Carlisle Project started just before Christmas 2020 and has delivered one to one mentoring to 60 Carlisle businesses. The project also established a web directory for Carlisle businesses which can be found at [www.buylocalcarlisle.co.uk](http://www.buylocalcarlisle.co.uk) To date 320 local businesses have registered on the platform which allows business to business engagement and customer searches to take place. This gives us all the ability to buy local and protect our local business economy and supply chain.

## **COVID-19 AND IMPACT ON CARLISLE'S ECONOMY**

- The City Council commissioned specialist support to undertake a detailed study on the short, medium and longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on the national and

local economy and key employment sectors within the District – both urban and rural

- This piece of work has been fed directly into the Future High Street Fund business and Town Deal submissions to demonstrate that the identified projects addresses the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic

The Council has now commissioned the preparation of an investment framework for responding to COVID-19 in Carlisle city centre. This will be shared with Members for comment in the coming weeks for consideration and feedback.

## **ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

- Good progress on the development of the Council's Economic Strategy continues to be made and the COVID-19 studies have informed the approach
- The Strategy has been considered by Members, who have agreed the strategic priorities, which are:
  - Driving the recovery from Covid-19
  - Levelling up our communities
  - Delivering clean, green growth
- Six objectives for the Strategy have been agreed:
  1. Driving housing and population growth
  2. Growing our target employment sectors and levelling up our skills base and productivity
  3. Increasing city centre vibrancy
  4. Enhancing digital and transport connectivity
  5. Supporting rural development and innovation
  6. Raising the profile of Carlisle as a place to invest and do business in and to live, work and visit

## **REGULATORY SERVICES**

**The Warm Homes Fund Project**, to offer funded gas connections and funded first time central heating, has been successfully delivered despite delays due to the pandemic. Through this project, Homelife HIA delivered 120 first time central heating systems, 195 other measures including 146 gas grid connections.

Homelife HIA are working with the NW Energy Hub provided by the LEP and Eden District Council as the lead accountable body on a Cumbrian consortium **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Project** for energy efficiency measures of approximately 75 private sector homes. (Please note that this is a separate scheme to the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme that ended in March).