

# AGENDA

## Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 29 July 2021 AT 16:00  
In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG

**\*\* A pre meeting for Members to prepare for the Panel will take place 45 minutes before the meeting\*\***

The Press and Public are welcome to attend for the consideration of any items which are public.

### **Members of the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel**

Councillor Brown (Chair), Councillors Mrs Bowman, Ms Ellis-Williams, Mrs Glendinning, Meller (Vice Chair), Mrs McKerrell, Mitchelson, Paton.

Substitutes:

Councillors Alcroft, Atkinson, Bainbridge, Birks, Collier, Mrs Finlayson, Glover, Lishman, Mrs Mitchell, Morton, Patrick, Robson, Shepherd, Miss Sherriff, Southward, Sunter, Mrs Tarbitt, Dr Tickner, Tinnion, Miss Whalen.

## **PART A**

### **To be considered when the Public and Press are present**

#### **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutions.

#### **Declarations of Interest (including declarations of “The Party Whip”)**

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests, and any interests, relating to any item on the agenda at this stage.

#### **Public and Press**

To agree that the items of business within Part A of the agenda should be dealt with in public and that the items of business within Part B of the agenda should be dealt with in private.

#### **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

To note that Council, on 20 July 2021, received and adopted the minutes of the meetings held on 12 April and 17 June 2021. The Chair will sign the minutes. [Copy minutes in Minute Book 48(1)].

#### **A.1 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS**

To consider any matter which has been the subject of call-in.

#### **A.2 CARLISLE PLAN 2021-2023**

**7 - 26**

Portfolio: Leader  
Directorate: Community Services  
Officer: Steven O’Keeffe, Policy and Communications Manager  
Report: PC.26/21 herewith

#### **Background:**

The Policy and Communications Manager to submit the draft Carlisle Plan 2021-2023, which forms part of the Council’s Policy Framework.

#### **Why is this item on the agenda?**

The matter was included in the Notice of Executive Key Decisions (KD.15/21) and will be considered by the Executive on 31 August 2021.

#### **What is the Panel being asked to do?**

Consider and comment on the draft Carlisle Plan.

**A.3 EVENTS - PLANNED EVENTS AND HOW THEY CAN SUPPORT CITY VITALITY** **27 - 36**

Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing  
Directorate: Economic Development  
Officer: Zoe Sutton, Regeneration Officer  
Paul Walker, Destination Manager  
Report: ED.24/21 herewith

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Economic Development to submit a report outlining key work streams that will contribute towards Carlisle's recovery from the challenges presented as we move out of the COVID-19 lockdown as we move towards economic recovery and renewal.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Agreed by EGSP Chair and Vice Chair at work planning meeting with the Corporate Director of Economic Development in June 2021.

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

To consider the contents of the report and contribute to emerging thinking regarding economic recovery and renewal of Carlisle District.

**A.4 CARLISLE ECONOMIC STRATEGY** **37 - 82**

Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing  
Directorate: Economic Development  
Officer: Steven Robinson, Regeneration Manager  
Report: ED.26/21 herewith

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Economic Development to submit an overview of the updated draft Economic Strategy for the Carlisle District. The Strategy sets out the Council's priorities, objectives and actions to drive economic growth and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic for the next five years. The Strategy has been developed in consultation with members of the Executive, the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel and the Senior Management Team.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

The Panel requested the report at their meeting on 17 June 2021 (Minute Excerpt EGSP.39/21)

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

1. Note the contents of the Strategy in terms of the challenges, opportunities, strategic priorities and objectives articulated.

2. Note the framework and context for the production of the updated economic strategy, particularly the impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit.

**A.5 CARLISLE CITY CENTRE TASKFORCE AND GRANTS PROGRAMME**

**83 -  
100**

Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing  
Directorate: Economic Development  
Officer: Jane Meek, Corporate Director of Economic Development  
Report: ED.27/21 herewith

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Economic Development to provide an overview of the proposals for a new city centre taskforce, made up of key stakeholders in the city centre, and the new City Centre Business Growth Grants, aimed at building new networks in the city, and providing new businesses with meaningful support, to encourage greater vitality and viability in the city centre, and ensure resilience following the COVID 19 pandemic.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Agreed by EGSP Chair and Vice Chair at work planning meeting with the Corporate Director of Economic Development in June 2021.

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

Note the progress and updates relating to the City Centre Taskforce, and Business Grants which aim to strengthen city centre resilience.  
Provide feedback on the proposals for the establishment of a City Centre Taskforce.

**A.6 OVERVIEW REPORT**

**101 -  
104**

Portfolio: Cross Cutting  
Directorate: Cross Cutting  
Officer: Rowan Jones, Overview and Scrutiny Officer  
Report: OS.20/21 herewith

**Background:**

To consider a report providing an overview of matters related to the work of the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

The Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel operates within a Work Programme which is set for the 2021/22 municipal year. The Programme is reviewed at every meeting so that it can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Panel and take into account items relevant to this Panel in the latest Notice of Executive Key Decisions.

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

- Note the items (within Panel remit) on the most recent Notice of Executive

Key Decisions

- Note the current Work Programme

## **PART B**

**To be considered when the Public and Press are excluded from the meeting**

-NIL-

Enquiries, requests for reports, background papers etc  
to: [committeeservices@carlisle.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@carlisle.gov.uk)



# Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Item  
A.2

Meeting Date: 29 July 2021

Portfolio: Leader

Key Decision: Yes

Within Policy and  
Budget Framework Yes

Public / Private Public

Title: Carlisle Plan 2021-2023

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive

Report Number: PC 26/21

## Purpose / Summary:

To progress the adoption of a new Carlisle Plan, which forms part of the Council's Policy Framework.

## Recommendations:

- That the Panel consider and comment on the draft Carlisle Plan.

## Tracking

Executive:	31 August 2021
Scrutiny:	Business & Transformation Scrutiny Panel 15 July 2021 Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel 22 July 2021 Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel 29 July 2021
Council:	14 September 2021

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The draft Carlisle Plan 2021-23 has been updated since the last round of scrutiny panels in April 2021.
- 1.2. Public consultation is now a possibility, with the lifting of the Covid-19 Restrictions on 19<sup>th</sup> July, as set out in the national roadmap.

## 2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1. The final draft version for public consultation has been agreed by the Leader.
- 2.2. A designed version of the content included in this report will be circulated to the Panel prior to the meeting. As well as the designed version, a digital illustrated map will be produced to showcase the investment and economic benefits, in terms of jobs and visitors, that the plan will deliver.
- 2.3. Progress on the programmes underpinning the draft Carlisle Plan will be reported in the quarterly performance report.
- 2.4. Service planning for 2021/22 has been completed and the Directorate and Corporate Plans have been agreed by Senior Management Team.

## 3. RISKS

- 3.1. The risks associated with the delivery of the Carlisle Plan will be managed in accordance with the Risk Management Assurance Framework Policy.

## 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1. Initial consultation with the three scrutiny panels was completed in April 2021.
- 4.2. Public consultation has been planned and the outline plan for consultation is presented below:

Activity	Dates
Launch of public consultation	9th July
Online consultation webpage and survey	9th July to 6 <sup>th</sup> August
Face to face consultation, linked to key projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greenmarket and Old Town Hall Assembly Room</li><li>• Tribe Carlisle, Bitts Park</li></ul>	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> August
July scrutiny round	15 <sup>th</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 29 <sup>th</sup> July
End of public consultation	6 <sup>th</sup> August



- 4.3. Effective consultation and engagement around the priorities and programme can be achieved by linking this work to the work on the key projects. Wherever possible, opportunities to promote the Carlisle Plan will be linked to the consultation and engagement work on the underpinning programmes.
- 4.4. Informal consultation on the plan will continue with partners engaged in delivering the priorities.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1. The commitment of investment in Carlisle and development of clear programmes and strategies now means that it is an appropriate time to update the Carlisle Plan.
- 5.2. The recommendation is:
  - That the Panel consider and comment on the draft Carlisle Plan.

## 6 CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- ## 6.1 The draft Carlisle Plan sets out the new priorities.

**Contact Officer: STEVEN O'KEEFFE Ext: 7258**

<b>Appendices attached to report:</b>	Draft Carlisle Plan 2021-2023 word version (A draft designed version will be shared prior to meeting) Economic Development Directorate Plan 2020-2023
---------------------------------------	---

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None**

### CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

**LEGAL** - The Carlisle Plan 2021-23 replaces the previous Carlisle Plan 2015-18 and forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. In exercising some statutory powers, the Council must have regard to its approved Plan.

**FINANCE** – There are no specific financial implications of adopting the Carlisle Plan, however the plan will be used to inform future budget processes to align council resources to the priorities contained within it.

**EQUALITY** – None. The equality impacts will be considered within the programmes and projects of the two priorities.

**PROPERTY** – Carlisle City Council has an extensive property portfolio that can assist in delivering the aspirations of the plan.

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE** – None.

# Carlisle Plan

## 2021-23

### The vision

To enable Carlisle to grow and prosper as the capital of the Borderlands region, benefiting the health and wellbeing of the people of Carlisle.

We will work in partnership so that all can enjoy the benefits of new opportunities and choices, whilst rising to the challenges of a changing climate.

## Contents

Foreword .....	3
Introduction.....	4
The Vision .....	5
Principles.....	6
The Seven Principles of Public Life .....	6
Clarity, confidence, and commitment .....	6
Priorities .....	7
Economic growth.....	7
Key economic growth programmes and projects.....	7
Health and wellbeing .....	11
Key health and wellbeing programmes and projects.....	12
Performance Monitoring .....	15

# Foreword

As Leader of Carlisle City Council, it is my privilege to present the Carlisle Plan - an ambitious plan to deliver growth. It has been an unprecedented period and the Covid-19 pandemic has tested our resilience and impacted on all our lives.

Working with partners, more than £250 million of government funding has been secured to deliver housing, infrastructure, and regeneration projects. This is in addition to the two major projects already underway - The Sands Centre Redevelopment and the reinstatement of the ground floor of the Civic Centre.

Carlisle is now well placed to bounce back from the impact of the pandemic and the programmes and projects in this Plan will make a tremendous contribution to this recovery. The Council is the lead for programmes and projects including, St. Cuthbert's Garden Village, the Future High Street Fund and Town Deal.

In simple terms this means supporting existing jobs and developing new jobs, building new homes, and creating new opportunities for economic growth. The health and wellbeing of all our residents remains the focus of the response and recovery from the pandemic, this Plan will continue to support the good, lifelong health and wellbeing of our residents and visitors.

In my time as Leader of the Council I have been consistently impressed at how the Council delivers good quality services, delivered in a customer friendly way. The recent response of all staff to the pandemic has been truly magnificent, a real credit to the Council at a time of great need.

The focus on two priorities, economic growth and health and wellbeing, will continue to guide our use of new and existing resources. This is in addition to the daily delivery of all the Council services, which are equally important but often less visible.

Working together we can deliver economic growth and improve health and wellbeing.

Leader of Carlisle City Council, Cllr John Mallinson

# Introduction

The Carlisle Plan, the third of its kind, is an ambitious plan setting out the Council's vision, priorities and key actions.

Carlisle is the capital of Cumbria with a population more than 108,000. The city is recognised as the capital of an economic region serving 1.1 million people who live in Cumbria, Northumberland, and Southern Scotland.

The City of Carlisle is the largest settlement in the district with more than two thirds of the population. The remaining population is distinctly more rural and in places extremely sparse. The most significant rural populations are in smaller market towns and large villages spread across the district, including Brampton, Dalston, Longtown and Wetheral.

Across the district, there are a wealth of natural and cultural assets making Carlisle a great place to live, work and visit. Carlisle draws strength from its strategic location, with heritage and environmental sites of national and international importance (Solway Coast and North Pennines) and good connections to national infrastructure. Now is a golden opportunity for growth and development, Carlisle can build on its established economic role whilst encouraging the development of new sectors and entrepreneurship.

Carlisle is set within some of the country's most spectacular natural scenery and the city is the final stop for three of the country's scenic railway lines (Settle to Carlisle, Cumbria Coast Line and Tyne Valley Line). Landmark buildings and heritage sites such as Carlisle Castle, Carlisle Cathedral, Lanercost Priory and Hadrian's Wall attract visitors from across the world.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our local economy. The impact has highlighted the importance of health and wellbeing across all communities reminding us that Carlisle is a place focused on tackling health inequalities and enabling communities to thrive and be healthy. This Plan will help Carlisle to bounce back from this public health emergency, with greater confidence and commitment to meet future challenges.

## The Vision

To enable Carlisle to grow and prosper as the regional capital, benefiting the health and wellbeing of the people of Carlisle.

We will work in partnership so that all can enjoy the benefits of new opportunities and choices, whilst rising to the challenges of a changing climate.

The Council plays a key role in enabling growth and prosperity, building on Carlisle's reputation as a regional economic capital. Our focus is on raising prosperity levels across the district as the primary purpose of the Plan; prosperity being the most important determinant of health and wellbeing. Improving health and wellbeing and tackling Climate Change will run through all our plans and services.

There are challenges ahead that will impact especially on our rural areas due to their ageing population, accessibility and often higher living and infrastructure costs. Knowing these issues and adapting policies and practices to meet the needs of rural areas will be vital to fulfilling the Vision.

Many of our activities and assets have a significant impact on the wider social, economic, and environmental determinants of health and wellbeing. Our employees work to address health inequalities daily and have a positive impact on the lives of some of the most vulnerable residents in Carlisle. We will continue to support the work of the Carlisle Healthy City partnership and the aspirations outlined in the Phase VII World Health Organisation Healthy City Plan.

We will be the best possible partner to organisations, communities and individuals that share our commitment, clarity, and confidence in Carlisle. We will help shape the future of Carlisle, delivering the priorities in the Plan whilst operating a highly effective organisation where employees are supported to be the best they can be. We will continue to adapt to meet the financial challenges of the future by carefully and confidently allocating our resources whilst seeking to develop new income streams that add value to the local economy.

# Principles

## The Seven Principles of Public Life

All officers and Carlisle City Councillors adhere to The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles):

- Selflessness.
- Integrity.
- Objectivity.
- Accountability.
- Openness.
- Honesty.
- Leadership.

## Clarity, confidence, and commitment

Three principles have been developed by our staff and Councillors to guide how we will deliver the vision for Carlisle:

- Clarity.
- Confidence.
- Commitment.

We are a clear, committed, and confident Council.

By setting out our vision, we show that we understand the needs of Carlisle's residents, businesses, and visitors. Our plans to respond to these needs are clear and straightforward. We know what is expected of us and do our best to create clarity in how we work.

We are committed to achieving our vision for Carlisle. We will ensure that our day to day work and resources are consistent with the priorities.

We will continue to work effectively with partners to drive positive change for Carlisle and will celebrate our successes and achievements. As part of our ongoing work to develop all our communities we will engage young people and make sure the Carlisle Plan helps to deliver their aspirations for Carlisle.

# Priorities

## Economic growth

**We will continue to prioritise the current response to and rapid recovery from the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the local economy.**

We aim to deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth, ensuring we provide opportunities for all our communities to prosper. We will boost the local economy, making Carlisle a more attractive place for investment, improving skills and drive key sector development. Committed to ensuring our growth agenda is as inclusive as possible, we will ensure that our activities benefit our rural communities.

We see improving connectivity as a key driver, both through the delivery of transport and digital connectivity, as well supporting the development of low carbon transport.

Carlisle's population will increase through housing-led growth and the delivery of St Cuthbert's Garden Village (SCGV). This will add to the vibrancy and activity in Carlisle City Centre, creating a thriving community for students, residents, businesses, and workers using the City Centre for education, housing, work, and leisure activities, during the day and into the evening. We will also grow Carlisle's visitor economy, attracting additional footfall and spending to the city.

## Key economic growth programmes and projects

### **Delivering the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal:**

- Carlisle Station Gateway: improving the railway station and surrounding public spaces as the key transport hub for the Borderlands and preparing for HS2, high speed railway linking London, the North and Central Scotland. The investment will transform the station and strengthen the strategic connectivity to Carlisle and to the wider Borderlands region. The Carlisle Station Gateway project includes:
  - Northern Gateway: Partial pedestrianisation of Court Square, enhancements to the space for passengers to enter and exit the station with easy access to ticket purchasing facilities. It will significantly reduce vehicular movements to the North of the station and Court Square, with improved connection to the city centre.
  - Station Building and Interior: Enhancements to the access to the platforms from the north and the undercroft using an easily accessible stairway. The undercroft will also be enhanced to provide a secure and welcoming entrance to the station from the South. Secure cycle parking, an improved historic entrance from the north, and improved/modernised passenger facilities are also included.
  - Southern Gateway: A new southern entrance and car parking facility will be created at the Southern part of the station. A total of 423 station car parking spaces is proposed, including disabled and electric bays. Together with the parking, coach services, rail replacement services and pick-up and drop-off will also be relocated to the southern side of the station.



- Enabling Streets and Junctions: Junction improvements at Victoria Viaduct / James Street, Water Street, Crown Street and Court Square Brow to improve access to the station, particularly for pedestrians.
- Citadels University Campus: developing a new City Centre campus/headquarters for the University of Cumbria. Investing in the university to attract greater student numbers and boost the number of Higher Education (HE) learners and graduates in Carlisle. The Citadels are a major gateway into the city and are a key part of the history and identity of Carlisle. As part of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, £50 million of funding has been allocated for the second phase the Growth Deal to bring new purpose to The Citadels and adjacent site. Plans are now in place to transform the Citadels Buildings and the adjacent site to become a new home for the University of Cumbria. The project is being developed jointly by Cumbria County Council, Carlisle City Council and the University of Cumbria working with Cumbria LEP as a key partner.
- Citadels Business Infrastructure: Creating a new bespoke business hub for the Creative and Digital sector, supporting the growth of an emerging high value sector in the city to boost productivity, reputation, and reach. This will be 888 square metres of hyper fast digitally enabled business interaction and accommodation space, linked to the University of Cumbria's flagship campus development.
- Support and lobby for the improvement/increased coverage of rural public transport networks, including the reopening of Gilsland railway station and Borders rail feasibility study.
- Improving digital infrastructure and access through the Borderlands digital voucher scheme, providing a new innovation centre for the digital sector at the Citadels and improving skills through the proposed digital and community learning hub.
- Delivery of the Longtown Place Plan: Working with local communities in Longtown to develop a locally owned place plan for Longtown, to seek investment in the town from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.
- Destination Borderlands (Hadrian's Wall): Seeking to work with key partners such as Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery to bring investment to the western side of the Wall, boost visitor numbers, create new jobs and support rural communities.
- Digital Voucher Scheme: providing opportunity for greater broadband speed for rural communities and businesses.

### **Delivering St Cuthbert's Garden Village:**

- Delivery of 10,000 new homes and over 9,000 direct jobs south of Carlisle. St Cuthbert's Garden Village (SCGV) is one of the largest developments of its kind nationally and the largest in the north of England in terms of new homes, supporting facilities and infrastructure.
- Establishing new communities where population health, wellbeing and environmental sustainability goals are at the heart of good design and land use.

- Providing improved walking and cycling infrastructure through projects such as St Cuthbert's Garden Village, Southern Link Road and Town Deal.
- Through our successful bid to the Government's New Development Corporation Competition (£745,000), we will explore with MHCLG options for appropriate delivery mechanisms to deliver the St Cuthbert's Garden Village and ensure the long-term management and maintenance of the community infrastructure that will be created.

