Derby City Council

COUNCIL CABINET
22 October 2014

ITEM 9

Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning, Environment and Regeneration

Vibrant City Strategy

SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose the Vibrant City Strategy which promotes physical regeneration in the city centre and district centres. Sustainable regeneration requires a vibrant city centre, successful district and neighbourhood centres and well-connected communities. This strategy seeks to support this through physical improvements to the environment including the connectivity between communities and jobs.

1.2 To achieve this, the Vibrant City Strategy proposes a coherent place-making approach for two interlinked and balanced strands of activities:

a. Vibrant City Centre Programme
b. Vibrant District Centres Programme

1.3 This Strategy presents a new exciting initiative which is a significant departure from previous approaches to physical regeneration. The intention is to fully fund the above mentioned programmes from within the existing approved DCC Capital Plan, ie: with no increase to spending totals subject to the overall affordability of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

1.4 The key principles underlying this strategy are:

- City Centre is at the heart of Derby's economy; the district centres are at the heart of local communities
- Effective connections between place-people-economy are necessary to create a vibrant and resilient city
- It is vital to partner with communities to create places that make people feel 'Proud of Derby'.

1.5 In summary, the key approach proposed here is to develop a balanced and joined up plan of improvements to achieve high quality place-making in the city centre and key district centres.

RECOMMENDATION

2.1 To approve the Vibrant City Strategy as outlined in this report.

2.2 To note the progress on preparing a new 15 year vision and masterplan for the City Centre.

2.3 To approve the initial 6 priority centres for the Vibrant District Centre Programme (para 4.13).

2.5 To delegate the authority to the Vibrant City Delivery Board to approve the appointment of consultants and contractors, to undertake design, achieve necessary approvals and to implement the schemes, as funding is confirmed.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Derby plays an important role regionally as a leading centre for economic activities. For Derby to sustain its success and maintain its status as a regional centre, it needs to reinforce its role by strengthening the economy, attract and retain high skilled workforce and provide quality living environment to its citizens.

3.2 The key challenges Derby faces today include- housing need, social cohesion, enterprise growth, skill and employment level, changing nature of retail etc. The Vibrant City Strategy proposes a strategic approach and a deliverable action plan to meet the challenges and achieve regeneration of two key areas of the city – the city centre (the engine of the economy) and the district centres (heart of communities).

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Report of the Chief Executive

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 The Vibrant City Strategy proposes a coherent place-making approach for two interlinked strands of activities:

a. Vibrant City Centre Programme
b. Vibrant District Centres Programme

4.2 The strategy set out below will complement the existing Local Plan and the Core Strategy; helping to implement their policies and achieve their objectives to make centres in the hierarchy more attractive, more active and more vibrant places. Both the 'City of Derby Local Plan Review' (CDLPR 2006) and the Draft Core Strategy establish the principle of a 'shopping centre hierarchy', which is made up of the City Centre, 13 District Centres and around 50 Neighbourhood Centres.

4.3 Both City Centre and District Centres are complementary to each other. The city benefits from well established and connected communities with access to jobs, amenities and quality living environment. A joined up and coherent approach to placemaking is proposed to enhance the offer and appearance of the city centre and key district centres.

4.4 The Strategy:

Vibrant City Strategy

Vision: to create a vibrant and resilient city

Vibrant City Centre

- Gateway to the city
- Focus for business, culture, retail and visitor economy
- Central location for city living
- Engine of city's economy
- Access to jobs and business opportunities
- Brings together people from different parts of the city
- Rail and road links to other cities

Inter-Action
Balance
Connections

Vibrant District Centres

- Heart of communities
- Focus for residential areas
- Suburban neighbourhoods
- Well-being of communities
- Access to everyday needs and amenities
- Meeting place for local people
- Radial routes from city centre; connections to employment areas

Connections:
Physical (road, cycle, bus and pedestrian links)
Social (amenity places, activities, events)
Technological (digital infrastructure)
Economical (connecting people to jobs)

Vibrant City Centre Programme:

4.5 Issues:

- City Centre undergoing a period of fundamental transformation
- Changing nature of retail and leisure activities
- Availability of vacant/ derelict/ underused retail and commercial space
- Maintaining footfall and activity especially during evening and night time
- Need to maintain the vibrancy and vitality of City Centre
- Disconnect (physical and social) between city centre and neighbourhoods

4.6 Distressed areas that need attention such as Beckett Well, Friar Gate Goods Yard, Sadler Square, East Street- Albion Street, North Riverside (OCOR).

