

Briefing Paper for Scrutiny: Tiverton Town Centre initiatives.

Cabinet Resolution:

FROM THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TIVERTON TOWN CENTRE (00-03-59)

At its meeting on 11 September 2017, the Scrutiny Committee noted the number of policies and action plans which appeared to have been on-going for a number of years. In particular, in relation to Tiverton Town Centre, the Scrutiny Committee passed the following resolution:

To recommend to the Cabinet that it acts upon the action plans to improve the Tiverton Town Centre and Pannier Market that were approved in 2011.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration outlined the contents of the report stating that the report identified by the Scrutiny Committee was thought to be "Tiverton Key Sites" which was discussed by the Cabinet in December 2011. This report identified key sites for potential development within the town; a project board was set up and it did look at potential sites, however at that time there was a lack of private sector investment in the town and although an officer working group continued the work by commissioning a retail study, little investment in the town took place.

With Premier Inn willing to invest in the town and other potential opportunities available, the Town Centre Masterplan/SPD which would look at the whole of the town (rather than just land holdings and property owned by the Council) was now very relevant and being progressed.

Consideration was given to:

- The key sites mentioned within the 2011 report and the fact that they were being considered within the masterplan.
- The need to generate capital receipts for investment.

RESOLVED that a briefing paper be produced for a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee highlighting the work that was taking place with regard to Tiverton Town Centre.

(Proposed by Cllr R J Chesterton and seconded by Cllr C R Slade)

Briefing Paper on Tiverton Town Centre Improvements since 2011

- At the beginning of 2011 the Council entered into a secondment arrangement with North Devon District Council to provide Economic Development support to the Community Development Team. Craig Bulley, Barnstaple Town Centre Manager and Ellen Vernon, Economic Development Officer for North Devon worked one / two days a week for the Council providing expert advice on various aspects of economic development.
- In January 2011, a paper was written providing an Initial Review of Tiverton Market and its potential for growth. In November 2011, a further report was compiled: Tiverton Key Sites Report for Cabinet which outlined the potential of using Council owned assets in the town centre to future growth. The report outlined the objectives for a Tiverton Key Site Project as:
 - Properly understanding the needs of Tiverton and reaching an agreed vision for the future development of the town
 - Properly understanding the viable development options for the key sites
 - Potential to deliver what the town really needs in the right locations
 - Potential generation of capital receipts for MDCC
 - Overall, moving towards ensuring Tiverton is a vibrant and sustainable market town

The secondment arrangement ended in December 2011.

- Following the report, Lyons, Sleeman and Hoare were commissioned by the Chief Executive to write a report outlining development opportunities in the town centre and had a

retail emphasis. This was completed in December 2013 as the Tiverton Town Centre Retail Analysis (later revised in March 2015).

- In January 2015 the Council set up an Officer Working Group under the CEO with the Head of Housing and Property Services as Project Manager to support 'Tiverton Regeneration Project' with stated objectives including:
 - Produce a master-plan for Tiverton town centre that is agreed by the District Council after consultation with the Tiverton Town Council, Tiverton Traders Association and other interested parties.
 - Improve the range and quality of retailers and food and beverage operators operating within the town centre of Tiverton.
 - Facilitate an improved cinema offering for the town by working in partnership with Merlin Cinemas.
 - Improve the car parking facilities for visitors to the town through access improvements, signage and physical links to the town centre.
 - Build on the town's historic areas and heritage assets to contribute to this project, applying for grant funding where opportunities arise.
 - Develop a business plan to maximise the Council's property portfolio and bring forward new commercial development on land identified in the master-plan.
 - Encourage additional choice of low cost supermarket shopping within the town centre.
 - Include longer term consideration for the New Hall and Town Hall in any future master-plan.
 - Promote the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) by April 2017.
 - Work with the private sector to bring forward plans for a hotel in the town centre.
- In August 2015 consultants were asked to bid for the delivery of a town centre investment and regeneration masterplan, with the intention that this be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, therefore having weight in subsequent planning decision making. (Previous reports and initiatives fulfilled different purposes and were not Supplementary Planning documents). Following consideration of these submissions, the Council decided to make changes to the brief to increase its scope and the shortlisted consultants were invited to resubmit their tenders.
- Following the resubmission of tenders, in December 2016 White, Young and Green were commissioned to undertake a master planning exercise covering the whole of Tiverton town centre. Stakeholder events were held to inform the contents of the draft options consultation document which will be going out for Stage 1 public consultation soon.
- During this period the Council has continued to take opportunities to facilitate future developments by assemblage of assets and changes of use, including:
 - Acquisition of 32-34 Fore Street (Apr 2014)
 - Re-location of Tiverton Information Centre to Tiverton Museum (Apr 2014)
 - Tiverton Shopfront Enhancement Scheme with High Street Innovation Funding
 - Development of a Coach Park in William Street
 - Opening of Elsie May Café (Jul 2014)
 - Acquisition of Market Walk (2014)
 - Negotiations with Premier Inn to develop a hotel at Phoenix Lane MSCP
 - Re-location of DWP Jobcentre to Phoenix House (Nov 2016)
- In June 2015 the Council introduced the highly successful Electric Nights' Streetfood Events, which went on to win the NABMA 'Best Small Food Market Award' 2016, and Devon Life 'Best Food Event of the Year' Nov 2016.
- Following the appointment of a new Market Manager, a Strategy for Tiverton 2017 – 2027 was approved at Council on the 22nd February 2017 and Market Position Paper received by

the Economy PDG in March 2017 which outlines the direction of market developments over the next five years.