## **Delivering the Future High Street Fund, Towns Fund, Town Deal Accelerated Fund, and related regeneration projects:**

- Reimagining the Market Square. The Market Square is the most substantial public space in the city centre, spanning 6,000 square metres, through improvements to the infrastructure and public realm of the square, it will become more of a focal point for residents and visitors.
- Repurposing 6-24 Castle Street. As part of moving away from a reliance on retail in the city centre, current vacant units could be used for several non-retail purposes that attract people to the city centre. This could help reactivate Carlisle's Historic Quarter increasing both weekend and weekday footfall.
- Pedestrianised improvements to Devonshire Street. Reducing the carriageway on Devonshire Street could provide more space for pedestrians and businesses to spill into, which would encourage activity and dwelling time in the street. The businesses currently located on the northern edge of the street offer a possibility to create a spacious outdoor seating area.
- Redevelopment of the former Central Plaza site. The Central Plaza was a Grade II Listed building which was previously a hotel until it closed in 2004. It occupies a key site on Victoria Viaduct, and its deterioration has arguably blighted this part of the city centre relative to other areas. With the site now cleared and £4.7m grant funding available, a number of the redevelopment options have become viable.
- Start with the Park (St Cuthbert's Garden Village). The 'Start with the Park' project will provide the 'Greenway' a connective, multi-modal green travel route connecting the key settlements of SCGV with Carlisle City Centre and providing high quality leisure and recreation facilities. The project will position SCGV as a unique and attractive destination for working-age families. delivering 7km of new/improved walking and cycling infrastructure and 5Ha of public realm/green space, setting the scene for future phases of development.
- Project Tullie, Welcome & Entrance to Tullie House Museum: Part of a wider programme of investment at Tullie House Museum, this project will better connect the Museum to the surrounding streetscape, increasing its visibility by providing a clear and contemporary point of arrival for visitors.
- Digital and Community Learning Hub. Investing in community learning to improve the local skills base. The refurbishment of the City Centre Library will create an accessible digital skills and community learning hub. This includes the installation of digital equipment and training materials in 13 community venues.

- Market Hall. This investment is to improve the infrastructure and internal structure in the Market Hall, to improve the experience for shoppers and visitors and explore options to create a food court and events space.
- Lighting-up Carlisle project (event and infrastructure). This investment of capital funding in digital lighting equipment is to support an expand the events programme.
- Citadels Business Infrastructure (Linked to Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal). This is part of a wider development scheme to bring a new University campus on the grade I listed Citadels site, this project will create a purpose built hyper fast digitally enabled business interaction and accommodation space, linked to the University of Cumbria's flagship campus development.
- Caldew Riverside: Remediation of development site with potential to provide new city centre living opportunities. Caldew Riverside is a 3.16 ha (7.81 acres) site located within an Edge of Centre location to the South of Carlisle City Centre, within 200 metres from Carlisle Railway Station and 40 metres from the historic quarter. The site is the best and only available location for the delivery of strategic scale residential development close to centre. Due to its location, it has the potential to deliver a high quality, transformational riverside residential development that will showcase and catalyse the city centre living market in terms of both supply and demand. This development site can accommodate an estimated 120 - 150 homes as identified in the current local plan period, with 20% affordable housing policy compliance within the designated zone.
- Creation of a temporary, modular 'pod village' in Bitts Park, providing a vibrant small business hub. The temporary Bitts Park courtyard will be based close to the car park. It will be populated by local businesses and will provide additional amenities for the benefit of park users. It will be constructed from six upcycled containers and will house up to 13 small independent businesses, with a diverse mixture of tenants that includes food and drink, retail and arts. Tenants will be either start-ups, looking to grow or well-established in the local area, which will ensure a collaborative, diverse and progressive working environment.

### **Building on success through new economic opportunities:**

- Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone: continuing support for the first Enterprise Zone in Cumbria as a local hub for key sectors such as manufacturing and logistics and an environment that welcomes new investors and high growth organisations.
- Development of a Rural Strategy: to explore opportunities and issues, building on the learning from the Place Planning work in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.
- Proactively position Carlisle for future investment: encourage private and public sector investment in Carlisle to improve productivity, help grow and boost the city; bringing in key employers and more high value jobs, while also ensuring we have investment in our infrastructure to help build Carlisle's future. Making it clear to government and the private sector alike that Carlisle is open for business.

- Grow our visitor economy: ensuring that Carlisle's strong potential as a tourist destination is realised, through providing an enhanced visitor experience with new attractions and increased vibrancy, whilst continuing work to promote the city through the Discover Carlisle brand. Developing a national marketing campaign for Carlisle that showcases the inward investment and the 2000 years of history.
- Working in partnership to tackle the carbon footprint of tourism.

## Health and wellbeing

**We will continue to prioritise the current response to and rapid recovery from the health and wellbeing impacts of Covid-19 pandemic.**

We will work with our partners in the public, health, private and voluntary sectors to deliver a broad programme that will support the good, lifelong health and wellbeing of our residents and visitors. This priority builds on the framework of the Cumbria Public Health Strategy and WHO Healthy City Programme with projects and programmes that will focus on the determinants of health; a sense of place and safety; the quality of the local environment and tackling Climate Change together.

Housing and a sense of home is fundamental to health and wellbeing. We will continue to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping with a strategic focus on early intervention and prevention rather than crisis management. We will also seek to improve the homes of residents in most need, ensuring that everyone has access to safe, warm, affordable housing.

As a Sustainable Food City, we will promote a vibrant and diverse food economy, with local communities having access to a range of healthy and affordable food options. We will continue to reduce waste and increase recycling and energy recovery, helping to reduce the Carbon footprint of our current lifestyles.

All communities will have good access to a wide range of recreational, leisure and exercise opportunities, that are both diverse and affordable. We will encourage opportunities to participate in and engage with the arts and culture, the strategic focus will be on establishing Carlisle as a central hub for culture within the wider region. Accessible green spaces have a vital role in human health and wellbeing as well as providing opportunities to increase net biodiversity gains through improved wildlife habitats.

Making Carlisle a great and safe place to walk, cycle, and use electric vehicles, alongside public transport systems will increase activity and reduce the Carbon footprint of local journeys.

## Key health and wellbeing programmes and projects

### **Delivering the Phase VII World Health Organisation Healthy City Plan:**

- Work with partners to deliver on key district wide actions associated with the WHO six Ps (People, Place, Prosperity, Planet, Peace, Participation).
- Via the County-wide Public Health Strategy and WHO 6 Ps sustain a focus on delivering projects and programmes that address - healthy weight management, physical activity levels, developing a child friendly city, supporting vulnerable adults, addressing mental health management particularly post Covid19 restrictions.
- Continue to influence and shape public planning policy for key developments such as the St Cuthbert's Garden Village, city centre redevelopment and other key place-based developments.

### **Delivering The Sands Centre Redevelopment project:**

- The delivery of a new £27 million flagship sport, leisure, and entertainment facility at the heart of the City will transform the quality and accessibility of health and leisure provision in our district. The new facilities will also enhance our strong partnership relationships with NHS providers focused on improving population health. The Sands Centre will host an extensive Musculoskeletal Unit designed to offer patients treatment and preventative services in a leisure setting.
- The design and development of the new facilities include a range of sustainable features which will support the Council's plans for reducing Carbon emissions, improving energy efficiency, and providing sustainable, healthy transport options.
- The new extension will significantly improve the access opportunities for all our communities to use and enjoy the facilities and services. Access to the building will be significantly improved from all points as will the internal layout. The development of the project has used an inclusive design approach to ensure equal access and wellbeing. This will assist users with physical and other conditions such as dementia to make full use of the site and surroundings.
- The facilities will also improve the existing opportunities for The Sands to host performances, cultural events, and conferences.

### **Supporting the delivery of partnership plans:**

- Deliver the National Lottery funded Place Standard programme to engage with local communities across the district to identify and work together on addressing local issues of concern.
- Develop and deliver an application to the National Lottery Partnership Fund to seek support for a project that will improve our ways of securing and delivering community funding programmes.

- Work with key partners to build on the work of the Carlisle Resilience Group and develop a stronger communities' network that can continue to support residents to participate in community action.

## **Delivering the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleepers Strategy:**

- Reduction of multiple exclusion homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Prioritising early intervention and prevention of homelessness.
- Promoting safeguarding and harm minimisation support for victims of domestic violence.
- Increasing access to flexible move on accommodation and support options available for people experiencing homelessness.
- Improve experiences and opportunities for young people and children experiencing homelessness.
- Increase key partnerships to respond effectively to local emergency situations.
- Meeting the Council's commitments via the Armed Forces Covenant by providing housing choices and support for those leaving the services.

## **Delivering the private sector housing standards to include a range of grants, advice, support and regulation:**

- Programme of Disabled Facilities Grant and discretionary grants funded through the Better Care Fund.
- Hospital Discharge Grants to anyone who is in hospital, or has recently been discharged, and requires emergency repairs or measures to get them home.
- Working to address fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency and reduce Carbon emissions.
- Work to help bring empty homes back into use.

## **Delivering the Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy**

Climate Change presents new challenges and opportunities for our whole region. In partnership we are committed to working towards a net zero Carbon future for Carlisle, Cumbria, and the Borderlands. Through programme and partnership working we can realise the cross-cutting co-benefits presented by the two priorities of economic growth and health and wellbeing. There are clear health benefits from improved air quality, healthier diets and more walking and cycling. The drive for clean growth has the potential for industrial and commercial opportunities. The strategy has the following objectives:

- Reducing emissions from the City Council estate and operations.

- Reducing energy consumption and emissions from homes and businesses in Carlisle and tackling fuel poverty, by promoting energy efficiency measures, sustainable construction, renewable energy sources and behaviour change.
- Reducing emissions from transport by promoting sustainable transport, reducing car travel and traffic congestion, and encouraging behaviour change.
- Reducing consumption of resources, increasing recycling, and reducing waste.
- Supporting council services, residents, and businesses to mitigate against and adapt to the impacts of Climate Change.

### **Delivering the Green Spaces Strategy and supporting the delivery of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (CWIP):**

- To make sure that Carlisle's reputation as a place that is enriched by its wealth of green spaces is enhanced as the city continues to grow and develop, recognising the health benefits from contact with green space and the natural environment and maintaining the current standard of 3.6ha of green space per 1000 population.
- To meet and exceed a set of challenging quality standards for all green spaces which will ensure they are safe, attractive, and welcoming for everyone who visits them.
- To make sure that all residents and our visitors have easy access to our inspirational green spaces, whatever their level of physical ability and that we take every opportunity to link and connect green spaces, walking and cycling routes, nature reserves and riversides.
- To manage our green estate as a diverse and flourishing natural resource which provides a range of environmental services including resilience against future flooding, reducing the impacts of and mitigation against Climate Change and enhancing biodiversity to provide rich and varied wildlife habitats.
- To nurture and support the role of our communities in caring for our green spaces and natural resources, encouraging them to take a leading role where appropriate and promoting green spaces as a primary resource in the cultural life of the city including as venues for events, play, sports and recreational activities.
- Make an ongoing and effective contribution to the development of extensive cycling and walking infrastructure plans for Carlisle, building on the existing infrastructure, increasing and improving the range of cycle and walking options and ensuring that these safe routes are widely publicised and sign posted.

### **Developing the new Cumbria Waste Strategy:**

- Development of the new Waste and Recycling Strategy which presents an opportunity to reflect the aims and objectives of the Resources & Waste Strategy, the Environment Bill, Clean Growth Strategy and Litter Strategy. The strategy will bring together the strategic aims of these national strategies with a focus on waste reduction, Carbon impacts, and future waste management infrastructure.

## **Supporting the delivery of the Carlisle Cultural Framework:**

- Placing culture at the heart of Carlisle's ambitions for environmental sustainability, inclusive economic prosperity, and good health for all.
- Embedding culture within regeneration and local planning to attract investment for city centre transformation and infrastructure development.
- Playing a full and active role in Carlisle's ongoing commitment as a World Health Organisation, Healthy City, using culture to improve the wider determinants of health, wellbeing, and community cohesion.
- Supporting artists and venues to emerge stronger from the COVID-19 crisis.
- Co-ordinating and promoting an exciting, wide-ranging, and inclusive programme of events in the city centre and across the district.

## **Performance Monitoring**

The Carlisle Plan priorities and projects, and all other council services, will be delivered in line with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

We will measure progress against the plan through an updated performance framework. This framework will include progress in key projects, risks, and opportunities.

A new set of measures will be agreed with Service Managers and the Senior Management Team. We will present these measures under each priority; their purpose will be to help steer services and projects towards the benefits we want to achieve by implementing the plan. The performance framework will be monitored through Directorate Management Team meetings and a quarterly report to Senior Management Team. A quarterly summary of performance will be reported to Executive and Overview and Scrutiny.

The Carlisle Plan will be reviewed annually before the setting of service plans within our Directorates.

If you require an alternative language or format please contact us to discuss your needs.

[policy@carlisle.gov.uk](mailto:policy@carlisle.gov.uk)

01228 817200



# Carlisle Plan 2020 - 2023

## Economic Development Priorities

**Our Vision:** The City of Carlisle is ambitious to grow, leading the way in unleashing the full economic potential of Cumbria and the wider Borderlands area, and closing the prosperity gap with other parts of the UK. As the business and population capital of the region, a university city, and the strategically located Borderlands hub connecting Cumbria to the rest of the UK, Carlisle has the assets, strengths and potential to drive future prosperity and growth across the region. Carlisle will be a thriving centre for businesses, residents, education, and culture providing new jobs, thousands of extra homes, better skills, a high-quality leisure offer, a clean environment, and a great quality of life for a growing resident population and workforce. It will be a flourishing visitor destination, welcoming tourists to the City and offering an attractive gateway to the beauty of the wider Cumbrian and Borderlands region.

Strategic Objective	Growing City District: Growing the working-age population of Carlisle and expanding the business and employment base, through investment in housing, business growth, high-quality job creation, and education & skills.	Resilient and Inclusive City District: Enabling Carlisle's businesses, people and communities to be resilient to current and future economic and environmental challenges including climate change, economic exclusion and unemployment, and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.	Connected City District: Making Carlisle a highly accessible and connected city, and supporting growth by making it easier for residents, workers, students and businesses to arrive at and move around the City.	Vibrant City District: Increasing vibrancy and activity in Carlisle city centre, creating a thriving community of students, residents, businesses and workers using the centre for education, housing, work and leisure activities, during the day and into the evening.	Destination City District: Enabling Carlisle's visitor economy, attracting additional footfall, vibrancy and spending to the City.
Our Aims	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grow Carlisle's population through housing-led growth with a focus on clean housing growth and low carbon lifestyles.</li> <li>2. Grow the local business base by providing infrastructure, workspaces and accommodation that meet the changing needs of businesses.</li> <li>3. Support the rural economy and strengthen the links between the agricultural and food processing sectors</li> <li>4. Provide the housing, jobs and learning opportunities to attract and retain more young people.</li> <li>5. Actively promote and market Carlisle as a great place to live and work, attracting people and businesses from outside the region to locate and invest in the City</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support businesses and communities to recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.</li> <li>2. Deliver inclusive growth, ensuring that residents from all backgrounds have the skills needed to access new jobs and participate in a digital economy.</li> <li>3. Build resilience in the local economy through the diversification of our industrial base</li> <li>4. Retain wealth in the area by ensuring businesses have access to a skilled local labour force and the development of local supply chains.</li> <li>5. Establish Carlisle an exemplar in clean growth.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve access into and out of the City, enhancing connectivity to Cumbria and the wider UK</li> <li>2. Enhance the City's digital infrastructure, providing outstanding connectivity.</li> <li>3. Address the challenge of digital exclusion in Carlisle by improving both access and literacy</li> <li>4. Improve Carlisle's low carbon transport provision including expansion of the electric vehicle infrastructure.</li> <li>5. Facilitate active travel, increase the number of journeys made by walking and cycling;</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a new campus in the City Centre for the University of Cumbria and develop Carlisle 'University City' status.</li> <li>2. Develop the cultural and leisure sector and reduce the dependency on retail and improve the offer and experience for both residents and visitors</li> <li>3. Provide new high-quality residential / urban living developments to grow the city centre population</li> <li>4. Create additional workspace and business accommodation, attracting more business activity to the city centre.</li> <li>5. Improve the public realm, making the City centre a more attractive place to spend time in.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen Carlisle's offer as a short stay destination and a tourist gateway to the wider Cumbria area, Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, and the Lake District National Park World Heritage site.</li> <li>2. Diversify and strengthen the visitor and leisure offer in the city centre by investing in the development and improvement of Carlisle's key heritage and cultural assets.</li> <li>3. Revitalise and improve access / orientation to the historic quarter to unleash its full potential.</li> <li>4. Improve the City's visitor accommodation offer, including high-quality hotel developments.</li> <li>5. Offer new reasons for visitors to come to the City, include events and festivals that are distinctive to Carlisle</li> </ol>
Project Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carlisle District Local Plan Review</li> <li>• Adopt a Local Plan for SCGV and undertake a design competition for 'Start with the Park'</li> <li>• Support the expansion of Kingmoor Park EZ</li> <li>• Production of a Town Investment Plan and the development of a Town Deal for Carlisle</li> <li>• Redevelopment of the Citadels</li> <li>• Borderlands Business Infrastructure Programme</li> <li>• Develop a Rural Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresh of the existing economic / rural strategy</li> <li>• City Centre Business Support</li> <li>• RHSS Projects: eg Development of Business Support Hub / Business Directory to better engage with local businesses, build local supply chains / shop local</li> <li>• Implementation of the Climate Change Strategy</li> <li>• Carlisle Ambassadors</li> <li>• Production of a Borderlands Energy Masterplan</li> <li>• Borderlands Place Programme</li> <li>• Borderlands Natural Capital Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borderlands - Carlisle Citadel Station improvements</li> <li>• Delivery of the Carlisle Southern Link Road</li> <li>• The production of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Carlisle</li> <li>• Production of a Transport and Movement Study for the city centre</li> <li>• Development and delivery of the Future High Street Fund programme</li> <li>• Towns Fund</li> <li>• Borderlands Digital / Voucher Scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and delivery of the Future High Street Fund programme</li> <li>• Redevelopment of Caldew Riverside</li> <li>• Redevelopment of the Former Central Plaza</li> <li>• Redevelopment of the Citadels</li> <li>• Production of a City Centre Investment Framework</li> <li>• Development of a City Centre Events Programme</li> <li>• Young Carlisle Ambassadors</li> <li>• Improving the offer of the Market Hall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of appropriate promotional material including business prospectus</li> <li>• Carlisle Ambassadors - Raise the profile of Carlisle through business engagement / to engage partners in promoting the Carlisle story / offer</li> <li>• England's Historic Cities Consortia to maximise tourism opportunities for the visitor economy</li> <li>• Discover England Fund projects to support our visitor economy</li> <li>• Maximise the opportunities and links that Carlisle has to the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site</li> <li>• Borderlands Destination Programme (Hadrian's Wall)</li> <li>• Develop a heritage strategy</li> <li>• Redevelopment of the Former Central Plaza</li> </ul>
Outcomes	<p>The growing city of Carlisle will be a great place to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work, with thriving businesses creating high quality, well paid jobs for a growing working-age population.</li> <li>• learn, with access to excellent education and skills development in an outstanding learning environment</li> <li>• invest and do business with an active Business Community working to promote each other, support and maintain local supply chains and promote their offer outside Carlisle</li> <li>• live in, a place offering high quality green spaces, affordable housing in a healthy environment with a high-quality transport infrastructure providing easy access to places of work, leisure, learning and using active modes of transport with access to an engaging leisure and cultural offer</li> </ul>				



# Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Item  
A.3

Meeting Date: 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021  
Portfolio: Economic Development  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: Yes/No  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Events - planned events and how they can support city centre vitality  
Report of: Corporate Director of Economic Development  
Report Number: ED 24/21

## Purpose / Summary:

This Report outlines key work streams that will contribute towards Carlisle's recovery from the challenges presented as we move out of the COVID-19 lockdown as we move towards economic recovery and renewal.

## Recommendations:

To consider the contents of the report and contribute to emerging thinking regarding economic recovery and renewal of Carlisle District.

## Tracking

Executive:	
Scrutiny:	ED.26/20: Carlisle's Economic Recovery and Renewal Post COVID-19 - 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2020
Council:	

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. Amongst the challenges presented by COVID-19, the pandemic has had a huge impact on our city centres. While some changes and challenges brought about by the pandemic are new, others are merely a continuation or acceleration of pre-existing trends. Lockdowns have driven a significant increase in online shopping, which has in turn hastened the decline of high street retail. The demise of several well-known high street retailers over the last year has also seen a renewed policy focus on what we should do about our high streets.
- 1.2. The changes in the economic geography of the city during lockdown have reinforced the importance of our local places. The adoption of working from home, closures of retail and hospitality, and the temporary end of commuting en masse have all changed how and where we spend our time and money. City centres have seen both footfall and spending decline dramatically: yet in some high streets that serve more local catchment areas, spending has increased
- 1.3. This report will outline the challenges and opportunities that Carlisle city centre faces if mass retail continues to decline and what other activities should take place on Carlisle's high street.