4.7 Opportunities:

- Derby benefits from the pull of Intu, the Cathedral Quarter brand and a relatively resilient economy.
- Positive partnership approach of City Council, Marketing Derby and the BIDs.
- Success of 'Connect' business centres in promoting entrepreneurial activities

4.8 The key objective is to create a vibrant and resilient city centre which is a:

- **City of Choice** - a leisure, cultural and retail destination (linked to the Markets review and Assembly Rooms review)
- **Business City** - a successful 'central business district' (on going work through the Regeneration Fund)
- **Living City** - a lifestyle and housing choice (new city centre living initiative)
- **Connected City**- a well-connected smarter city (delivery of 'Super Connected Derby' and other smarter cities projects + connections to district centres)

4.9 Delivery of Vibrant City Centre masterplan:

- Stakeholder consultation workshops are being organised to steer the strategy. An agreed plan is anticipated to go out to consultation in December 2014 with a view to finalising the strategy and a Cabinet report in March 2015.
- The existing projects with the current capital programme and external funding are to progress according to individual project timescales and budgets.
- An Action Plan for future projects and development strategies along with funding requirements are to be prepared following the cabinet approval in March 2015.
- Detailed masterplan and action plan are being prepared and delivery strategies for individual projects will be prepared with identified funding requirement and delivery timescales
- Funding bids for external and internal funding to deliver these projects will be prepared by the officers as opportunities arise.

Vibrant District Centres Programme:

4.10 Issues:

- Placemaking in district centres has received little attention in terms of policy or funding in the past.
- Recent investment has put emphasis on traffic management and parking issues rather than the holistic revitalisation of these local centres.
- A focus on strategic improvement projects is required to create vibrant and connected communities.
- District centres need to become vibrant community hubs with good connections to jobs and the city centre.

4.11 Opportunities exist to strengthen the role of district centres as a hub for local communities by:

- improving the offer and appearance of district centres,
- reinforcing a unique identity for local communities,
- enhancing vibrancy and increasing economic vitality.

4.12 The key objectives to achieve are:

- reduced vacant buildings
- enhanced built environment and reduced clutter
- improved access arrangements including parking
- better connections to jobs and amenities particularly in the city centre
- reinforced community spirit

4.13 In addition to the improvement works at Alvaston and the programme of activities in Osmaston area, a new 5 year programme is proposed. The proposed new priorities put forward, in consultation with the leadership, are:

1. Mackworth
2. Cavendish
3. Derwent
4. Normanton
5. Chaddesden
6. Mickleover

4.14 Delivery of Vibrant District Centres Programme:

- Existing priorities (Alvaston and Osmaston) in the current capital programme are to be carried out according to the agreed timescales and budgets.
- Workshops and ‘walk arounds’ with ward councillors and key community partners will be organised to identify key issues and opportunities for the 6 priority centres.
- Quick wins to achieve tidy up, de-clutter, street cleaning and small scale projects such as planting, lighting and signage improvements will be identified along with required budget, timescales and links with any existing programme.
- Commission feasibility studies and detailed design for all identified priority centres, identify preferred option, funding sources and delivery timescales to take forward for the long term sustainable development of the district centres.
- Where feasible, prepare external (EU, ESF, LGF, HLF etc) funding bids to support the delivery of the projects.
- Seek Cabinet approval, agree approach and priority, and implement the

schemes on site.

Governance

4.15 It is proposed that individual projects will be managed by appointed project managers in the Regeneration Projects team with support from projects teams to include colleagues from highways, planning, neighbourhoods etc.

4.16 Project managers for both the Vibrant City Centre Programme and Vibrant District Centres Programme will report to the Vibrant City Delivery Board, chaired by Head of Regeneration Projects, for monitoring of budgets and timescales. The Regeneration Programme Board will monitor the financial management of the programme.

4.17 The Director of Regeneration will directly report to the Leader on progress on delivery of the Vibrant District Centres Programme.

Funding

4.19 The report to this Cabinet on the Regeneration Capital Programme 2014-2017 contains full details of existing budget allocations to the Vibrant City Centre and Vibrant District Centres Programme.

4.20 Vibrant City Centre Programme:

a. The existing schemes being delivered within the current Vibrant City Centre Programme for the year 2014-17, which are on site and under construction, are:
   - St Peter's Cross
   - Derby After Dark (lighting strategy and pilot projects)
   - Tunnel Lighting (under the ring road, along the river)
   - The Spot
   - Castleward Open Space
   - Townscape Heritage Initiative and Building Frontage Enhancement schemes

b. A separate report to Cabinet proposes a City Living Initiative which includes a £6.5m *recoverable* loan fund to deliver sustainable residential development in Derby City Centre.

4.21 Vibrant District Centres Programme:

a. The existing projects being delivered within the district centres are listed below. These are being brought together under the proposed Vibrant District Centres sub-programme for the year 2014-17:
   - Alvaston- £1.5m (already committed)
   - Mackworth- £1.15m
   - Unallocated- £1.2m (priority to be agreed in the future)

b. This unallocated budget (£1.2m) will support the delivery of:
   - An additional District Centre to be designed and implemented. The priority centre will be decided from the 6 mentioned in para 4.13, in agreement with the Leadership
   - Quick win projects in all 5 priority centres identified in para 4.13
   - Design and feasibility for the 5 priority centres
   - Project management costs and internal fees

   Note: In addition to the above, there is £4.36m already committed for Osmaston regeneration programme.

c. Initial scoping works suggest that a further sum of approximately £6m may be required to complete the enhancement works to all the 6 centres identified in para 4.13. Clearly, this sum will need to be revisited following further scoping and consultation exercise.

d. The Director of Finance and Procurement is in the process of examining existing Capital Programmes to identify budgets that could be re-directed to the Vibrant District Centre Programme.

e. The intention is to fully fund the Vibrant District Centres Programme from within the existing approved DCC Capital Plan, ie: with no increase to spending totals. Members will need to consider the requirement for additional funding to support this programme against other Council priorities. Members will also need to consider the overall affordability of the Council's Capital Plan, within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

f. There are also potential external funding opportunities such as the Local Growth Fund Round 2 and European Union Funds that will be explored to support this programme.

