

## DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	PLANNING COMMITTEE	16 SEPTEMBER 2020	4
<b>TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP UPDATE AND PROPOSALS TO SUPPORT THE REGENERATION OF ST ANNES TOWN CENTRE</b>			

### PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### SUMMARY

On 11 March 2020, Planning Committee resolved to create a Town Centres Working Group. The membership of the group was specifically established to include a cross section of members from various committees with an interest in the Borough's three town centres.

With the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, the working group was initially tasked with considering several interventions to assist in the safe reopening of the high street. As customers and business owners have become accustomed to the new way of life that the continuing situation require to be observed, the working group has been able to consider a number of longer term projects that will benefit the three town centres and assist in maintaining and improving their economic prosperity.

Members have previously made a commitment to the regeneration and revitalisation of St Annes town centre, with this being a priority for the Council's Funding Volatility Reserve. The report requests the committee to confirm those projects that members wish to proceed with.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is recommended to:

1. Note the work of the Town Centres Working Group in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.
2. Note the submission of the bid for Future High Street Funding for Kirkham Town Centre in line with the details presented to Planning Committee on 3 June 2020.
3. Authorise officers to work with the Town Centres Working Group, in consultation with ward members and other key stakeholders, to develop proposals for Lytham Town Centre identified as part of the council's capital programme.
4. Recommend that the Finance & Democracy Committee approve a revenue funded budget increase for 2020/21 in the sum of £150,000, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, to provide for the commissioning of a vision/strategy for St Annes Town Centre, such vision to include a town centre health check and be informed by the survey results and working group proposals for St Annes.
5. Consider the projects for St Annes that have been identified by the Town Centres Working Group and prioritise those schemes that they wish officers to develop for further consideration and approval by committee.

## SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

### Council 5 March 2020

Resolved that the regeneration of St Annes town centre will be a priority commitment of the Council, with the first call on the Funding Volatility Reserve to be in support of this initiative;

### Planning Committee - 11 March 2020

Resolved to establish a Town Centres Working Group comprising a core group of 7 councillors namely: Councillors Richard Redcliffe, Liz Oades, David O'Rourke, Stan Trudgill, Michael Sayward, Roger Small and Michael Withers with Minutes - Planning Committee – 11 March 2020 Councillors Cheryl Little and Viv Willder being co-opted as and when appropriate to consider matters relating to St Annes Town Centre.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services ( <b>Value for Money</b> )	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council ( <b>Clean and Green</b> )	✓
Working with all partners ( <b>Vibrant Economy</b> )	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live ( <b>A Great Place to Live</b> )	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit ( <b>A Great Place to Visit</b> )	✓

## REPORT

1. The Planning Committee resolved to establish a Town Centres Working Group on 11 March 2020 with the following terms of reference:

### **Purpose**

To be an advisory working group to the Planning Committee in respect of town centre development, to enable research and discussion on town centre strategy and management issues and to coordinate, support and develop initiatives to reinvigorate and strengthen the three town centres of Fylde borough.

### **Objectives**

- To improve the prosperity and enhance the well being of Kirkham, Lytham and St Annes Town centres, being the three identified town centres of the borough.
- To engage and work with key stakeholders, including retailers, local businesses, other public sector and transportation bodies and community representatives to create a viable and sustainable town centre economy.
- To develop and deliver the town centre action plans as set out in the Fylde Economic Strategy.
- To identify opportunities for funding from a range of national, regional, and local funding sources and oversee the preparation of funding bids in order to deliver the programme of improvement.
- To take responsibility for identifying potential to develop the role of the town centres.

### **Reporting**

The Town Centres Working Group will report to the Planning Committee and other committees of the council. During discussion at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 22 January, it was suggested that, rather than establishing a fixed group of 5 elected members, the composition of the Town Centres Working Group could take the form of a smaller core of elected members, with other members co-opted to assist with the consideration of particular issues or matters that are relevant to a particular centre as appropriate. Members may wish to consider this approach further in the establishment of the working group.

2. Since it was established, the working group has met (via Zoom) on 9 occasions with a smaller subgroup of 3 members and a representative of St Annes on the Sea Town Council meeting separately to consider a number of site specific issues in St Annes town centre that benefitted from a physical inspection. The group was limited in size in order to comply with Covid secure guidelines.

3. With the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, the working group initially considered several interventions to assist in the safe reopening of the high street. As customers and business owners have become accustomed to the new way of life that the continuing situation require to be observed, the working group has been able to consider a number of longer term projects that will benefit the three town centres and assist in maintaining and improving their prosperity as part of the wider Covid recovery.
4. The working group is currently exploring a number of initiatives for each of the borough's town centres. The Planning Committee supported the submission of funding bids to the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) and Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) programmes in Kirkham. The council has also identified capital funding to address a number of issues previously identified in Lytham. The Working Group is now working to understand the likely budgetary implications of a number of projects in St Annes. As these are still under consideration members will be presented with an outline of the latest projects and estimated costs involved at the meeting.
5. In 2013/14, the council established a funding volatility reserve from additional Business Rates received under the Business Rate Retention Scheme. The budget report to council in March 2020 identified that the reserve currently stands at £5.221m. As part of that report members made a commitment to the regeneration and revitalisation of St Annes town centre and that this should be a priority for the Council's Funding Volatility Reserve.
6. In order to better understand the issues that St Annes Town Centre is facing and to support any future applications for central government funding it is considered necessary to commission a town centre health check. This would be undertaken by specialist consultants and is estimated to cost in the region of £20-30k, depending upon the scope of the commission. The findings of the health check would inform the production of a revised town centre strategy for St Annes which in turn would act as a vehicle to deliver a new vision for St Annes town centre. This wider piece of work would be a similar undertaking to the work carried out to support the Kirkham Future High Street Fund final business case (which included a town centre health check), funded by a grant of £150,000 provided by central government. Accordingly, the Planning Committee is requested to recommend that the Finance & Democracy Committee approve a revenue budget increase for 2020/21 in the sum of £150,000, funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, to provide for the commissioning of a town centre health check and town centre strategy.
7. The committee is asked to consider the projects for St Annes that have been identified by the Town Centres Working Group and prioritise those schemes that they wish officers to develop for further consideration and approval by committee.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This report recommends to the Finance & Democracy Committee approval to a revenue funded budget increase for 2020/21 in the sum of £150,000, funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, for the commissioning of a town centre health check for St Annes.
Legal	No implications
Community Safety	No implications
Human Rights and Equalities	No implications
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	The commissioning of a town centre health check will ensure any proposals and actions which emerge are founded on need.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No implications

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
None		