## **2. City Centre Overview**

- 2.1. Carlisle lies at the heart of both the county of Cumbria and the wider Borderlands region. It serves a wide geographical hinterland and is the economic, administrative, and cultural centre for Cumbria, as well as a substantial portion of north west England and southern Scotland. Over 500,000 people live within one hour of the city and the city's retail catchment, with few alternatives, totals over 180,000 people.
- 2.2. However, only 4,220 people live in Carlisle city centre, a decline of 7.2% since 2011. The working age resident population in the city centre has fallen by 11%, whilst the over-65s population has increased by 21% over the same period.
- 2.3. Furthermore, the city centre's employment is focused primarily in wholesale and retail trade (27%), the public sector (20%) and professional services (19%). Of these sectors, only wholesale and retail trade is proportionally larger than the district, Cumbria and England, due to the high street presence of major retailers, such as at the Lanes Shopping Centre, which accommodates over 70 stores including major retailers such as Primark, NEXT and New Look. This employment is likely to fall following the closure of Debenhams and is likely to shrink further still from the lockdown impacts of 2020 and early 2021.

- 2.4. In 2019, retail, professional services, and the public sector combined representing 66% of employment in the city centre and highlighting Carlisle's reliance on a service-led economy. The recent restrictions, during which most of these establishments were closed, demonstrates the precariousness of the city centre economy and the issues with over-reliance on one or two sectors.
- 2.5. Carlisle's visitor economy suffered significantly during the pandemic where the sectors impact fell by £404m (72%) from 2019, to £156m in 2020, although the prospects for a strong rebound in 2021 are promising.
- 2.6. Carlisle's city centre is dominated by retail land use. The city centre had a vacancy rate of 12% in 2019, which has been relatively stable since 2012. Weekend footfall fell all over the city centre including in the Historic Quarter from 2012 to 2019. The weekend decline may be exacerbated by the lack of city centre residential properties, implying that working individuals often do not visit in the city at weekends.

### **3. City Centre Economic Recovery Action Plan**

- 3.1. As part of the package of actions funded by the Re-opening the High Street Safely Fund, an 'Economic Action Plan - Responding to Covid -19 in Carlisle City Centre' was commissioned (the full report can be found here [www.carlisle.gov.uk/regeneration](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/regeneration)). This provided an economic baseline on which to monitor change. The action plan covered:
- Key economic trends affecting Carlisle
  - Stakeholder engagement and feedback
  - Policy review
  - Development of themes and sub-themes to form an Investment Framework and Economic Action Plan.
- 3.2. Carlisle has been ranked 27<sup>th</sup> out of 110 town and cities to be most vulnerable post pandemic<sup>1</sup>. This considered the impact of home working and loss of retail outlets with the strength of current cultural assets. This analysis emphasises the need for more appropriate and sustainable measures to be implemented in Carlisle city centre to ensure the economy thrives post-pandemic. The key messages nationally that also apply to Carlisle include:

---

<sup>1</sup> KPMG (2020) 'The future of towns and cities post COVID-19' Available at: <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/uk/pdf/2021/01/the-future-of-towns-and-cities-post-covid-19-how-will-covid-19-transform-england-s-town-and-city-centres.pdf> [accessed on 22/02/2021]



Workers will continue to work from home for at least some of their time post-COVID-19.



Rural homes may become more desirable due to their size and closeness to natural assets, both of which have increased in importance during the pandemic.



Flexible office space is expected to continue to increase in demand, in both big cities and smaller towns.



Retail land use will continue to fall post-COVID-19 in town and city centres presenting opportunities for alternative land uses to draw people into city centres.



Sustainable growth will be a key part of recovery from the pandemic, with the net-zero goal and active travel being important aspects of this.



Securing a UK/EU trade agreement has reduced the concern of the impacts of Brexit many sectors, however there are opportunities in promoting local business opportunities.

Source Mott MacDonald

3.3. Through the baselining exercise, trends analysis, stakeholder engagement process and policy review, the main findings were identified and the opportunities and challenges they present for Carlisle city centre considered. There were then developed into three key themes for investment:

- Theme 1 – Harnessing changing working patterns to diversify and grow the city centre.
- Theme 2 – Creating a thriving centre for residents and visitors.
- Theme 3 – Ensuring a supporting and innovative public sector.

3.4. Of relevance to this report is Theme 2 with sub-themes 1 to 3 being of particular relevance to the discussion around city centre vitality and the impact of events.



Source: Mott MacDonald

### **1. A sense of place - repurposing and revitalising the city centre**

- 3.5. The city centre has been hugely impacted by COVID-19. Visitor numbers have fallen due retail outlets and heritage assets being closed and no events taking place. Creating a sense of place will help draw people back into the city centre improving vitality and viability.

#### ***Key opportunities:***

- There is a need for further support for the change in use of city centre vacant units, with the City Council highlighted as a body who should support such action. However, it has been noted that due to the historical nature of the city and it being home to many listed buildings the cost of conversion for some units will be high.
- Prior to COVID-19, Carlisle's limited leisure and evening economy (especially during the week) had led to a perception of a lack of vibrancy. *Reinvention* and *rebranding* are required to increase visitor number and improve perception of the city centre

## **2. The visitor economy –expanding and marketing Carlisle's visitor offer**

- 3.6. Carlisle's visitor offer is a key strength for the city. Carlisle should capitalise on the growing trend of the staycation market, positioning itself as an attractive location for weekend breaks and as part of longer journeys in the North West of England.

### ***Key opportunities***

- Carlisle has strong historic assets in the city centre, such as Carlisle Castle, Cathedral and Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery.
- It is likely that the tourism industry will rebound after lockdown measures are lifted in 2021 with an expected strong demand for domestic tourism.
- Event such as the Cultural Bazaar and monthly Farmers' markets are very popular in Carlisle. Those stakeholders who are involved in running events cited the need for appropriate infrastructure for these to function at the best of their ability e.g. water and drainage for outdoor stalls or suitable indoor space during the colder months.
- Carlisle is currently not a popular option for UK holidays (at least in terms of searches for holidays), even with an increasing interest in the nearby Lake District and Hadrian's Wall. There is an opportunity for Carlisle to reposition itself to take advantage of this trend in staycations.

## **3. The leisure economy – bringing vibrancy to the city centre, in particular the evening economy**

- 3.7. Carlisle's reliance on the retail sector (both for visitors and as a source of employment) will be severely impacted by changing trends in this sector. The city centre needs to bolster its leisure offer in order to be more resilient and attract larger number of visitors.

### ***Key opportunities***

- Extend the 'after five' offer in Carlisle into the centre of the city with a wider variety of entertainment and leisure facilities for all age ranges.
- Food stalls were highlighted as potentially offering a wide range of benefits, being a leisure service to residents and visitors, creating an entrepreneurial culture as well as celebrating different food cultures from across Carlisle and Cumbria's residents.
- Suggested ideas for vacant units include exhibition space, a community hub, a cooking school, a community cinema and a food hall. With many large vacant units in the centre this may be an opportunity for a multi-use space operating as both a cinema and community hub for example.
- Carlisle city centre has the opportunity to rebrand its leisure economy to be attractive to a wider demographic.



## **4. Grimsey Review**

- 4.1. Building on the Grimsey 1 and Grimsey 2 reviews, the 'Build Back Better'<sup>2</sup> Covid-19 supplement report, produced by Bill Grimsey and team, provides a comprehensive exploration of how town centres and high streets can transform in order to thrive in a post-Covid19 environment. It also includes a series of insightful best practice case study examples throughout to bring the 27 key recommendations to life. The ideas contained focus on boosting local authority capacity; building place making skills; enhancing coordination; and delivering intelligence and data directly to high streets and town centres.
- 4.2. The report suggests COVID-19 has accelerated a cultural shift around what people want to see from their high streets and town centres, which was underway before the pandemic, such as the desire for experiences over 'stuff', and concerns over societal issues like sustainability. As the report observes, the pandemic has therefore "paved the way for a post retail landscape to emerge", whereby "we've spent an enormous amount of energy over the last decade trying to work out how to keep an outdated model on life-support. It's time we expended that same energy and commitment on looking to the future". To build back better in the future, the authors subsequently urge us to see our high streets and town centres as being about more than just retail; instead offering 'community hubs' which provide "health, education, culture, housing, leisure, art and crafts, along with some shops"

## **5. CITY CENTRE EVENTS**

### **5.1 Why event will be important in city centre vitality**

- 5.1.1 According to a recent report on eating out in town centres, by Springboard and the NPD Group, improved performance of high streets is being driven by a booming and inventive food and drink sector, such as street food or markets.
- 5.1.2 The report Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our high streets by DCLG states that there is no point in simply chasing the traditional model of the high street - a place where people come together to shop. Retail is an important element of a thriving town centre, but it's not sufficient. Instead, you need to re-imagine your high street and town centre, and drive towards a new future where people come together for many different reasons. Events are a compelling reason for people to visit our City Centre.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.highstreettaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=5f61c69f-8fbe-43bf-9cdb-03a0517bfe64>

5.1.3 Markets in particular can be an important asset to the area economically – for example supplementing the variety of goods and services available, providing enterprise opportunities, and attracting visitors – and socially – encouraging different communities to intermingle, and including social groups who might otherwise not be attracted to the town centre.

5.1.4 The potential for urban spaces to support growth in the evening and night-time economy should not be ignored – not just in terms of outside seating areas for pubs, bars and restaurants, but also nighttime and performances. Clever lighting can highlight attractive or historical features and architectural details and unlock heritage for both the community and visitors alike, deter anti-social behaviour, and increase safety.

## 5.2 **Past successes – impact**

5.2.1 Following the easing of restrictions, the Council was awarded funding from the Governments 'Welcome Back Fund'. Some of this was used to support the introduction of a new event in the City Centre, the Carlisle Hawker Festival. This event provided a street food market, open air seating and live music.

5.2.2 It is estimated that around 20,000 attended the event, many of whom would not have been in the City Centre had the event not been put on. The event also provided a platform for local businesses to trade (free of charge) and was an opportunity for local musicians to perform to an audience once again. The event generated some positive feedback from those who attended and took part.

5.2.3 The International Market held twice per year in the City Centre has the same effect drawing residents and visitors into the City Centre with spin off benefits into other retail and hospitality outlets.

5.2.4 In February 2020, the Council's Discover Carlisle Team introduced a new event, Carlisle City of Lights. The event was organised in partnership with Cumbria County Council's Street Light Team and Carlisle Local Committee. The event featured new architectural lighting of some of Carlisle's key historic buildings and the headline sound and light experience 'SPACE – God, The Universe and Everything' at Carlisle Cathedral. The event completely sold out and an economic impact assessment has shown that over the duration of the event an additional £166,000 was generated for the local economy. One restaurant owner reported that bookings during the February event were higher than the Christmas period.

## 5.3 **Future events**

5.3.1 The Summer International Market is planned for August Bank Holiday Weekend and will incorporate the Proclamation. The Proclamation is a declaration of the City Council's rights to hold an annual fair in August, originally granted to the citizens of Carlisle in 1352 by Edward III.

- 5.3.2 Restrictions in February 2021 meant that the 'City of Lights' event could not go ahead. It was decided that the event should be postponed until Autumn. The proposed dates for City of Lights 2021 are 14,15 and 16 October (pending government restrictions). The event will be based over 3 venues and will be held outdoors.
- 5.3.3 Next year, 2022, marks the 1900<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hadrian's Wall. City of Lights 2022 will be themed on Roman Occupation with a bespoke digital immersive sound and light experience.

## **6. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Events will play an important part in enhancing the vitality of the city centre driving footfall to existing businesses and encouraging new business start-ups.
- 6.2 Research conducted in partnership has shown that Carlisle receives 7% of the total visitor market in Cumbria. Events are one way to increase Carlisle's share of this market.
- 6.3 Events have a key cultural and social value, but also an economic impact with City of Lights 2020 generating £166,000 for the local economy over 3 days, with 91% of those attending visiting specifically because of the event.
- 6.4 Events are an instrument for the development of the visitor economy and to extend the visitor season.

## **7. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES**

Contribution to the new Carlisle Plan priorities of economic growth and health and wellbeing.

**Contact Officer:** Paul Walker and Zoe Sutton **Ext:** 7312

**Appendices**  
**attached to report:**

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- None

**Equality – None**

**Property – No Property comments**

**Finance** - Funding was awarded to the Council as a response to COVID-19 from the ERDF for Reopening High Streets Safely and the Welcome Back Fund, both of which were intended on attracting visitors back to the Town Centre. Further funding has been granted for the Town Deal and Future High Street Fund which will see nearly £30m invested in the City Centre area to help improve vitality and increase usage of the City Centre. The Council also has base budgets for use in and around the City Centre to provide events and improve footfall.

**Legal** - It is vitally important as a public authority that all events are run in accordance with relevant rules, regulations and guidance both generally and particularly in relation to covid-19.

**Information Governance** - There are no information governance implications with this report.

# Report to Economic Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Item  
A.4

Meeting Date: 29 July 2021  
Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise & Housing  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Carlisle Economic Strategy  
Report of: Corporate Director of Economic Development  
Report Number: ED26/21

## Purpose / Summary:

This report provides an overview of the updated draft economic strategy for the Carlisle District, which is included as Appendix 1. The Strategy sets out the Council's priorities, objectives and actions to drive economic growth and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic for the next five years. The Strategy has been developed in consultation with members of the Executive, the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel and the Senior Management Team.

## Recommendations:

It is recommended that Overview & Scrutiny:

1. Note the contents of the Strategy in terms of the challenges, opportunities, strategic priorities and objectives articulated.
2. Note the framework and context for the production of the updated economic strategy, particularly the impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit.

## Tracking

Executive:	20 July 2020 2 June 2021
Scrutiny:	21 January 2021 29 July 2021
Council:	14 September 2021

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The production of the updated economic strategy has very much been evidence-led in order to ensure that it is developed to respond to local needs and opportunities. Up-to-date data has been used to ensure that the approach is pertinent to the current economic climate and challenges.
- 1.2 The Strategy also takes account of existing economic development strategies developed on a wider geographical scale relevant to the District including the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and the Cumbria Local Industrial Strategy. The recently produced Carlisle Town Investment Plan has also informed the approach.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The first stage in the production of the Strategy involved the collation of a comprehensive evidence base document. This included data on the entire district of Carlisle (as well as, where relevant exploring differences between the rural and urban areas) under the following headings:
  - Population
  - Economy
  - Place
  - Transport
  - Digital Infrastructure and connectivity
  - Environmental sustainability and low carbon
- 2.2 Members will also be aware of the COVID-19 economic impact study that has recently been commissioned. This has had a major bearing on the development of the Strategy in terms of the emergent challenge of driving the recovery and renewal of the local economy.

## **3. STRATEGY – CHALLENGES FACING CARLISLE**

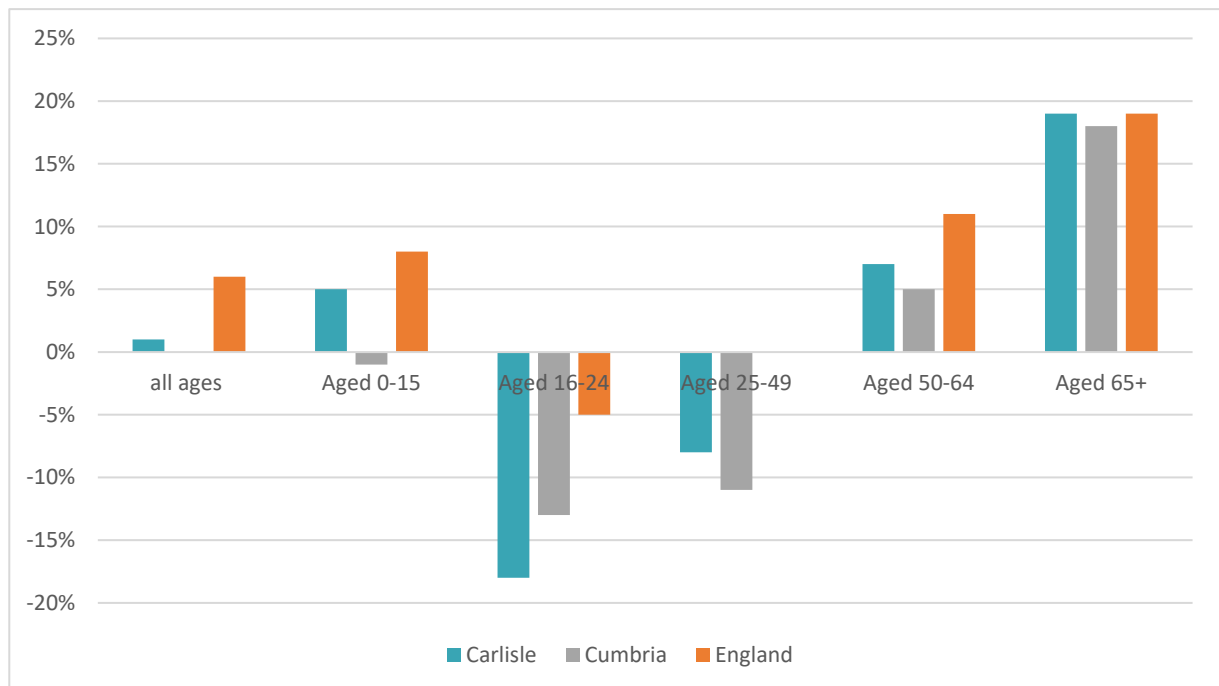
### **3.1 CHALLENGE 1 - DECLINING WORKING AGE POPULATION**

- 3.1.1 Carlisle in line with Cumbria and the wider Borderlands area has a declining working age population. Figure 1 shows the 16-24 age group has seen a decline -18%, and the 25-49 group, -8% between 2011-2019. Coupled with an increasing retirement population of 19%, Carlisle has a high old age dependency ratio of 36.35, compared to 29.5 in England<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on ONS population estimates 2019

**Figure 1: Population change in Carlisle, Cumbria and England among age groups, 2011-2019**



Source: ONS: Population estimates based by single year of age 2019

- 3.1.2 These statistics indicate that there is a need to improve the offer for young people in the City. Carlisle's position as a university city is key to this. The University of Cumbria enrolled 6300 full-time equivalent students in 2019<sup>2</sup>, however many graduates tend to move on elsewhere to continue their post graduate careers. Evidence suggests that Carlisle lacks strength in key sectors, such as creative and digital, which account for only 2% of employment in Carlisle, to retain graduates, particularly given the strengths of the university in such sectors<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.1.3 If this ageing demographical trend continues unchecked, it will have significant impacts on the provision of services and the local economy: creating dual problems of a lack of available and skilled labour force and an increased number of people reliant on key services including health and social care.

<sup>2</sup> Access and Participation Plan 2019-20, University of Cumbria

<sup>3</sup> Identification of future growth opportunities: Carlisle, Regeneris Consulting 2017

### 3.2 CHALLENGE 2 - LOW SKILL LOW WAGE ECONOMY

- 3.2.1 Carlisle has a high number of people concentrated in low skilled low wage sectors, such as retail (making up nearly one fifth of total employment)

**Table 1: Qualification levels by adult population (%) in Carlisle, Cumbria and England**

Qualification level	Carlisle	Cumbria	England
NVQ4+	28	32.5	40
NVQ3+	51.7	55.4	58.5
NVQ2+	67.7	74.3	75.7
NVQ1+	85.2	89.4	85.8
Other Qualifications	8.4	5.2	6.7
No Qualifications	6.4	5.4	7.5

Source: APS, ONS 2019

- 3.2.1 As the table above indicates, Carlisle has a relatively low skilled population- with 12% holding NVQ4+ qualifications than the England average (4.5% less than Cumbrian average).
- 3.2.2 Alongside this, Earnings in Carlisle are below that of both Cumbria and England, with a median annual salary of £20,929, compared with £24,003 and £25,118 for Cumbria and England respectively<sup>4</sup>.
- 3.2.3 This influences the low productivity of the city, with the average GVA per worker in Carlisle 90% of England average and 92% of North West average<sup>5</sup>. Low productivity and low skills base results in difficulty attracting high value sector employers to invest in Carlisle, while local employers regularly cite difficulty in recruiting skilled workers in the city. This is a significant impediment to local economic and business growth.

### 3.3 CHALLENGE 3 - LACK OF CITY CENTRE VIBRANCY

- 3.3.1 While the city centre has a strong sense of place, there is evidence that it lacks the vibrancy necessary to perform to its full potential as a regional hub.

---

<sup>4</sup> ASHE, ONS: 2019

<sup>5</sup> Sub regional productivity, ONS 2018



- 3.3.2 The city centre economy currently relies heavily on its retail offer and this makes Carlisle highly vulnerable to fluctuations and further contraction of the retail sector – exemplified by the closure of Debenhams and stores within the Arcadia group. Only 8% of businesses in the city centre retail core contribute to the evening economy<sup>6</sup>. This means that city centre vibrancy is significantly reduced after 5pm.
- 3.3.3 Only 4,250 people live in the city centre area. The ‘offer’ of housing in the city centre is generally perceived to be low and particularly unsuitable for young professionals, who are the largest market for city centre living<sup>7</sup>. The absence of a strong city centre residential community contributes significantly to the lack of evening activity. Increasing city centre living will also help create a greater demand for the city centre evening economy.
- 3.3.4 Carlisle has a relatively weak visitor sector when compared to other small cathedral cities, such as York, Norwich and Lincoln. Between Carlisle 241,000 visitor trips, against 356,000 in Lincoln, 633,000 in Norwich and 1.24 million in York<sup>8</sup>. Despite its beautiful location and strong heritage offer, Carlisle underperforms as a visitor destination.
- 3.3.5 Improving vitality and viability of the city centre - through the diversification of uses and improving the residential, leisure and culture offer - is therefore a priority. A focussed strategy and intervention is necessary to avoid an accelerated decline in footfall and increased vacancy rates. A poorly-performing city centre would have a significant impact on the Carlisle’s role as a regional economic hub, the strength of the local economy – and income to the Council via business rates.
- 3.4 CHALLENGE 4 - INCONSISTENT PROVISION OF GOOD DIGITAL AND TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY
- 3.4.1 Public transport provision throughout the district is generally considered (as with many rural districts) inconsistent, with infrequent bus services to the city, particularly in remote rural areas. Bus journeys are also consistently longer than comparative journeys by car, and most junctions prioritise motor vehicles above both pedestrians and cyclists. Consequently, over 60% of travel-to-work journeys to Carlisle city centre are made by car<sup>9</sup>. This makes Carlisle’s transport emissions high and discourages healthy and active lifestyles.

---

<sup>6</sup> Carlisle city centre Health Check, 2019

<sup>7</sup>BBC (2018) ‘The UK’s rapid return to city centre living’ available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-44482291> [accessed 27.02.2020]

<sup>8</sup> Mott Macdonald, 2020

<sup>9</sup> Mott Macdonald, Carlisle City Centre Transport and Movement Plan 2020

- 3.4.2 There is a lack of integrated walking and cycling routes into and out of the city, and particularly a lack of cycle routes into the city centre, which further entrenches vehicular dominance. Encouraging and facilitating active travel is one of the key ways in which Carlisle City Council can contribute and support the city's transition to a net-zero carbon city, through working in partnership with Cumbria County Council as the Highways Authority.
- 3.4.3 Only 46.2% of people have access to superfast broadband in Carlisle, compared to 95% nationally<sup>10</sup>, indicating that the city has a lack of digital infrastructure. There is now widespread recognition that digital infrastructure is central to supporting local economies. Connectivity is one of the most significant barriers to growing the population and economy of Carlisle. The District is perceived as a peripheral location, but with improved digital connectivity perceptions of remoteness can be changed.
- 3.4.4 Poor digital and transport connectivity holds our city back: The dominance of vehicles on highways impacts on the health, wellbeing of our communities and the local environment. Meanwhile the lack of good digital infrastructure and connectivity makes the businesses, residents and education centres across Carlisle less resilient to the shocks caused by the COVID 19 pandemic.

## **4 STRATEGY – OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARLISLE**

### **4.1 OPPORTUNITY 1 - HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE OFFER**

- 4.1.1 Carlisle is an affordable place to live- with an average house price of 136,721, significantly lower than the England average of £248,083<sup>11</sup>. This makes Carlisle potentially attractive for first time buyers. Carlisle unsurprisingly has high levels of home ownership, 6% above the national average at 68%<sup>12</sup>.
- 4.1.2 The city is set in beautiful rural surroundings and acts as a gateway to two UNESCO world heritage sites and is home to two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Solway Coast and North Pennines). Carlisle's beautiful natural heritage helps make it an attractive place to live.
- 4.1.3 Together the affordability and unrivalled natural capital give Carlisle a strong quality of life offer, which can make the city an attractive place to live in and invest in. Changes in lifestyle after COVID19 make living in Carlisle a more realistic offer for

---

<sup>10</sup> Connected nations update: Spring 2019 dashboard, Ofcom 2019

<sup>11</sup> UKHPI December 2019

<sup>12</sup> Census 2011

more people, as proximity to workplace becomes important, and flexible working arrangements are likely to become more commonplace.

#### 4.2 Opportunity 2 – Carlisle as the regional capital of the borderlands

4.2.1 As the only city and the largest settlement of both Cumbria and the wider Borderlands region, Carlisle acts as a regional capital of the Borderlands.

4.2.2 Carlisle is the economic driver of Cumbria and the Borderlands, generating £2.83 billion of GVA per year- making up a quarter of the total Cumbrian GVA<sup>13</sup>. The city is the regional centre for the Borderlands area, acting as a hub for 1.1 million (10% of the UK landmass). This context makes Carlisle both regionally and nationally strategically important.

4.2.3 Carlisle acts as a civic hub for the area- and hosts a number of key public services and institutions, including Cumbria County Council, NHS, and the University of Cumbria.

**Table 1: Employment rate (%) for Carlisle, Cumbria and England (as of March 2020)**

	Carlisle	Cumbria	England
Males aged 16-64	82.8	82.5	80.2
Females aged 16-64	79.8	75.4	72.3
All persons aged 16-64	81.3	78.9	76.2

Source: DWP, 2020

4.2.4 Due to its role as a sub-regional hub, Carlisle has a high level of employment and economic activity. 81% of adults in the city are in employment. Carlisle has historically had high levels of employment, and despite the impacts of coronavirus, which has led to an increase in unemployment across the UK, Carlisle's level remains below the national average<sup>14</sup>.

4.2.5 This role and these assets give Carlisle a weighted importance above similarly sized comparable settlements. There is an opportunity to capitalise on Carlisle's role as a strategic location for housing, employment and commercial growth – given its size and connectivity.

<sup>13</sup> Sub regional productivity, ONS 2018

<sup>14</sup> DWP 2020

### 4.3 OPPORTUNITY 3 - EXCELLENT STRATEGIC CONNECTIVITY

- 4.3.1 As well as being the geographical centre of the Borderlands region, Carlisle forms part of the geographical centre of the UK. This makes the city well connected to the rest of the UK.
- 4.3.2 Carlisle is situated on the West Coast Mainline and has good rail connectivity: approximately 1 hour from Glasgow and Edinburgh, 2 hours from Manchester, 3 hours from London and Birmingham by rail. Local rail links such as the Cumbrian Coastline and the Glasgow and South West Line makes the city well connected to other regional centres and act as an interchange for South West Scotland and West Cumbria.
- 4.3.3 Situated on the M6 corridor, Carlisle is equally well served by road- well connected to Scotland via the A/M74, the south of England via the M6 and Newcastle and the North East via the A69.
- 4.3.4 This makes the Carlisle easily accessible from most parts of the UK, reversing misconceptions of isolation, and instead putting the city at the heart of the UK, and a significant link between the Scottish and English economies.

### 4.4 OPPORTUNITY 4 - GROWTH POTENTIAL

- 4.4.1 Carlisle has significant growth potential and is already embarking on a significant growth journey. Carlisle is set to grow its population with the development of 10,000 new homes through St. Cuthbert's Garden Village. This development will help provide over 9,000 new jobs and support the reversal of the declining working age population.
- 4.4.2 Carlisle also has clear potential to support business growth. There is good availability of employment land across the district (80Has)<sup>15</sup>. The city is home to Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone, the only Enterprise Zone in Cumbria, with over 30 Has of development land available, and new developments already underway such as the ModVillage.
- 4.4.3 Carlisle is a base for both manufacturing and transport and logistic industries, scoring highly on the index of specialisation. Manufacturing accounts for around 12% of employment. Meanwhile, transport and storage accounts for 7.9% of employment compared with Cumbrian and England averages of 4.7%<sup>16</sup>. Building on the

---

<sup>15</sup> Annual Monitoring Study, 2019

<sup>16</sup> BRES, ONS, 2018

specialisms of the University, Carlisle has the potential to grow its creative and digital sector, a growing high value sector across the country.

- 4.4.4 Carlisle can grow in a way that no other area in the Borderlands region can. And as the only city, and a service centre for 1.1 million, the success of our growth agenda is critical to the growth of the wider Borderlands area.

## **5 IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES**

- 5.1 The overarching corporate economic development objective is growth – both population and employment. In order to achieve this, there are five key building blocks:
1. Housing offer – quality, mix and affordability
  2. Business space – quality / flexible that caters for a broad range of sectors
  3. Connectivity – excellent / reliable digital and transport infrastructure
  4. Environment – high quality built / natural environment
  5. City Centre – a vibrant city centre that provides range of uses / experience
- 5.2 In order to achieve our growth agenda and meet our climate change obligations, this growth (and the five key building blocks) must be delivered in a way that is clean, inclusive and sustainable. These three principles have been woven into the strategy as three key cross-cutting themes and presented as strategic priorities that form the ‘golden threads. The intention is to establish and embed them as critical success factors that will inform our future corporate decision-making and appraisal of projects and activities.
- 5.3 Carlisle City Council recognises the impacts of climate change locally. Climate change has caused more extreme weather more often, locally this has been felt with serious flooding events in Carlisle in recent years. In 2019 Carlisle City Council declared a climate change emergency and have produced a Climate Change Strategy, which prioritises investment to support clean green growth and highlights the opportunity for climate change interventions to drive the growth of the local economy. The strategy sets out a number of objectives to reduce the carbon footprint for the whole of Carlisle and achieve a goal of net zero emissions by 2037. Therefore, it is important that the actions of the Economic Strategy are aligned to and support the achievement of this target.
- 5.4 It is recognised that there are inequalities across the District, in terms of pay, employment and education. Some communities have been ‘left behind’ and it is vital

that the future growth and recovery creates opportunities and increases prosperity for all. This Strategy reinforces the commitment of the Council to deliver inclusive growth and ensure that our activities provide meaningful outcomes for all communities - from creating new jobs, delivering new homes, providing greater training opportunities, promoting health and wellbeing and improving the leisure and cultural offer.

- 5.5 Additionally, a further priority is to respond the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and plan for the recovery and renewal of the local economy. COVID-19 has exacerbated the trends in the retail industry. Trading restrictions and reduced footfall have pushed many businesses into permanent closure. This highlights the need for Carlisle city centre to adapt to changing behaviours to maintain vitality and viability. There are opportunities that have arisen as a result of the pandemic that could accelerate development of the Carlisle economy, the most obvious being the positive environmental impacts brought about by the general reduction in travel and much greater prevalence of home working.
- 5.6 Drawing on the evidence of needs, challenges assets and opportunities, the following six priorities have been identified for the Economic Strategy, along with key actions for delivery.
- 5.7 PRIORITY 1- DRIVING HOUSING AND POPULATION GROWTH
- 5.7.1 A strategy of driving housing and population growth will address the shift in the age distribution of the population and increase the working-age population in the District. This will support economic growth by creating an available and skilled labour force and reducing the number of people reliant on key services including health and social care.
- 5.7.2 It is imperative that this growth is delivered in a way that is clean, inclusive and sustainable. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the climate change credentials of new developments.
- 5.7.3 Key Actions:
- 1 **Production a Local Plan for St Cuthbert's Garden Village** – Develop and adopt the Local Plan that will provide the planning framework to support the planned delivery of 10,000 new homes and over 9,000 jobs to the south of city
  - 2 **Review of the Carlisle Local Plan** – undertake a review of the Local Plan, which was adopted in 2015, to ensure an adequate supply of deliverable housing and employment land.

- 3 **Remediation of the Caldew Riverside site** – Undertake detailed site investigation works and remediation of the site to enable the delivery a city centre living scheme to increase the city centre population to be progressed
- 4 **Development and delivery of ‘Start with the Park’** – Develop and deliver the project to improve cycling and walking connectivity to the Garden Village and the creation green infrastructure for the communities of Carlisle and future residents of the Garden Village

## 5.8 PRIORITY 2 – GROW OUR TARGET EMPLOYMENT SECTORS AND LEVEL UP OUR SKILLS BASE AND PRODUCTIVITY

5.8.1 Carlisle must not only grow our local economy but increase its reliance. Therefore, the focus must be on consolidating our strengths in areas such as advance manufacturing and logistics, but also growing smaller and formative sectors such as professional services and digital and creative.

5.8.2 It is clear that there are inequalities across our communities and therefore this strategy must address this by ‘levelling up’ and ensuring all our residents are able and encouraged to access training and learning opportunities. There is a need up upskill our local workforce and improve productivity to make Carlisle a more attractive place to invest and attract higher value sectors and employers.

### 5.8.3 Key Actions:

- 1 **Supporting the redevelopment of the Citadels site** – support the delivery of the scheme Deal to create a new campus for the University of Cumbria, to attract greater student numbers and boost the number of HE learners and graduates in Carlisle
- 2 **Supporting the delivery of a Business Innovation Hub in the City Centre** - support the delivery of the project to create a new business hub for the creative and digital sector, to support the growth of an emerging high value sector in the city to boost productivity
- 3 **Supporting the delivery of Digital and Community Learning Hub** - support the delivery of the project to create new learning hubs in the city centre and local centres, to improve digital access and skills.
- 4 **Facilitating the continued growth of Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone** – Continue to support Enterprise Zone to grow and develop key employment sectors such as manufacturing and logistics

## 5.9 PRIORITY 3 - INCREASING CITY CENTRE VIBRANCY

- 5.9.1 For the strategy of driving housing and population growth to succeed, Carlisle needs to be an attractive place to live, work and visit and the city centre plays a key role in that overall offer. A vibrant city centre that functions as a hub for cultural, leisure and economic activity is a prerequisite for a younger demographic and therefore, key to increasing the working age population.
- 5.9.2 Increasing the mix of uses in the city centre will generate different kinds of footfall through the day and into the evening and increase the perception of vibrancy. The shift from a retail centre to a multifunctional hub will enhance the overall experience of the city centre and reposition it as a visitor destination.
- 5.9.3 The Council is proposing the formation of a new City Centre Taskforce to ensure our strategies and activities for city centre regeneration are shaped by key city centre stakeholders. The membership would aim to reflect the key sectors based in the city centre, including organisations from retail, property/real estate, professional services and cultural/community sectors. The group will provide feedback on our activities as below, as well as any future plans/strategies for the city centre. More detail on this proposal is available in report ED27/21.
- 5.9.4 Key actions:
- 1 **Creation of a new events space at the Greenmarket** – Upgrading of the area and the installation of infrastructure to create a focal point for the hosting of events in the city centre
  - 3 **Redevelopment of the Sands Centre** – Investment in Sand Centre to improve the offer and experience and enhance the cultural and leisure offer in the city
  - 3 **Improvements to the Market Hall** – Investment in the Market Hall, to improve the offer and experience, support local businesses and enhance the cultural and leisure offer in the city
  - 4 **Progressing the redevelopment of the Central Plaza site** – progress the redevelopment of the site to support the businesses on Victoria Viaduct and the regeneration of the wider Station Gateway area.

## 5.10 PRIORITY 4 - ENHANCING DIGITAL AND TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

- 5.10.1 To ensure our local communities and businesses are not left behind and that growth is clean and sustainable, Carlisle needs to improve both transport and digital connectivity.



5.10.2 The lack of good digital infrastructure and connectivity makes the area less attractive to potential investors. The COVID-19 crisis has also increased the strategic importance of digital infrastructure to allow effective remote working through access to digital applications, services, and data.

5.10.3 Key actions:

- 1 **Supporting the delivery of Carlisle Station Gateway project** – support delivery of the scheme to upgrade the station, increase passenger usage and prepare it for HS2
- 2 **Supporting the delivery of the Southern Link Road and Gateway projects** - support delivery of the schemes to create a new connection to Junction 42 of the M6 and improve the highway network and streetscape within the city centre
- 4 **Supporting the production of a Carlisle Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** – support production of a LCWIP that sets out a strategic approach to identifying improvements required in the City, to identify projects to improve the local cycling and walking networks.
- 5 **Supporting the development of the Borderlands Digital Programme** – Contribute to the development of a 4G mobile infrastructure in-fill programme to improve digital connectivity across the District.

## 5.11 PRIORITY 5 - SUPPORTING RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

5.11.1 Carlisle has a large rural hinterland, whose communities account for around 30% of the total population of the District. The agricultural sector is very important to the local economy and the strength of the associated supply chain further increases its significance.

5.11.2 A key priority is to improve productivity whilst supporting natural capital. In areas of high quality land can be turned over to more productive uses that are compatible with local natural capital. The growing market for energy, fibre, pharmaceutical and industrial crops is an opportunity. Poorer land that cannot show a margin could be taken out of arable production and planted to trees or wildlife habitat to enhance local natural capital. There are substantial opportunities, as companies are now seeking carbon or biodiversity offsetting.

5.11.3 Key actions:

- 1 **Produce a Place Plan for Longtown** - Working with local businesses and communities in Longtown to develop and produce develop a Place Plan, to access funding for capital regeneration projects from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
- 2 **Produce a Rural Strategy** – Develop and produce a rural strategy to identify new priorities and actions, to support the development of the rural economy and respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit.
- 3 **Secure investment in the western route of Hadrian’s Wall** - Working with the Hadrian Wall Partnership, develop and produce a strategy for investment in the section of the wall that runs through the Carlisle District, to access funding from the Borderlands Growth Deal to improve the experience and boost visitor numbers
- 4 **Support the development of Natural Capital Innovation Zone** - Contribute to the development of natural capital investment programme funded through the Borderlands Growth Deal, to develop trials and sector strategies to capture the benefits of the region’s natural capital.

#### 5.12 PRIORITY 6: PROMOTING CARLISLE AS A PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT

5.12.1 To realise our growth strategy and grow our target employment sectors and attract investment, we must raise the profile of Carlisle as a place to invest and do business in and to live, work and visit.

5.12.2 This requires a multifaceted approach encompassing marketing and promotional activity, capitalising on our networks and activities with local, regional and national partners and working with government departments.

5.12.3 Key actions:

- 1 **Produce an investment prospectus** - Develop and produce an investment prospectus that can be used to market Carlisle to national and international investors and developers.
- 2 **Capitalise on the opportunities presented by the England’s Originals consortia** – Develop and deliver the suite of augmented reality products to promote the District and grow domestic and international visitor numbers.
- 3 **Develop a marketing strategy for the City** – Explore new and innovative ideas to promote a strong and coherent image of Carlisle to a national and international audience.
- 4 **Support and strengthen the Carlisle Ambassadors network** - Continue to support the activities of the Ambassadors network and expand activity into

business support and mentoring, to increase entrepreneurial activity and new business start-ups in the District.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 A report outlining the key challenges economic challenges presented by Covid-19 pandemic and the implications for the national and local economy was considered by the Executive in July 2020. The also report set out the emerging thinking regarding the role of the Council's emerging economic strategy in the recovery and renewal process. Feedback from the Executive was that the strategy should be evidence-led in order to ensure that it responds to local needs and opportunities
- 6.2 A workshop was held with the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel on 30 November, where an evidence base document was presented and considered by Members. The session focussed on agreeing what were the key needs / challenges facing the District from an economic growth perspective, then then opportunities / strengths that should be capitalised upon and finally, the priorities upon which the Strategy should focus.
- 6.3 An updated draft of the strategy was taken to the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel on the 21 January 2021. Members of the Panel recommended that narrative around the Strategy delivering inclusive growth and ensuring that that activities and investments generate benefits for all communities should be strengthened. Further refinement of the Strategy and in particular, strengthening of Strategic Priority 3 (delivering clean green growth) and Objective 5 (supporting rural development and innovation) and Objective 6 (promoting Carlisle as a place to live, work and visit) were key outcomes.
- 6.4 The strategy was amended in line with these comments and approved by Executive for submission to Council on 2 June 2021. Following review by Overview & Scrutiny, the strategy will be submitted for consideration of Full Council on the 14 September 2021.

## **7 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 This Strategy sets out a framework - based on a clear rationale, reflecting analysis of the key issues, challenges and opportunities - to drive clean, inclusive and sustainable urban and rural growth within the Carlisle District.

- 7.2 The production of Strategy has very much been evidence-led in order to ensure that it is developed to respond to local needs and opportunities. Up-to-date data has been used to ensure that the approach is pertinent to the current economic climate and challenges.
- 7.3 The Strategy recognises the role this Council has to play in delivering the Strategy through leadership, proactively using our resources and available powers where appropriate and utilising the land and property assets we own. Nevertheless, it equally recognises that that Council does not have control over all of the actions and activities required to deliver it. Therefore, it reinforces the commitment to working in partnership with our public, private and voluntary sector partners to deliver the objectives and outcomes.
- 7.4 It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny:
1. Note the contents of the Strategy in terms of the challenges, opportunities, strategic priorities and objectives articulated.
  2. Note the framework and context for the production of the updated economic strategy, particularly the impacts of Brexit and Covid-19.

## **8 CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES**

- 8.1 The Economic Strategy will contribute to all five of the Carlisle Plan priorities:

- P1: Supporting business growth and skills development to improve opportunities and economic prospects for the people of Carlisle.
- P2: Further develop sports, arts and cultural facilities to support the health and well-being of our residents.
- P3: Improving the quality of our local environment and green spaces so that everyone can enjoy living, working and visiting Carlisle.
- P4: Address current and future housing needs to protect and improve residents' quality of life.
- P5: Promoting Carlisle regionally, nationally and internationally as a place with much to offer - full of opportunities and potential.

**Contact Officer: Steven Robinson**

**Ext: 7535**

**Appendices  
attached to report:**

**Appendix 1 – Draft Carlisle Economic Strategy 2021-2026**

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- **None**

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL** – The Economic Strategy is a policy reserved to full Council as per Article 4 of the Constitution. Accordingly, full consultation is required so that the Executive are able to benefit from Overview & Scrutiny's input and advice. The proposed policy will subsequently be recommended to Council for approval and adoption.

**PROPERTY SERVICES** – The Council owns a significant property portfolio that can assist with delivery of the strategy however careful consideration will be necessary to ensure that income generation is retained/maximised.

**FINANCE** – The Council supports the activities to underpin the Economic Strategy through investment in base budgets to fund the Economic Development team which then allows it to look towards inward investment opportunities and receipt of significant grant funding opportunities. External funding such as Towns Deal, Future High Street Fund, Garden Village and Borderlands Growth Deal will all help the Council to achieve the priorities outlined in the Strategy and further complement the funding the Council already provides.

**EQUALITY** – The declining working age population is a challenge within the Economic Strategy.

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE** – There are no information governance implications with this report

# **Carlisle Economic Strategy 2021-2026**

**May 2021**

V13

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1** The District of Carlisle comprises of large rural hinterland that encompasses the only city in Cumbria and the wider Borderlands region. This distinctive profile is a key strength and asset that amplifies the economic potential of Carlisle and generates significant opportunities for both urban and rural growth.
- 1.2** However, there are number of interconnected weaknesses and challenges that must be addressed in order for this potential to be fully unleashed.
- 1.3** This Strategy sets out a framework - based on a clear rationale, reflecting analysis of the key issues, challenges and opportunities - to drive clean, inclusive and sustainable urban and rural growth.
- 1.4** City Council recognises the role it has to play in delivering the Strategy through leadership, proactively using our resources and available powers where appropriate and utilising the land and property assets we own.
- 1.5** Nevertheless, we equally recognise that we do not have control over all of the actions and activities required to deliver this Strategy. Therefore, the City Council is committed to

working in partnership with our public, private and voluntary sector partners, as well as ensuring support is secured from our local communities.

- 1.6** The Strategy identifies the six priorities we will focus our resources and energies on across the next ten years to grow our local economy:
- (1) Accelerate housing and population growth
  - (2) Grow our target employment sectors and level up our skills base and productivity
  - (3) Drive the regeneration and transformation of the city centre
  - (4) Improve digital and sustainable transport connectivity and access
  - (5) Support rural development and innovation
  - (6) Promote Carlisle as a place to live, work and visit

## 2. The District of Carlisle in Context

- 2.1** Carlisle serves a wide geographical hinterland and has a substantial and uncontested sphere of influence. It is the business, residential, educational and retail capital of Cumbria and the wider rural Borderlands region, which encompasses a substantial portion of North West England and southern Scotland with a population of around 500,000 people.



- 2.2** Consequently, Carlisle has a large economic functional area with a high degree of self-containment and a large labour pool to draw upon.

- 2.3** Many of Carlisle's strengths are closely linked to its location, its physical infrastructure and the quality of its urban and rural environments.

- 2.4** The city enjoys excellent north-south road connectivity via the M6 and is similarly advantaged by west to east road and rail links. With a principal train station on the West Coast Main Line, London is under three and a half hours by direct services to the south with Glasgow and Edinburgh an hour to the north. This strategic positioning reinforces the District's role as a regional transport hub and a gateway to significant markets including Scotland, the North East, and the wider North West, as well as the opening up of international markets enabled by the airport.

- 2.5** Carlisle is a vibrant historic city and has a rural and stunningly beautiful hinterland with the Solway Estuary to the west; the Pennines to the east; the northern Lake District World Heritage Site to the south; the Eden Valley to the south-east; and Northumberland National Park in the north east. Coupled with the world heritage site of Hadrian's Wall and the city's distinctive shopping, leisure and cultural offerings, Carlisle is a popular destination for tourism, with visitor numbers and associated expenditure growing year on year.



Map showing Carlisle's Geographical Context and Sphere of Influence to be inserted...

- 2.6** Carlisle has a business base of around 6,000 active businesses, employing approximately 55,000 people which represents 25% of Cumbria's total workforce. A 3% increase in the number of employees has been observed in Carlisle between 2010 and 2015, supporting that there is job growth in the economy. 99.5% of Carlisle's businesses are defined as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which are categorised as those which employ less than 250 employees.
- 2.7** In 2019, East Cumbria (Carlisle, Eden and South Lakeland local authority areas combined) generated £6 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA). This accounts for 54% of Cumbria's £11.2 billion total. As East Cumbria's largest economy Carlisle is a key contributor to this figure and highlights its important role within the county.
- 2.8** Carlisle's key sectors, those which are the highest value in terms of GVA and where it has competitive advantage relative to other areas are manufacturing (both advanced and food), logistics and storage, construction, and agriculture. The district also has a number of enabling sectors, which are not necessarily high value in terms of GVA but play an important role in fulfilling Carlisle's role as a regional capital. These are

retail and leisure, health and social care and professional services.

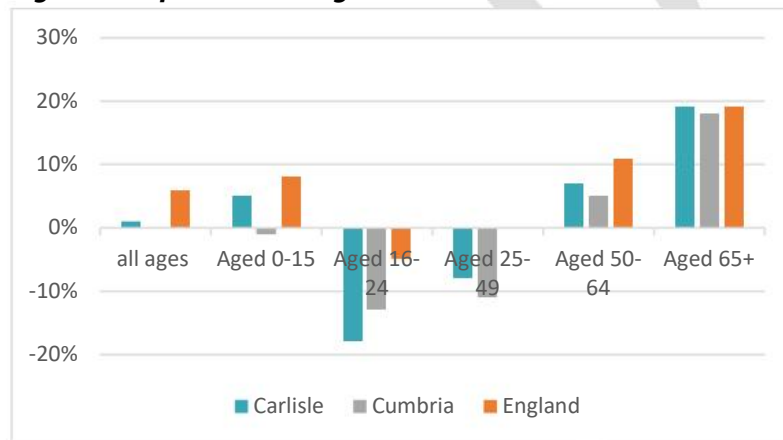
- 2.9** The digital and creative industry is an emerging sector in Carlisle's economy and whilst this currently has a low value in terms of GVA, there is real opportunity to nurture growth. There is significant potential presented by the strength of arts and creative provision at the University of Cumbria and the anticipated growth in young people stemming from the planned housing growth centred on St. Cuthbert's Garden Village.
- 2.10** It is imperative that the actions of this Strategy seek to support Carlisle District's key sectors to grow and prosper, for enhancement in our enabling sectors linked to enhancing Carlisle's sub-regional role and for the incubation of our aspirational sectors to support a transition towards a higher-skilled and higher-wage economy.

### 3. Needs and challenges

#### 3.1 Challenge 1- Declining working age population and retaining young people

**3.1.1** Carlisle, in line with Cumbria and the wider Borderlands area, has experienced shift in the age distribution of its population. Figure 1 explains this trend, illustrating declines of 18% and 8% in the 16-24 and 25-49 age group respectively between 2001-2019. Conversely over the same period there has been an increase 19% in the 65+ age group.

**Figure 1: Population change 2001-2019**



Source: ONS, 2019

<sup>1</sup> The ratio of the number of people of pensionable age and over per 1,000 people (ONS, 2019)

**3.1.2** Consequently, the old age dependency ratio in the District is higher than the national average, with a ratio of 36.4 in the Carlisle compared to 29.5 in England<sup>1</sup>. This indicates that greater proportion of the population is likely to be economically inactive due to old-age and, based on the shift in the age distribution, that the working age population is declining.

**3.1.3** These trends demonstrate the need for Carlisle to grow its population and economy in order to stabilise and increase its working age population. To achieve this objective Carlisle must improve the liveability offer and critically, employment prospects for a younger demographic.

**3.1.4** Carlisle lacks strength in key sectors, such as creative and digital and professional services to attract and retain graduates and young professionals. Despite the University of Cumbria enrolling over 6000 full-time equivalent students per academic year, the majority of graduates left the area to commence their postgraduate careers<sup>2</sup>.

**3.1.5** If these demographic trends continue there will be significant implications for the District: impacts on the provision of

<sup>2</sup> Access and Participation Plan 2019-20, University of Cumbria

services and the sustainability and performance of the local economy. A declining working age population creates a dual problem of a lack of available labour force and an increased number of people reliant on key services including health and social care.

## 3.2 Challenge 2 - Low skill low wage economy

**3.2.1** A high proportion of the economically active population in Carlisle are concentrated in low skilled low wage sectors, such as manufacturing, retail and leisure. These sectors collectively account for nearly 25% of employment in the District.

**3.2.2** As Table 1 indicates, Carlisle has a relatively low skilled population with only 28% of the population holding NVQ4+ (or equivalent) qualifications, compared to the county and national averages of 32.5% and 40% respectively.

**Table 1: Qualification levels by adult population (%)**

Qualification level	Carlisle	Cumbria	England
<b>NVQ4+</b>	28	32.5	40
<b>NVQ3+</b>	51.7	55.4	58.5
<b>NVQ2+</b>	67.7	74.3	75.7
<b>NVQ1+</b>	85.2	89.4	85.8

<b>Other Qualifications</b>	8.4	5.2	6.7
<b>No Qualifications</b>	6.4	5.4	7.5

Source: APS, ONS 2019

**3.2.3** Consequently, average earnings in Carlisle are well below county and national averages, with a median annual salary of £20,929, compared with £24,003 and £25,118 for Cumbria and England respectively<sup>3</sup>.

**3.2.4** The skills and qualifications of workers, the nature of employment and cost of labour all influence levels of productivity. This explains the relatively low productivity of the District, with the average GVA per worker in Carlisle only 90% of national average<sup>4</sup>.

**3.2.5** The twin problems of a low skills base and low productivity results in difficulty in attracting high value sectors and employers to invest in Carlisle. Similarly, local employers regularly cite difficulty in recruiting for specialised posts due to a lack of skilled local labour.

**3.2.6** Upskilling the local labour force and improving productivity is vital to drive economic growth in the District and grow our enabling and emerging sectors such as professional services, information and communications and digital and creative. In

<sup>3</sup> ASHE, ONS: 2019

<sup>4</sup> Sub regional productivity, ONS 2018

addition is also fundamental that the right infrastructure is delivered and available to ensure that the right kind of premises and workspaces are available to encourage and accommodate the growth of these enabling and emerging sectors.

### **3.3 Challenge 3 - Lack of city centre vibrancy:**

**3.3.1** While the city centre has a strong sense of place, there is evidence that it lacks the vibrancy necessary to perform to its full potential as a regional hub.

**3.3.2** The city centre economy currently relies heavily on its retail offer. The over-reliance on retail makes Carlisle highly vulnerable to fluctuations and further contraction of the retail sector and in order to improve the economic resilience and sustainability of Carlisle, the city centre must diversify with a greater leisure, cultural, residential and employment offer.

**3.3.3** Only 8% of businesses in the city centre retail core contribute to the evening economy<sup>5</sup>. This means that city centre vibrancy is significantly reduced after 5pm, with local residents

identifying that the isolated streets in the evening can feel threatening.

**3.3.4** Only 4,250 people live in the city centre area. The 'offer' of housing in the city centre is generally perceived to be low and particularly unsuitable for young professionals, the largest market for city centre living in the country<sup>6</sup>. The absence of a strong city centre residential community contributes significantly to the lack of evening activity. Increasing city centre living will also help create a greater demand for the city centre evening economy, as more people will live close to shops and bars, and therefore the city centre operates as a neighbourhood- as per the principles of a '15 minute city'<sup>7</sup>

**3.3.5** Carlisle has a relatively weak visitor sector when compared to other small cathedral cities, such as York, Norwich and Lincoln. Between Carlisle 241,000 visitor trips, against 356,000 in Lincoln, 633,000 in Norwich and 1.24 million in York<sup>8</sup>. Despite its beautiful location and strong heritage offer, Carlisle is clearly underperforming as a visitor destination.

**3.3.6** Improving vitality and viability of the city centre - through the diversification of uses and improving the residential, leisure and culture offer - is therefore a priority.

---

<sup>5</sup> Carlisle city centre Health Check, 2019

<sup>6</sup>BBC (2018) 'The UK's rapid return to city centre living' available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk/44482291> [accessed 27.02.2020]

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.15minutecity.com/> [accessed 10.12.20]

<sup>8</sup> Mott Macdonald, 2020

**3.3.7** Without intervention and a focussed strategy, the city centre could experience an accelerated decline in footfall and increased vacancy rates. This would have a significant impact on the Carlisle's role as a regional economic hub, the strength of the local economy – and income to the Council via business rates.

**3.4 Challenge 4 - Inconsistent provision of good local digital and transport connectivity:**

**3.4.1** Public transport provision throughout the district is inconsistent, particularly in rural areas. Bus journeys are also consistently longer than comparative journeys by car. There is a lack of integrated walking and cycling routes into and out of the city, and particularly a lack of cycle routes into the city centre

**3.4.2** Consequently, over 60% of travel-to-work journeys to Carlisle city centre are made by car<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, working in partnership with Cumbria County Council as the Highways Authority to encourage and facilitate greater levels of sustainable and active travel is a key priority. This model shift will contribute and support the ambition to transition to a net-zero carbon city.

**3.4.3** Only 46.2% of people have access to superfast broadband in Carlisle, compared to 95% nationally<sup>10</sup>, indicating that the city has a lack of digital infrastructure

**3.4.4** There is now widespread recognition that digital infrastructure is central to supporting local economies. Connectivity is one of the most significant barriers to growing the population and economy of Carlisle. The District is perceived as a peripheral location, but with improved digital connectivity perceptions of remoteness can be changed.

**3.4.5** Poor digital and transport connectivity is holding the District back. The dominance of vehicles on highways and the lack of alternative sustainable / active transport mode choices impacts on the health and wellbeing of our communities and the local environment. Meanwhile the lack of good digital infrastructure and connectivity makes the area less attractive to potential investors and reduces the resilience of local businesses and residents to economic shocks such as the COVID 19 pandemic.

---

<sup>9</sup> Mott Macdonald, Carlisle City Centre Transport and Movement Plan 2020

<sup>10</sup> Connected nations update: Spring 2019 dashboard, Ofcom 2019

## 4. Strengths and Opportunities

### 4.1 Opportunity 1 - High quality of life offer

- 4.1.1** Carlisle is an affordable place to live- with an average house price of 136,721, significantly lower than the England average of £248,083<sup>11</sup>. This makes Carlisle potentially attractive for first time buyers. Carlisle unsurprisingly has high levels of home ownership, 6% above the national average at 68%<sup>12</sup>.
- 4.1.2** The city is set in beautiful rural surroundings and acts as a gateway to two UNESCO world heritage sites and is home to two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Solway Coast and North Pennines). Carlisle's beautiful natural heritage helps make it an attractive place to live.
- 4.1.3** Together the affordability and unrivalled natural capital give Carlisle a strong quality of life offer, which can make the city an attractive place to live in and invest in. Changes in lifestyle after COVID19 make living in Carlisle a more realistic offer for more people, as proximity to workplace becomes important, and flexible working arrangements are likely to become more commonplace.

### 4.2 Opportunity 2 – Carlisle as the regional capital of the Borderlands

- 4.2.1** As the only city and the largest settlement of both Cumbria and the wider Borderlands region, Carlisle acts as a regional capital of the Borderlands.
- 4.2.2** Carlisle is the economic driver of Cumbria and the Borderlands, generating £2.83 billion of GVA per year- making up a quarter of the total Cumbrian GVA<sup>13</sup>. The city is the regional centre for the Borderlands area, acting as a hub for 1.1 million (10% of the UK landmass). This context makes Carlisle both regionally and nationally strategically important.
- 4.2.3** Carlisle acts as a civic hub for the area and hosts a number of key public services and institutions, including Cumbria County Council, NHS, and the University of Cumbria.

---

<sup>11</sup> UKHPI December 2019

<sup>12</sup> Census 2011

<sup>13</sup> Sub regional productivity, ONS 2018

**Table 1: Employment rate (%)**

	<b>Carlisle</b>	<b>Cumbria</b>	<b>England</b>
<b>Males aged 16-64</b>	82.8	82.5	80.2
<b>Females aged 16-64</b>	79.8	75.4	72.3
<b>All persons aged 16-64</b>	81.3	78.9	76.2

Source: DWP, 2020

**4.2.4** Due to its role as a sub-regional hub, Carlisle has a high level of employment and economic activity. 81% of adults in the city are in employment. Carlisle has historically had high levels of employment, and despite the impacts of coronavirus, which has led to an increase in unemployment across the UK, Carlisle's level remains below the national average<sup>14</sup>.

**4.2.5** This role and these assets give Carlisle a weighted importance above similarly sized comparable settlements. There is an opportunity to capitalise on Carlisle's role as a strategic location for housing, employment and commercial growth – given its size and connectivity.

#### **4.3 Opportunity 3- Excellent strategic transport connectivity:**

**4.3.1** As well as being the geographical centre of the Borderlands region, Carlisle forms part of the geographical centre of the UK. This makes the city well connected to the rest of the UK.

**4.3.2** Carlisle is situated on the West Coast Mainline and has good rail connectivity: approximately 1 hour from Glasgow and Edinburgh, 2 hours from Manchester, 3 hours from London and Birmingham by rail. Local rail links such as the Cumbrian Coastline and the Glasgow and South West Line makes the city well connected to other regional centres and act as an interchange for South West Scotland and West Cumbria.

**4.3.3** Situated on the M6 corridor, Carlisle is equally well served by road- well connected to Scotland via the A/M74, the south of England via the M6 and Newcastle and the North East via the A69.

**4.3.4** This makes the Carlisle easily accessible from most parts of the UK, reversing misconceptions of isolation, and instead putting the city at the heart of the UK, and a significant link between the Scottish and English economies.

#### **4.4 Opportunity 4 - Growth potential:**

**4.4.1** Carlisle has significant growth potential and is already embarking on a significant growth journey. Carlisle is set to grow its population with the development of 10,000 new homes through St. Cuthbert's Garden Village. This

<sup>14</sup> DWP 2020

development will help provide over 9,000 new jobs and support the reversal of the declining working age population.

**4.4.2** Carlisle also has clear potential to support business growth. There is good availability of employment land across the district (80Has)<sup>15</sup>. The city is home to Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone, the only Enterprise Zone in Cumbria, with over 30 Has of development land available, and new developments already underway such as the ModVillage.

**4.4.3** Carlisle is a base for both manufacturing and transport and logistic industries, scoring highly on the index of specialisation. Manufacturing accounts for around 12% of

employment. Meanwhile, transport and storage accounts for 7.9% of employment compared with Cumbrian and England averages of 4.7%<sup>16</sup>. Building on the specialisms of the University, Carlisle has the potential to grow its creative and digital sector, a growing high value sector across the country.

**4.4.4** Carlisle can grow in a way that no other area in the Borderlands region can. And as the only city, and a service centre for 1.1 million, the success of our growth agenda is critical to the growth of the wider Borderlands area.

---

<sup>15</sup> Annual Monitoring Study, 2019

<sup>16</sup> BRES, ONS, 2018



## 5. Our Strategy in Context

### 5.1 Driving recovery from COVID-19

**5.1.1** COVID-19 has brought unprecedented social and economic challenges around the world. Measures brought in by governments across the world throughout 2020 and into 2021 put serious restrictions on certain sectors and have had a major impact on the economy.

**5.1.2** Over the year of 2020, GDP in the UK contracted by 9.9%, the most significant falls on record<sup>17</sup>. Continued changes to restrictions to manage the virus spread have created a challenging economic environment for businesses, with rising unemployment and high debt.

**5.1.3** Evidence from Summer 2020, when lockdown restrictions were eased, gives some degree of optimism about the potential for the economy to 'bounce back' once restrictions are eased. Despite this it is important to recognise that COVID-19 has exacerbated many of our challenges and altered the national and local context that we operate in. A study into the impacts of COVID-19 have highlighted the following issues and opportunities<sup>18</sup>:

#### **5.1.3.1** Issues:

- COVID-19 has exacerbated the trends in the retail industry. Trading restrictions and reduced footfall have pushed many businesses into permanent closure. This highlights the need for Carlisle city centre to adapt to changing behaviours to maintain vitality and viability.
- Unemployment has risen during the crisis, and the inability to return many furloughed jobs has the potential to further increase unemployment. Job creation is therefore crucially important to driving recovery - underpinned by upskilling our labour force to increase the level of high-skilled employment.
- Poor Broadband connectivity in parts of the district have held some business and communities back during the pandemic, as more homeworking and online activity is likely to be sustained after the pandemic - it is vital that this is addressed.

---

<sup>17</sup> ONS: GDP Quarterly Accounts, October-December 2020

<sup>18</sup> Mott Macdonald: Carlisle COVID Baseline 2021

### 5.1.3.2 Opportunities:

- Carlisle has the opportunity to become a key long-distance commuter base, due to the potential for increased homeworking, comparatively low house prices and strong transport links- driven by its high quality of life offer and significant housing growth planned in coming decades.
- Due to proximity to the Lake District, as well as key assets in the District, such as Hadrian's Wall, Carlisle has the potential to benefit from a sustained increase in staycations, however, the hotel offer will have to develop to meet the demand.
- COVID-19 has prompted many people to change how the travel from place to place. Coupled with an increase in homeworking, there is an opportunity to encourage permanent shift in behaviour that reduces motor vehicle uses and increases active travel. This trend would improve healthy lifestyles and reduce vehicle emissions.

---

<sup>19</sup> UK Government, UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement Summary, 2020

## 5.2 Brexit

**5.2.1** Following the vote to leave the EU in June 2016, and the completion of negotiations between the UK and the EU, UK has now left the EU. The Brexit 'transition period' ended on the 1 January 2021 following the agreement of a new Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the UK and the EU. This brings the UK out of the EU's trading frameworks, including the Single Market and Customs Union, and ends freedom of movement between the UK and EU<sup>19</sup>

**5.2.2** The full effect of Brexit on our local economy will become clearer as time goes on and the new arrangements have become more established, however early analysis outlines the following<sup>20</sup>:

- The FTA ensures tariff free and quota free trade between the UK and the EU, however there are changes in import and export rules and process that export businesses will need to transition to, for example Rules of Origin.
- Business mobility rights have been agreed, allowing for short term travel (up to 90 days within a 180-day

<sup>20</sup> UK Government, UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement Summary, 2020

period) to other EU nations. New immigration rules have come into effect. This 'points-based system' will impact on businesses which currently rely on workers from the EU and prioritises skilled workers.

- Between 2021 and 2027 the Basic Payments (the current farming subsidy system). The Government aims to refocus the way it provides subsidies and is launching an Environmental Land Management scheme which offers incentives for the provision of 'public goods' for example, clean air and water, mitigation of climate change and protection of natural heritage. The government is also launching a Farming Investment Fund to support investment in technology and infrastructure to increase productivity in UK farms<sup>21</sup>.

**5.2.3** While a deal with the EU has been agreed, global trade remains an ever-evolving picture for the UK. New opportunities will arise for exporters and importers based in Carlisle as the UK agrees new trading relationships with other countries around the world.

## **5.3 Climate change and green growth**

**5.3.1** Climate change remains an ever-pressing issue, and the UK government has committed to making the UK a net-zero emissions economy by 2050.

**5.3.2** Carlisle City Council recognises the impacts of climate change locally. Climate change has caused more extreme weather more often, locally this has been felt with serious flooding events in Carlisle in recent years. In 2019 Carlisle City Council declared a climate change emergency, and there is a local as well as national drive to ensure we transition towards a green economy.

**5.3.3** The Climate Change Strategy<sup>22</sup> outlines how the Council aims to de-carbonise its own activities and services. The Strategy prioritises investment to support clean green growth and highlights the opportunity for climate change interventions to drive the growth of the local economy.

**5.3.4** The strategy sets out a number of objectives to reduce the carbon footprint for the whole of Carlisle and achieve a goal of net zero emissions by 2037. Therefore, it is important that the actions of the Economic Strategy are aligned to and support the achievement of this target.

---

<sup>21</sup> DEFRA, Farming is Changing (2020)

<sup>22</sup> Carlisle City Council, Climate Change Strategy, 2020

## 5.4 Aligning with other Local, regional, and national initiatives

**5.4.1** This Strategy sits within a framework for local growth formed through strategies of the City Council and its local and regional, and national partners. We recognise that we share challenges and opportunities with other areas nearby, and that through close partnership working we can maximise the benefits of our joint actions. This includes working with partners such as Cumbria County Council, our neighbouring local authorities, the Borderlands Partnership and Cumbria LEP.

**5.4.2** We will ensure that our strategy and activities continues to align closely with various local and regional initiatives and strategies, including:

- **Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal:** The £452m deal is the first rural deal to be developed, and the only deal to cross the Anglo-Scottish Border. It includes six core investment themes: Business, Digital, Energy, Place, Destination, and Rural Innovation.
- **Cumbria LEP Local Industrial Strategy<sup>23</sup>** sets strategic objectives that address Cumbria's key

challenges and opportunities: improving connectivity (physical and digital); investing in skills development; capitalising on productivity, innovation and enterprise potential; and inclusive economic growth.

- **Cumbria LEP Strategic Economic Plan<sup>24</sup>** outlines key issues across the County that create a barrier to growth: low productivity, low skills base within the labour force, an underperforming visitor economy and comparably poor digital connectivity.
- **Cumbria County Council Economic Strategy<sup>25</sup>** has a vision for Cumbria to be 'one of the fastest growing economies in the UK' by delivering innovative and sustainable projects that will secure a better quality of life for current and future generations.
- **Carlisle City Council's Local Plan (2015-30)** sets out a long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives to support the development of a thriving district.
- **Carlisle Town Investment Plan (2020-2030)** Establishes a vision for the City of Carlisle to be a "thriving centre for businesses, residents, education and culture" – consolidation of the city's position as the cultural, economic, population and employment centre of the Borderlands region.
- **Northern Powerhouse Strategy (2016)** sets out the Government's approach to "unleash the full economic potential of the North". It explains how Government

<sup>23</sup> Cumbria...the place to grow: Cumbria's Local Industrial Strategy (March 2019)

<sup>24</sup> The Four-Pronged Attack: Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-24

<sup>25</sup> Cumbria Economic Strategy 2009-2019: Cumbria County Council

will work with local stakeholders to address key barriers to productivity including: improving in transport and digital connectivity to raise skill levels and encourage business start-up and growth.

- **Cumbria Creative and Cultural Strategy and Carlisle Cultural Prospectus** set out the key role of

the creative and cultural industries in making Cumbria and Carlisle great places to live, work, study and do business.

DRAFT

## 6. Priorities and objectives

**6.1** One of key strategic priorities for economic development in the District is population and employment growth. However, in order to achieve this, there are five key preconditions or building blocks that must be in place for this to occur:

1. An **appealing housing offer** in terms of quality, mix and affordability
2. A good supply of **high-quality business space** that is flexible and adaptable
3. **Excellent connectivity** underpinned by fast, reliable and accessible digital and transport infrastructure
4. An **attractive built and natural environment** that contributes to quality of life and wellbeing.
5. A **vibrant city centre** that includes range of different uses and provides an experience to visitors

**6.2** In order to achieve these preconditions and increase our working age population, housing and employment growth must be delivered in a way that is clean, inclusive and sustainable. The City Council has declared a climate change emergency and therefore our approach to growth must reflect our obligations to support Carlisle in becoming a net-zero carbon District.

**6.3** Levelling up our communities is also a key strategic priority. There are inequalities across the District, in terms of pay, employment and education. Some communities have been 'left behind' and it is vital that the economic strategy creates opportunities and increases prosperity for all.

**6.4** This Strategy reinforces the commitment of the Council to deliver inclusive growth and ensure that our activities provide meaningful outcomes for all communities - from creating new jobs, delivering new homes, providing greater training opportunities, promoting health and wellbeing and improving the leisure and cultural offer.

**6.5** Additionally, a further key strategic priority is to respond the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and plan for the recovery and renewal of the local economy. There are opportunities that have arisen as a result of the pandemic that could accelerate development of the Carlisle economy, the most obvious being the positive environmental impacts brought about by the general reduction in travel and much greater prevalence of home working.

**6.6** Therefore, there are three key cross-cutting themes are presented as strategic priorities and form the 'golden threads' that are woven throughout the Strategy:

- Strategic Priority 1 – Driving the recovery from Covid-19
- Strategic Priority 2 – Levelling up our communities

- Strategic Priority 3 – Delivering clean, green growth

**6.7** Taking account of the three strategic priorities and drawing on the evidence of the needs and challenges of the District and also its strengths and opportunities, the following six priorities have been identified:

**6.8 Objective 1- Driving housing and population growth:**

**6.8.1** A strategy of driving housing and population growth will address the shift in the age distribution of the population and increase the working-age population in the District. This will support economic growth by creating an available and skilled labour force and reducing the number of people reliant on key services including health and social care.

**6.8.2** It is imperative that this growth is delivered in a way that is clean, inclusive and sustainable. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the climate change credentials of new developments and ensure that efforts to maximise energy efficiencies and reduce carbon footprints have been made.

**6.8.3** This strategy will enable Carlisle to continue to fulfil its important role as the city of the county and the wider Borderlands region.

**6.9 Objective 2 – Growing our target employment sectors and levelling up our skills base and productivity:**

This strategy involves targeting sectors that will not only grow our local economy but increase its reliance. Therefore, the focus must be on consolidating our strengths in areas such as advance manufacturing and logistics, but also growing smaller and formative sectors such as professional services and digital and creative.

It is clear that there are inequalities across our communities and therefore this strategy must address this by 'levelling up' and ensuring all our residents are able and encouraged to access training and learning opportunities. There is a need up upskill our local workforce and improve productivity to make Carlisle a more attractive place to invest and attract higher value sectors and employers.

**6.9.1** In addition to skills of the local workforce, is also vital that the right infrastructure, premises and workspaces are available to encourage and accommodate the growth of these target sectors. This means ensuring that there is a varied supply, particularly in strategic locations such as Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone and the city centre.

**6.10 Objective 3 - Increasing city centre vibrancy:**

**6.10.1** For the strategy of driving housing and population growth to succeed, Carlisle needs to be an attractive place to live, work and visit and the city centre plays a key role in that overall offer. A vibrant city centre that functions as a hub for cultural, leisure and economic activity is a prerequisite for a younger demographic and therefore, key to increasing the working age population.

**6.10.2** Carlisle City Centre is heavily reliant on its retail function and has comparatively small leisure and cultural sectors and a weak night time economy. The residential population is modest and there is been a trend of office-based businesses relocating to modern premises on the periphery of the city.

**6.10.3** The changes on the high street and contraction of the retail sector has highlighted the vulnerability of the City Centre and therefore a strategy of diversification must be pursued. Encouraging and where possible, facilitating leisure, cultural, employment and residential development must be a priority.

**6.10.4** Increasing the mix of uses in the city centre will generate different kinds of footfall through the day and into the evening and increase the perception of vibrancy. The shift from a retail centre to a multifunctional hub will enhance the overall experience of the city centre and reposition it as a visitor destination.

#### **6.11 Objective 4 - Enhancing digital and transport connectivity:**

**6.11.1** The strategy to enhance digital and transport connectivity is vital to our economic growth objectives, given that they are particularly essential to the employment sectors targeted for growth: manufacturing, logistics, professional services and digital and creative.

**6.11.2** The lack of good digital infrastructure and connectivity makes the area less attractive to potential investors. The COVID-19 crisis has also increased the strategic importance of digital infrastructure to allow effective remote working through access to digital applications, services and data.

**6.11.3** The lack of alternative sustainable / active transport mode choices means that car dependency in Carlisle is high, which at times causes significant congestion and also impacts on the health and wellbeing of our communities and the local environment.

**6.11.4** Carlisle needs to improve both transport and digital connectivity, ensuring its local communities are not left behind, and that we as a city achieve sustainable growth.

#### **6.12 Objective 5 - Supporting rural development and innovation:**



**6.12.1** Carlisle has a large rural hinterland, whose communities account for around 30% of the total population of the District. The agricultural sector is very important to the local economy and the strength of the associated supply chain further increases its significance.

**6.12.2** Brexit has increased the level of uncertainty in the agricultural sector and the wider rural economy, with the planned end of direct payment subsidies and traders currently facing extra costs with checks and additional paperwork for food exports.

**6.12.3** Whilst the Covid-19 has presented challenges to the rural economy, it has had resulted in increase demand for locally produced food. This trend is likely to endure and filter into industrial food manufacturing and therefore, there is an opportunity for local producers to increase production to supply this growing demand.

**6.12.4** A key priority is to improve productivity whilst supporting natural capital. In areas of high quality land can be turned over to more productive uses that are compatible with local natural capital. The growing market for energy, fibre, pharmaceutical and industrial crops is an opportunity. Poorer land that cannot show a margin could be taken out of arable production and planted to trees or wildlife habitat to enhance local natural capital. There are substantial opportunities, as companies are now seeking carbon or biodiversity offsetting.

## **6.13 Objective 6: Promoting Carlisle as a place to live, work and visit:**

**6.13.1** To realise our growth strategy and grow our target employment sectors and attract investment, we must raise the profile of Carlisle as a place to invest and do business in and to live, work and visit.

**6.13.2** This requires a multifaceted approach encompassing marketing and promotional activity, capitalising on our networks and activities with local, regional and national partners and working with government departments such as the Department for International Trade.

**6.13.3** From a promotional perspective, we can capitalise on our strategic location on the border of two nations, our position as the only city in the county and wider Borderlands region, our rich heritage and exceptional natural assets.

**6.13.4** We can also champion the planned investment in our District which cumulatively is over £200m and includes the government funded projects through the Borderlands Growth Deal, Housing Infrastructure Fund, Future High Street Fund and Town Deal. This instils confidence and make a persuasive case for Carlisle as a place for further investment.

## 7. Action Plan

<b>Objective 1: Driving housing and population growth:</b>	
<b>Key Actions</b>	
1	<b>Production a Local Plan for St Cuthbert's Garden Village</b> – Develop and adopt the Local Plan that will provide the planning framework to support the planned delivery of 10,000 new homes and over 9,000 jobs to the south of city
2	<b>Review of the Carlisle Local Plan</b> – undertake a review of the Local Plan, which was adopted in 2015, to ensure an adequate supply of deliverable housing and employment land.
3	<b>Remediation of the Caldew Riverside site</b> – Undertake detailed site investigation works and remediation of the site to enable the delivery a city centre living scheme to increase the city centre population to be progressed
4	<b>Development and delivery of the first phase of 'Start with the Park'</b> – Develop and deliver the project to improve cycling and walking connectivity to the Garden Village and the creation green infrastructure for the communities of Carlisle and future residents of the Garden Village

<b>Objective 2: Growing our target employment sectors and levelling up our skills base and productivity</b>	
<b>Key Actions</b>	
1	<b>Supporting the redevelopment of the Citadels site</b> – support the delivery of the scheme Deal to create a new campus for the University of Cumbria, to attract greater student numbers and boost the number of HE learners and graduates in Carlisle
2	<b>Supporting the delivery of a Business Innovation Hub in the City Centre</b> - support the delivery of the project to create a new business hub for the creative and digital sector, to support the growth of an emerging high value sector in the city to boost productivity
3	<b>Supporting the delivery of Digital and Community Learning Hub</b> - support the delivery of the project to create new learning hubs in the city centre and local centres, to improve digital access and skills.
4	<b>Facilitating the continued growth of Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone</b> – Continue to support Enterprise Zone to grow and develop key employment sectors such as manufacturing and logistics

<b>Objective 3: Increasing city centre vibrancy</b>	
<b>Key Actions</b>	
1	<b>Creation of a new events space at the Greenmarket</b> – Upgrading of the area and the installation of infrastructure to create a focal point for the hosting of events in the city centre
3	<b>Redevelopment of the Sands Centre</b> – Investment in Sand Centre to improve the offer and experience and enhance the cultural and leisure offer in the city
3	<b>Improvements to the Market Hall</b> – Investment in the Market Hall, to improve the offer and experience, support local businesses and enhance the cultural and leisure offer in the city
4	<b>Redevelopment of the Central Plaza site</b> – progress the redevelopment of the site to support the businesses on Victoria Viaduct and the regeneration of the wider Station Gateway area.

<b>Objective 4 - Enhancing digital and transport connectivity</b>	
<b>Key Actions</b>	
1	<b>Supporting the delivery of Carlisle Station Gateway project</b> – support delivery of the the scheme to upgrade the station, increase passenger usage and prepare it for HS2
2	<b>Supporting the delivery of the Southern Link Road and Gateway projects</b> - support delivery of the schemes to create a new connection to Junction 42 of the M6 and improve the highway network and streetscape within the city centre
4	<b>Supporting the production of a Carlisle Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan</b> – support production of a LCWIP that sets out a strategic approach to identifying improvements required in the City, to identify projects to improve the local cycling and walking networks.
5	<b>Supporting the development and delivery of the Borderlands Digital Programme</b> – Contribute to the development and delivery of a 4G mobile infrastructure in-fill programme to improve digital connectivity across the District.

<b>Objective 5: Supporting rural development and innovation</b>	
<b>Key Actions</b>	
1	<b>Produce a Place Plan for Longtown</b> - Working with local businesses and communities in Longtown to develop and produce develop a Place Plan, to access funding for capital regeneration projects from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
2	<b>Produce a Rural Strategy</b> – Develop and produce a rural strategy to identify new priorities and actions, to support the development of the rural economy and respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit.
3	<b>Secure investment in the western route of Hadrian’s Wall</b> -Working with the Hadrian Wall Partnership, develop and produce a strategy for investment in the section of the wall that runs through the Carlisle District, to access funding from the Borderlands Growth Deal to improve the experience and boost visitor numbers
4	<b>Support the development of Natural Capital Innovation Zone</b> - Contribute to the development of natural capital investment programme funded through the Borderlands Growth Deal, to develop trials and sector strategies to capture the benefits of the region’s natural capital.

<b>Objective 6: To raise the profile of Carlisle as a place to invest and do business in and to live, work and visit:</b>	
<b>Key Actions</b>	
1	<b>Produce an updated investment prospectus for Carlisle</b> - Develop and produce an investment prospectus that can be used to market Carlisle to national and international investors and developers.
2	<b>Capitalise on the opportunities presented by the England’s Originals consortia</b> – Develop and deliver the suite of augmented reality products to promote the District and grow domestic and international visitor numbers.
3	<b>Develop a marketing strategy for the City</b> – Explore new and innovative ideas to promote a strong and coherent image of Carlisle to a national and international audience.
4	<b>Support and strengthen the Carlisle Ambassadors network</b> - Continue to support the activities of the Ambassadors network and expand activity into business support and mentoring, to increase entrepreneurial activity and new business start-ups in the District.

**Table 1: Delivery Programme**

The below table outlines the delivery programme for our key activities above over the lifespan of this strategy (2026).

Objective	Action	Council Led	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
1	Production a Local Plan for St Cuthbert's Garden Village	Y					
1	Review of the Carlisle Local Plan	Y					
1	Remediation of the Caldew Riverside site	Y					
1	Development and delivery of the first phase of 'Start with the Park'	Y					
2	Supporting the redevelopment of the Citadels site	N					
2	Supporting the delivery of a Business Innovation Hub in the City Centre	N					
2	Supporting the delivery of Digital and Community Learning Hub	N					
2	Facilitating the growth of Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone	Y					
3	Creation of a new events space at the Greenmarket	Y					
3	Redevelopment of the Sands Centre	Y					
3	Improvements to the Market Hall	Y					
3	Redevelopment of the Central Plaza site	Y					
4	Supporting the delivery of Carlisle Station Gateway project	N					
4	Supporting the delivery of the Southern Link Road and Gateway projects	N					
4	Supporting the production of a Carlisle Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	N					
4	Supporting the development and delivery of the Borderlands Digital Programme	N					
5	Produce a Place Plan for Longtown	Y					

5	Produce a Rural Strategy	Y					
5	Secure investment in the western route of Hadrian's Wall	Y					
5	Support the development of Natural Capital Innovation Zone	N					
6	Produce an updated investment prospectus for Carlisle	Y					
6	Develop a marketing strategy for the City	Y					
6	Capitalise on the opportunities presented by the England's Originals consortia	Y					
6	Support and strengthen the Carlisle Ambassadors network	Y					

Project Development	
Project Delivery	

## 8. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

**8.1** Regular monitoring of our actions and the wider economic context of Carlisle is crucial to ensure that our growth agenda is delivered and any new issues and opportunities arising are identified and responded to. An annual monitoring report will be taken to Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel and Carlisle City Council Executive showing:

- Progress on delivery of the specific actions listed outlined in section 6, including analysis of outputs, outcomes and issues.
- Progress of the Carlisle's economic growth measured against the key indicators.

**8.2** This will also support reflection on which objectives Carlisle is delivering and where challenges still lie; supporting amends to activities, refocussing energies and ensuring the Strategy remains 'live' and flexible to respond to a changing context. This annual report will be supplemented by reports and updates to relevant committees and partners on a case-by-case basis for each activity as and when appropriate.

**8.3** In order to ensure we are delivering on our objectives we will undertake regular monitoring of our six objectives, measuring key indicators relating to each objective.

**8.4** The below table provides a monitoring toolkit for this strategy, these high-level measures will be used to track Carlisle against characteristics of good growth, and against the

**8.5** six objectives of this strategy. Where available the data for Carlisle will be benchmarked against the regional (Cumbria/Northwest averages) and National (England/UK averages) or against similar areas of the country, to put the data into appropriate context. The indicators selected are closely linked to our objectives, using sources that provide good quality data that is regularly available. Where useful, much of this data can be analysed by smaller geographical areas, for example the urban/rural geography, wards and LSOAs- which will be used to measure the delivery of inclusive growth.

**8.6** These indicators will be reviewed over time to ensure continued fit with our priorities and relevance to this strategy's aims.

**8.7** Due to the nature of the objectives and outputs that will be used to measure the success of these actions, as well as the timescales for each action, certain outputs will be measured with a different frequency than others.

**8.8** Some outputs will need to be monitored regularly throughout the life of this strategy, to ensure that key changes are identified. Whereas other outputs- namely those that experience a gradual rate of change, do not require regular monitoring as to do so would only highlight less meaningful changes. This framework will outline the key outputs measured, the data sets used and frequency of monitoring.

Table 2: Monitoring toolkit:

Objective	Indicator	What does this show?	Source(s)	Baseline Data	Frequency of monitoring/reporting	Target direction of travel
Driving housing and population growth	number new homes built (completions) per year	Is Carlisle delivering the resources for population growth?	Carlisle City Council records	663 (2019/20)	annually	Maintain
Driving housing and population growth	Total population by age cohort	Is Carlisle reversing its declining working age population?	ONS- Population estimates – Local Authority based by single year of age	Total population: 108,678 (0-15: 18%, 16-24: 9%, 25-49: 30%, 50-64: 20%, 65+: 30%) (2019)	bi-annually? By 2026 (review when 2021 census based LA estimates are released- March 2022)	maintain/increase working age population (16-64)
Grow our target employment sectors and level up our skills base and productivity	people employed in growth sectors as a percentage of all jobs in Carlisle (Creative, Digital and IT, manufacturing and logistics)	Is Carlisle growing/maintaining its key sectors	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey Employee jobs by industry	Information and Communication (J): 1.4%, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (R) 2.2%, Manufacturing (C): 10.3%, Transportation and Storage (H): 8.6%	by 2026	Increase J & R, Maintain C & H
Grow our target employment sectors and level up our skills base and productivity	Percentage of population qualified to NVQ4+	Is Carlisle growing its local skills base?	ONS Annual Population Survey: Qualifications	28% (2020)	Annually	Increase
Grow our target employment sectors and level up our skills base and productivity	Percentage of workers in managerial, professional and technical occupations (SOC 1-3)	Is Carlisle's proportion of high skilled workforce growing?	ONS Annual Population Survey: Employment by Occupation	37.5% (2020)	Annually	Increase
Grow our target employment sectors and level up our skills base and productivity	Median annual resident salary	Are earnings for average workers growing in real terms?	ONS: ASHE	£20,929 (2019)	Annually	Increase
Grow our target employment sectors and level up our skills base and productivity	GVA	Is Carlisle increasing output and closing the productivity gap with other areas of the U.K.?	GVA- ONS Regional GVA(I) by local authority in the UK	2.7bn (2017)		Increase
Increasing city centre vibrancy	City Centre vacancy rate	Is Carlisle maintaining city centre viability and supporting diversification where necessary?	City Centre Health Check	13% (2019)	Annually	Maintain
Increasing city centre vibrancy	Percentage of evening economy businesses	Is Carlisle growing its city centre evening economy?	City Centre Health Check	8% (2019)	Annually	Maintain/increase
Increasing city centre vibrancy	Footfall Counting	Is Carlisle city centre sustaining footfall despite the challenges to retail, maintaining its position as a regional hub?	City centre health check (springboard?)	N/A	Annually (monthly?)	Maintain
Enhancing Digital and Transport connectivity	Air Quality Monitoring: NO2 annual mean Ivl of Exceedance in AQMAs	Is air quality improving in AQMAs? (indicating an improvement in transport connectivity)	Air Quality Annual Status Report- Carlisle City Council	34.9-42.7 (2019)	Annually	Decrease
Enhancing Digital and Transport connectivity	KM of cycling and walking paths created/improved by end of strategy	Are active travel routes and options improving in Carlisle?	Cumbria County Council/Carlisle City Council	N/A	by 2026	Increase
Enhancing Digital and Transport connectivity	Access to superfast broadband	Is digital connectivity improving across Carlisle?	Ofcom: connected nations update	46.20%	Annually	Increase
Supporting Rural Development and Innovation	GVA - Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	is production in rural based industries being maintained?	ONS: Regional GVA (I) by local authority in the UK	£72 million	Annually	Maintain
Promoting Carlisle as place to live, work and visit	Number of Carlisle Ambassador Members	Is the Carlisle Ambassador network growing, increasing partnerships across the city?	Carlisle Ambassadors	307	Annually	Maintain
Promoting Carlisle as place to live, work and visit	Number of visitors to Carlisle per year	Is Carlisle improving its visitor offer and growing visitor numbers to the district?	STEAM	9.04 Million (2019)*	Annually	Increase
Inclusive growth measures	Economic Activity rate	Is Carlisle maintainng its high economic activity rate?	ONS Annual Population Survey: Economic Activity	83% (2020)	Annually	Maintain
Inclusive growth measures	Gender Pay Gap	Is the gender pay gap reducing in Carlisle?	ONS: Annual Gender Pay Gap Estimates (home geography)- Based on ASHE	16.10%	Annually	Decrease
Inclusive growth measures	number of affordable new homes built	Is Carlisle delivering enough affordable homes to ensure housing is available for all income groups?	Carlisle City Council records	151 (2019/20)	Annually	Maintain



**8.9** At the end of the strategy's timeframe in 2026, a Monitoring and Evaluation report will be produced, using the above indicators (incorporating any amends to the above toolkit) as well as project specific evaluations under each activity listed in section 6.

**8.10** The Monitoring and Evaluation report will identify where objectives have been met, where challenges still lie, and support the production of an Economic Evidence Base report which will include recommendations for a new Economic Strategy, based on the challenges and opportunities facing Carlisle in 2026, as well as an opportunity to reflect on 'lessons learned' from 2021-2026 to ensure the Council and its partner's activities continue to respond to the ever changing economic challenges and opportunities in an optimised manner.



Meeting Date: 29 July 2021  
Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise & Housing  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: No  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Carlisle City Centre Taskforce and Grants programme  
Report of: Corporate Director of Economic Development  
Report Number: ED27/21

**Purpose / Summary:**

This report provides an overview of the proposals for a new city centre taskforce, made up of key stakeholders in the city centre, and the new City Centre Business Growth Grants, aimed at building new networks in the city, and providing new businesses with meaningful support, to encourage greater vitality and viability in the city centre, and ensure resilience following the COVID 19 pandemic.

**Recommendations:**

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny is asked to:
- i) Note the progress and updates relating to the City Centre Taskforce, and Business Grants which aim to strengthen city centre resilience.
  - ii) Provide feedback on the proposals for the establishment of a City Centre Taskforce.

**Tracking**

Executive:	<b>12 October 2020 (City Centre Growth grants) 31 August (City Centre Taskforce)</b>
Scrutiny:	<b>29 July 2021</b>
Council:	

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the continuing strain on high streets across the UK was evident. Changing consumer habits, particularly fuelled by the rise of online shopping and out of town retail centres, have caused retail to contract in high streets and city centres. Due to the city's role as a service centre for around 500,000, the city has fared comparably well against similar cities in the UK. The vacancy rate has remained steady, and close to the national average of 12% between 2012-2019. However, the city has clearly faced challenges prior to this, for example the loss of the key anchor site in the historic quarter, Hoopers Department store in 2012, which has negatively impacted the viability of retail in this area. Carlisle City Centre has remained retail dominant- however the changes the high street faces means that the city needs to diversify towards greater experiential offer for visitors and shoppers, and offer a range of uses beyond shopping- including residential, office and hospitality.
- 2.2 The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges- and the closure of key retailers in Carlisle, including Topshop and Debenhams further exemplify the need for the city centre to adapt and change to the new role of high streets.
- 2.3 Carlisle City Council and its partners are in the process of securing over £100 million in funding for Carlisle City Centre. This transformational funding will be used to support the city's regeneration and allow Carlisle to grow and succeed in a new era for centres and high streets.
- 2.4 In 2020 the Carlisle's Town Deal Board was created to oversee plans for investment in Carlisle through the government's Towns Fund. This board is made up of key private and public sector organisations across the city- its remit covers the entirety of Carlisle's urban area. The Town Deal Board has overseen the creation of Carlisle's Town Investment Plan- submitted to government in October 2020 and is an example of successful collaboration working taking place to drive forward Carlisle's growth.
- 2.5 Alongside these activities, The Council is also looking to develop greater city-centre networks, and a package of business support for city centre businesses, to ensure greater city centre resilience going forward. Two proposals have been developed under this aim:
- **The City Centre Taskforce:** The formation of a focussed collaboration, made up of key city centre- based organisations to identify the challenges and opportunities the city centre faces, and ensure local leadership for the city centre as it moves towards economic recovery following the impacts of COVID-19, and the delivery of significant city centre investment.
  - **City Centre Business Growth Grants:** A new capital grants programme, to support new, start-up and growing SME businesses looking to occupy vacant

space in the city centre with funding for capital works (ie renovations of purchasing essential equipment for their businesses.

- 2.6 These activities will aim to support greater collaboration working in the city centre, generating new ideas and gaining different perspectives on city centre economic issues, while providing cash grants to businesses to ensure the city centre can recover and diversify.
- 2.7 Unlike many centres, Carlisle has does not have a Business Improvement District which has meant there is a gap in collaboration working for the city centre. The proposed task force would ensure that an effective collaboration body for the city centre exists, this would also further support the plans and funds for the city centre coming forward- creating a strong forum for engagement across a range of projects.

### **3. The City Centre Taskforce**

#### **3.1 Remit**

- 3.1.1 The role of the Taskforce is solely to act as an engagement group, providing feedback to Carlisle City Council on city centre regeneration activities. It will not have any formal decision-making status or financial implications for the Council, other than the costs of hosting the meetings.
- 3.1.2 The task force shall provide feedback to the Carlisle City Council on such matters including but not limited to:
- a) The development of the regeneration projects in Carlisle City Centre, including Borderlands, Future High Street Fund and Town Deal projects.
  - b) Highlight city centre specific issues that will be reported to the Council
  - c) Identify further/future opportunities for Carlisle's growth and development
  - d) Support the City Council in formulating new strategies and plans for the city centre and seeking additional funding

#### **3.2 Composition**

- 3.2.1 Taskforce members will be nominated by the Council and include individuals from key city centre businesses and organisations. The membership would aim to reflect the key sectors based in the city centre for example, including organisations from:
- Retail and hospitality sectors
  - Property and landlord sectors
  - Professional service sectors
  - Community and public sectors

- 3.2.2 The Taskforce shall meet as and when required- aiming to provide flexibility to changing demands and timescales of key projects, with an expected number of around 4-6 meetings taking place every year (with options to meet virtually, using teleconferencing facilities in place). 2 hours will be scheduled for each meeting.
- 3.2.3 The Taskforce will be chaired by Carlisle City Council's Portfolio Holder of Economy, Enterprise and Housing.
- 3.2.4 Support and administrative arrangements will be provided by the Council.
- 3.2.5 A full Terms of Reference is available below (Annex A)

### **3.3 Progress on establishing group**

- 3.3.1 The Council is currently identifying potential members to be invited to join the taskforce, aiming to ensure that a broad representative membership is achieved, drawing on the range of sectors as above.
- 3.3.2 Following feedback from Scrutiny, the proposal for a City Centre Taskforce will be taken to Executive for consideration.
- 3.3.3 We are aiming to hold the inaugural of the Taskforce meeting by September 2021.

## **4. City Centre Growth Grants**

- 4.1 In order to support businesses, Carlisle City Council has allocated grants to existing businesses under the government's COVID-19 business grant schemes. Since March 2020, over £50 million has been awarded to businesses across Carlisle, and these grants have been vitally important in keeping businesses afloat during unprecedented times.
- 4.2 However, we recognise that in order to support Carlisle and its city centre through the recovery phase, businesses and organisations need the confidence to invest in the city centre again.
- 4.3 In order to support investment, Carlisle City Council is offering small City Centre Business Growth Grants to businesses looking to occupy vacant space in the city centre. This fund will support our city centre through these challenging times; reducing vacancy rates and encouraging investment and growth.
- 4.4 Approval for the City Centre Business Growth was given by Executive in October 2020, however the administration was delayed as the restrictions in November 2020

resulted in additional government business support schemes which colleagues have been focused on delivering.

- 4.5 The Councils 2021/2022 has allocated £35,000 for the provision of the City Centre Growth Grants programme.
- 4.6 Now that restrictions are easing, it is proposed that this scheme is launched in tandem with the new taskforce, as key 'recovery' actions for the city centre.
- 4.7 The policy for this grant fund is appended to this report (Appendix B), however below provides an overview of how this funding will be delivered.
- 4.7.1 The Carlisle City Centre Business Support Grant will be a grant of up to £2,500 (£5,000 for particularly strong cases) for businesses occupying vacant space in Carlisle City Centre (shown in attached map). The award of the grant is subject to an appraisal process. This is a discretionary grant, and the decision to award a grant is entirely at the Council's discretion. The following outlines the criteria which will inform how the Council will make its decision
- 4.7.2 **Criteria for businesses-** in order to qualify for this grant, businesses must fall into **one** of the following categories:
- A new start-up beginning trading in Carlisle City Centre
  - An SME/microbusiness re-locating to Carlisle city centre from outside the district or opening a new branch in Carlisle.
  - Existing SME/Microbusiness currently trading in Carlisle City Centre, demonstrating growth, expanding to a larger premise.
- 4.7.3 **Criteria for the premise-** In order to qualify for this grant, businesses must demonstrate that the property they are looking to trade from meets **all** of the following criteria:
- Must be vacant or have vacant ground floor space in it which the applicant business will occupy. This includes businesses who have begun renovating a vacant space but have not started trading.
  - Must be held by the applicant by a minimum of a 2-year lease.
  - Must be brought into use by the applicant business.
  - Must be in the area of Carlisle City Centre.
- 4.7.4 **The grant may be used for capital expenditure relating to:**
- Physical improvements to the premise, including improvements to the frontage of the building and signage- subject to the relevant planning permission being secured.

- The provision/purchase of equipment essential for the operation of the business. This includes equipment to ensure businesses can operate in a COVID-compliant manner.

## **5. Recommendations**

5.1 Overview and Scrutiny is asked to:

- i) Note the progress and updates relating to the City Centre Taskforce, and Business Grants which aim to strengthen city centre resilience.
- ii) Provide feedback on the proposals for the establishment of a City Centre Taskforce.

## **6. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan priorities**

6.1 These activities will contribute to the following Carlisle Plan Priorities

- P1: Supporting business growth and skills development to improve opportunities and economic prospects for the people of Carlisle.
- P3: Improving the quality of our local environment and green spaces so that everyone can enjoy living, working and visiting Carlisle.

**Contact Officer:** Jenson Kemp

**Ext:** 7074

**Appendices** Appendix A: City Centre Taskforce Terms of Reference  
**attached to report:** Appendix B: City Centre Growth Grants Policy

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- None

### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL** – There are no legal implications arising from this Report.

**PROPERTY SERVICES** – No property comments



**FINANCE** – Executive approved at its meeting of 12 October (report ED37/20) a scheme for City Centre Growth Grants and allocated a budget of £35,000. This budget was requested to be carried forward as part of the revenue outturn for 2020/21 and was approved by Council on 20 July. Report ED37/20 also approved that authorisation of payments under the scheme be delegated to the Corporate Director of Economic Development and the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Economy, Enterprise and Housing.

The formation of a City Centre Taskforce would need to comply with the Council's Partnership Policy and approval of the Executive required following consideration by them of the roles, responsibilities and risks associated with the Taskforce. It would also need to be recorded and monitored through the Partnership register.

**EQUALITY** – The Terms of Reference for the Taskforce state:

*'The Taskforce is fully committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work and will adhere to the Council's Equality Policy. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out, as appropriate, when developing plans, policies and projects.'*

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE** – There are no information governance implications with this report

## **Carlisle City Centre Taskforce**

### **Draft Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Purpose**

The Carlisle City Centre Taskforce is a collaboration established to identify issues, and explore opportunities to support the growth of Carlisle City Centre, as well as support the City Council by sharing views on the emerging regeneration projects for Carlisle, as the city moves towards recovery from the impacts of Coronavirus pandemic.

#### **2. Status**

The City Centre Taskforce will act in as an engagement group to provide feedback on city centre issues and activities to Carlisle City Council (hereafter the Council).

#### **3. Membership**

The membership of the Taskforce aims to reflect the range of organisations based in the city centre, and includes representatives from key sectors, including retail; property; cultural/community organisations and professional services as well as the public sector.

The taskforce will be chaired by Cllr Paul Nedved, Portfolio Holder of Economy, Enterprise, and Housing of Carlisle City Council.

Membership may be changed at any time. Membership will be managed by the Council.

#### **4. Remit**

The Taskforce will operate as a stakeholder engagement group, providing feedback to the Council on such matters including but not limited to:

- a) The development of the regeneration projects in Carlisle City Centre, including Borderlands, Future High Street Fund and Town Deal projects.
- b) Highlight city centre specific issues that will be reported to the Council
- c) Identify further/future opportunities for Carlisle's growth and development
- d) Support the City Council in formulating new strategies and plans for the city centre and seeking additional funding

#### **5. Meetings**

The Taskforce shall meet as and when required- aiming to provide flexibility to changing demands and timescales of key projects, with an expected number of around 4-6 meetings taking place every year (with options to meet virtually, using teleconferencing facilities in place). 2 hours will be scheduled for each meeting.

In consultation with the Chair, members of the taskforce may nominate substitutes if they are not able to attend a meeting, taskforce members may invite colleagues to Board meetings to observe and provide technical support, as required.

All agendas, minutes, and supporting documentation will be circulated, electronically, to taskforce members five days before a meeting.

The quorum for any meeting of the Taskforce shall be **25%** of its membership, including the Chair.

## **6. Secretariat**

Support and administrative arrangements will be provided by the Council.

## **7. Code of conduct and conflicts of interest**

Each Taskforce Member is under an obligation to act in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct, i.e. in performing their duties, they must act with integrity, honesty, impartiality, objectivity and within the law.

Conflicts of interest may arise where an individual's personal, family, business or organisations interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the group or meeting that taskforce members are attending. All Members will declare interests as set out in the Lead Council's Code of Conduct.

## **8. Complaints**

Complaints received from stakeholders and members of the public will be considered and responded to in line with the Council's Complaints and Feedback Policy.

## **9. Data Protection**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) policy and procedure of the Council will be applied in all cases.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

The Taskforce is fully committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work and will adhere to the Council's Equality Policy. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out, as appropriate, when developing plans, policies and projects.

## **11. Freedom of Information (FOI)**

All Freedom of Information request will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's policy and procedure.

## **12. Amendments**

Any of these procedures and terms of reference may be altered or amended from time to time by resolution of the Taskforce. Notice shall be given of the proposed alteration(s) in a paper for the meeting of the Taskforce at which they are to be discussed.

# Carlisle City Council

## City Centre Business Growth Grant - Policy



### Introduction

- 1.1** Carlisle's city centre is a crucial service centre for the Borderlands area, with a retail catchment of over 500,000. In light of the Coronavirus pandemic, and the restrictions placed by government to protect our health and key services, the severe impact to the global economy is widely recognised. High Streets have clearly been affected by this across the country, and businesses and retail centre managers have to adapt to unprecedented changes to retail.
- 1.2** In order to support businesses, Carlisle City Council has allocated grants to existing businesses under the government's Small Business Grant, Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant and Local Authority Discretionary Grant schemes. around £28 million has been awarded to businesses across Carlisle, and these grants have been vitally important in keeping businesses afloat during unprecedented times.
- 1.3** However we recognise that in order to support Carlisle and its city centre through the recovery phase, businesses and organisations need the confidence to invest in the city centre again. In order to support investment, Carlisle City Council is offering small City Centre Business Growth Grants to businesses looking to occupy vacant space in the city centre. This fund will support our city centre through these challenging times; reducing vacancy rates and encouraging investment and growth.
- 1.4** This is a pilot scheme for the year 2020/2021 There is a fixed budget of £35,000 for this fund for the financial year 2020/2021, once this money has been allocated the grant programme will end and we will not be able to approve further grants under this scheme.

### Eligibility

- 2.1** The Carlisle City Centre Business Support Grant is a grant of up to £2,500 (£5,000 for particularly strong cases) for businesses occupying vacant space in Carlisle City Centre (shown in attached map). The award of the grant is subject to an appraisal process. This is a discretionary grant, and the decision to award a grant is entirely at the Council's discretion. The following outlines the criteria which will inform how the Council will make its decision.
- 2.2** Businesses must demonstrate the business is viable and contributes to the vitality of the high street.
- 2.3** This grant is available to tenants looking to occupy space, not for landlords looking to redevelop space they own to lease. If the property owner is looking to redevelop space that they own to trade themselves, then they would be eligible.

- 2.4** Any financial arrears to Carlisle City Council will be taken into account, as will as any previous financial assistance provided by the Council to the business or linked businesses.
- 2.5 Criteria for businesses** - in order to qualify for this grant, businesses must fall into **one** of the following categories:
- A new start-up beginning trading in Carlisle City Centre.
  - An SME/microbusiness re-locating to Carlisle city centre from outside the district or opening a new branch in Carlisle.
  - Existing SME/Microbusiness currently trading in Carlisle City Centre, demonstrating growth, expanding to a larger premise.
- 2.6 Criteria for the premise** - In order to qualify for this grant, businesses must demonstrate that the property they are looking to trade form meets all of the following criteria:
- Must be vacant or have vacant ground floor space in it which the applicant business will occupy. This includes businesses who have begun renovating a vacant space but have not started trading.
  - Must be held by the applicant by a minimum of a two-year lease.
  - Must be brought into use by the applicant business.
  - Must be in the area of Carlisle City Centre.
- 2.7 The grant may be used for capital expenditure relating to:**
- Physical improvements to the premise, including improvements to the frontage of the building and signage- subject to the relevant planning permission being secured.
  - The provision/purchase of equipment essential for the operation of the business.  
This includes equipment to ensure businesses can operate in a COVID-compliant manner.
- 2.8** We require the use of the funds to be fully transparent and traceable in order to award a grant. Therefore, all works funded by the grant must be undertaken by a professional company, with quotes of works provided alongside the application to evidence the use of the fund. We require the applicant to provide at least 3 costs of works with their application, to ensure value for money.
- 2.9** An assessment of the financial viability of the business will be made. If the Council deems the business or project to be unviable, a grant will not be awarded. To do this, we ask that applicants provide us with an overview of the business proposal and evidence that the business will be sustainable, for example by submitting a business plan and 12-month cashflow forecast.
- 2.10** The type of business, and how this will contribute to diversifying the mix of businesses in the city centre will be considered when making our assessments. We will not award grants to businesses under A5 use class (takeaways) or certain other uses, including betting shops and adult shops. We will prioritise the uses that support the maintenance of active frontages and face to face business-customer interactions.
- 2.11** The scale of the project will determine the level of grant awarded. Large scale projects will receive a higher level of grant then smaller scale projects.

- 2.12** This grant is an in-kind contribution to investment, and not a full subsidy for businesses. Businesses will be expected to contribute to the project funded by the grant themselves. A percentage of financial contribution the applicant will make to the overall cost of moving into the property will be assessed. We expect the applicant to cover at least **70% of the costs** of works through their own revenue for the project they are seeking grant funding for, with up to **30% provided by the grant**.

## Application process

- 3.1** A printable application form will be made available on the Carlisle City Council's Website. Please ensure your application is returned answered fully with **all the relevant documents attached** (Please see APPENDIX 1). Please return your application to **regeneration@carlisle.gov.uk** or by post to City Centre Business Growth Grant Team, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG.
- 3.2** Following submission of a complete application form, with **all the relevant documents attached**, we will aim to review and process, and notify you of a decision within 21 days of submission. For more complicated applications this may take longer, and we may require further information in order to award a grant with confidence. In such circumstances prompt and fully co-operative responses from applicants will help the process move as quickly as possible.
- 3.3** This is a limited fund allocated on a first come first served basis once the allocated budget has been committed, no further grants will be awarded. There may be some circumstances where applicants have a strong project, with clear tangible benefits for the city centre that the Council wishes to support but may not be able to commit to at the first instance. For example, the project requiring funding may be at too early stage for us to confidently support. In such circumstances the City Council may be able to reserve some funding aside for such an application, to award a grant at a later stage. This is by no means guaranteed and it remains the Council's discretion on how it awards the grants- guided in principle by awarding grants on a first come first served basis.
- 3.4** It will be important that you provide all the information accurately and truthfully and provide all the supporting documents that are requested. We will be unable to consider incomplete applications; this includes applications where the full supporting documents required are not submitted.
- 3.5** You must answer all of the questions honestly when completing your application, if the Council suspects any business is trying to fraudulently claim the grant, it will investigate accordingly.

## Appeals Process

- 4.1** There is no right to appeal, and the decision of the Council is final, however the Council will work with businesses who believe the wrong decision has been made due to missing information.
- 4.2** The Council's interpretation of this document is at its own discretion and it will be the final arbiter of the definitions contained within this policy.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- 5.1** It is vitally important that we undertake monitoring and evaluation of this use of public funds. Moreover, as this is a pilot scheme, the council will use the evaluation when determining whether to launch the fund in future years or consider alternative/revised interventions.
- 5.2** By making an application, organisations consent to take part in an evaluation process. This will include at least one follow-up with the businesses which received a grant under this fund, to verify how the fund was used and the benefits that the fund helped the business realise.
- 5.3** Alongside this, the Council undertakes a yearly city centre health check, as part of the health check for the year 2021, the impact of the grant fund will be monitored. As part of this, the Council will consider how many vacant premises have been occupied with help from this fund.

## Definitions

- 6.1** SME/Microbusiness - a business with less than 250 employees, and a turnover of less than £50 million.
- 6.2** City Centre- Please see APPENDIX 2 for the boundary for the area of the Carlisle City Centre Business Growth Grants.

## Tax

- 7.1** Grant income received by a business is taxable therefore funding paid under the City Centre Business Grants Fund will be subject to tax. Only businesses which make an overall profit once grant income is included will be subject to tax.

## State Aid

- 8.1** The United Kingdom left the EU on 31 January 2020, nonetheless under the Withdrawal Agreement the State aid rules continue to apply during a transition period, subject to regulation by the EU Commission. The local authority must be satisfied that all State aid requirements have been fully met and complied with when making grant payments, including, where required, compliance with all relevant conditions of the EU State aid De-Minimis Regulation, the EU Commission Temporary Framework for State aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak, the approved COVID-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities, and any relevant reporting requirements to the EU Commission.
- 8.2** The Council will require each business to confirm that by accepting the grant payment, the business confirms that they are eligible for the grant scheme, including that any payments accepted will be in compliance with State aid requirements.



## **Data protection**

- 9.1** We will use your information to assess your application for financial support. We will confirm information about you and your account from credit referencing agencies to confirm account validity and your identity. If you provide false or inaccurate information, we will record this. All personal information will be processed in accordance with the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation. For full information on how any personal information we gather will be processed, please visit our privacy statement at <https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/Privacy-Statement/regeneration-services-privacy-statement>

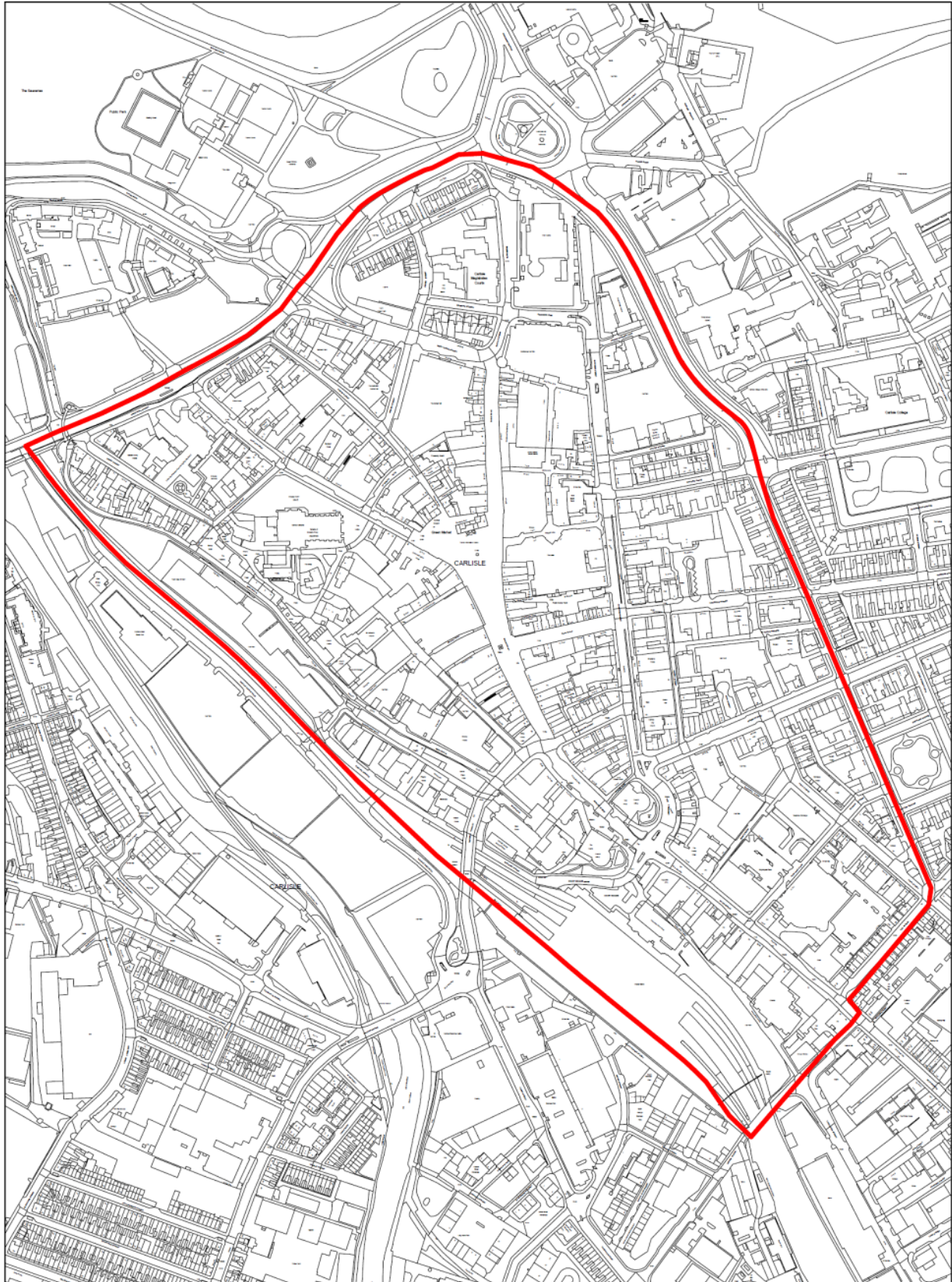
## **Right to update our policy**

- 10.1** The council reserves the right to update or change this policy without notification or prior warning in the event that the government updates or changes its guidance to us or in the event of an error or omission.

## Appendix 1- evidence needed to support an application

Information	Evidence Required	Comment
Payment details	Copy of bank statement clearly showing name, address, sort code and account number	This must match the name of the business or individual listed on the business rates bill or lease/mortgage agreement
Evidence of your right to occupy the premise you are applying from	You will need to provide a copy of your current lease agreement or title deeds/ mortgage statement if you own the property	
Evidence you are an SME or micro business	This will be done on self-declaration	
Evidence that your business/ project is viable	Please submit a 12-month cashflow forecast and business plan, if available	We recognise that businesses may not have all the required information, however we do require some evidence that shows your business/project is viable before we can realise public funds. If you do not have the relevant documents, please return a similar document that is relevant
Evidence of how you will use the money	Please submit quotes of works from a professional company at a minimum for work that will be undertaken with support from the grant fund. We require a minimum of three quotes per project	We need clear evidence that the fund will be used properly and in line with the guidance provided above. If there is any doubt around how the fund will be used, a grant will not be awarded
Evidence of eligibility under state aid rules	This will be done by way of self-declaration on the application form	If you are unsure whether state aid applies to your business you need to seek independent legal advice

## Appendix 2 - city centre boundary



© Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey LA0100024459



# Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Item  
A.6

Meeting Date: 29 July 2021  
Portfolio: Cross-cutting  
Key Decision: No  
Within Policy and  
Budget Framework  
Private/Public Public

Title: Overview Report  
Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer  
Report Number: OS.20/21

## Purpose / Summary:

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Scrutiny Panel's work. It also includes the latest version of the work programme.

## Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Note the items within Panel remit on the most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions
- Note the current work programme

## Tracking

Executive:	Not applicable
Scrutiny:	EGSP 29/07/21
Council:	Not applicable

## 1. Notice of Key Decisions

**1.1** At the time of writing this Overview Report, the most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 02 July 2021. This was circulated to all Members. The following items fall within the remit of this Panel:

*Items which are included in the Panel's Work Programme:*

- KD 15/21 Carlisle Plan 2021 - 2023
- KD 10/21 Budget Process 2022/23 – 2026/27

*Items which are not included in the Panel's Work Programme:*

- KD 18/21 Use of Affordable Housing Commuted Sum finding to bring empty properties back into use in collaboration with Brampton Rural Housing Society

## 2. References from Executive

2.1 None

## 3. Progress on resolutions from previous meetings

**3.1** The following table sets out the meeting date and resolution that require following up. The status is presented as either “completed”, “pending” (date expected), or “outstanding”. An item is considered outstanding if no update or progress has been made after three panel meetings. All the completed actions will be removed from the list following the meeting.

	Meeting date	Minute ref	Action	Status
1	12/04/21	EGSP 28/21	(3) That the Panel wished to have sight of the revised draft Carlisle Plan at a future meeting.	Complete
2	17/06/21	EGSP 37/21	3) That the Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan be circulated to Panel Members when it became available.	Pending
3	17/06/21	EGSP 37/21	4) That the Policy and Communications Manager provide detailed information regarding the impact that major projects within the City had on climate change and potential growth.	Complete
4	17/06/21	EGSP 37/21	5) That the Business and Transformation Scrutiny be asked to consider establishing a Task and Finish Group to review the Agile Working Policy.	Pending

#### **4. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES**

**4.1** The overview and scrutiny of the Carlisle Plan items that match the panel remit contribute to ongoing policy development.

**Contact Officer: Rowan Jones**

**Ext:** rowan.jones@carlisle.gov.uk

**Appendices**

**1. Draft Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2021-22**

**attached to report:**

**Note:** in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL -**

**FINANCE –**

**EQUALITY –** This report raises no explicit issues relating to the public sector Equality Duty.

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE –**

## APPENDIX 1: Draft Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2021-22

Meeting Date	Title	Type of Scrutiny	Lead Officer
17/06/21	End of Year Performance Report	Monitoring	Gary Oliver
	Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy	Policy development	Steven O'Keeffe
29/07/21	Draft Carlisle Plan	Policy development	Steven O'Keeffe
	Events - planned events and how they can support city centre vitality	Policy update	Paul Walker/ Zoe Sutton
	Draft Economic Strategy and Action Plan	Monitoring	Steve Robinson
	High Street Task Force - quick wins for the City Centre	Policy development	Jane Meek
09/09/21	Covid-19 Recovery Update - focus on Economic Growth	Policy update	Jane Meek
	Economic Development Programme Management Office	Policy update	Jane Meek
	Performance Report - Q1	Monitoring	Gary Oliver
21/10/21	Delivering SCGV - ensuring the right resources and skills in Carlisle	Policy development	Jane Meek
	Making best use of existing housing stock (private sector housing)	Policy update	Jeremy Hewitson
	Tourism - delivering this strand of the Economic Strategy	Policy development	Jane Meek
02/12/21	Performance Report - Q2	Monitoring	Gary Oliver
	Budget	Budget	Alison Taylor
	Infrastructure for connectivity	Policy development	Jane Meek
20/01/22	High Street Task Force - quick wins for the City Centre update	Policy development	Jane Meek
	Diversifying the City Centre	Policy development	Jane Meek
	Kingmoor Park Update	Partnership	Steve Robinson
03/03/22	Performance Report - Q3	Monitoring	Gary Oliver
	LEP - Partner Update	Partnership	Jane Meek
	Economic Development Programme Management Office	Policy update	Jane Meek
14/04/22	Scrutiny Annual Report	Policy development	Rowan Jones
	Riverside - regeneration of existing stock	Partnership	Jeremy Hewitson
	Economic Strategy Action Plan - performance monitoring	Monitoring	Steve Robinson
For info report	Flood Risk Management		Environment Agency/ Steven O'Keeffe