Timescales:

4.22 It is proposed to run a parallel process for both the city centre and district centre programmes. A progress report will be brought to the Cabinet in early Spring 2015 to provide an update on activities. Key timescales are as below:

4.23 Vibrant City Centre Masterplan:
1. Stakeholders workshops- October/November 2014
2. Public consultation- December 2014
3. Revised Masterplan + Action Plan to cabinet- March 2015

4.24 Vibrant District Centres Programme:
1. Quick win for Mackworth- November 2014 to April 2015
2. Detailed design and implementation for Mackworth- October 2014 to October 2016
3. Quick wins for all 6 priority centres- November 2014 to Summer 2015 (subject to complexity of work and approvals required)
4. Detailed design and implementation for the next priority centre- April 2015 to

March 2017 (subject to complexity of location)

5. Detailed design for the 5 priority centres- April 2015 to October 2015 (subject to funding)
6. Cabinet approval for implementation- November 2015
7. Implementation of the remaining district centres- March 2016 to March 2019 (subject to funding)

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 **Do nothing for City Centre**

This option was not considered appropriate because the City Centre is the focus for economic, retail and cultural activities. It plays an important role in bringing people together from all sectors of the society, providing access to jobs, transport, events and cultural activities.

5.2 The role of city centre is changing due to changes in shopping, banking and trading patterns, online technology, and out of centre retail and commercial developments. Increasingly, the role of city centre is becoming a destination of choice, with a key purpose to provide a memorable experience.

5.3 Derby City Council is in the process to evaluate and agree its approach to the need for a new performing arts centre, markets and leisure provision. For these reasons, it is considered that there needs to be an aspirational and deliverable plan for Derby City Centre to face these challenges and perform its role as a gateway to the city. The proposed Vibrant City Centre masterplan is anticipated to co-ordinate these strategic elements and prepare a vision for the future developments of city centre for the next 15 years.

5.4 **Do nothing for District Centres**

This option was considered not appropriate because the district and neighbourhood centres play a very important role in keeping the communities together by providing a vibrant hub of activities. With changing demographics, increasing aging population and influx of migrant communities, it is important to reinstate the district centres as the thriving hubs that bring people together.

5.5 It is also recognised that the district centres need to be well connected, not just to the communities, but also with other centres and especially, the city centre. In order for the people to have access to jobs, leisure and cultural activities and expand social networks, these centres need to be connected physically and technologically.

5.6 The Vibrant District Centre Programme identifies priorities and proposes measures to create truly connected communities with quick wins and long term action plan.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	Emily Feenan
Financial officer	Martyn Marples
Human Resources officer	NA
Estates/Property officer	NA
Service Director(s)	Richard Williams
Other(s)	Paul Clarke, Christine Durrant, Richard Boneham, Paul Robinson

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

Appendix 1

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

1.1 A full report on the Regeneration Capital Programme with full budget details on individual schemes and sub-programme areas is being considered by Cabinet and should be read in conjunction with this report.

1.2 A sum of £1.15m has been identified from the existing regeneration capital programme for improvements in Mackworth. In addition, a sum of £1.2m has been identified for improvements to the other centres. This budget has been sourced from reprioritising the existing city centre programme, deleting some city centre activities in favour of district centre improvements.

1.3 The above £1.2m unallocated sum will be insufficient to support implementation of all 6 priority centres identified in para 4.13. Initial scoping works suggest that a further sum of approximately £6m may be required to complete the enhancement works to all the 6 centres identified in para 4.13. Clearly, this sum will need to be revisited following further scoping and consultation exercise.

1.4 The Director of Finance and Procurement is working with the respective Capital Programme leads to identify potential additional funding to support this initiative (subject to 1.6 below).

1.5 The intention is to fully fund the Vibrant District Centres Programme from within the existing approved DCC Capital Plan, ie; with no increase to overall spending totals.

1.6 Members will need to consider the requirement for additional funding to support the Vibrant District Centres Programme against other Council priorities and also against the overall affordability of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal

2.1 Legal implications of individual schemes within the Vibrant City Centre and Vibrant District Centre programmes will be considered and acted upon as required on scheme by scheme basis.

Personnel

3.1 NA

IT

4.1 IT implications of individual schemes within the Vibrant City Centre and Vibrant District Centre programmes will be considered and acted upon as required.

Equalities Impact

5.1 Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for individual schemes when required, in addition to consultation with the Disabled People's Diversity Forum as required.

Health and Safety

6.1 NA

Environmental Sustainability

7.1 Well planned, attractive and vibrant spaces offer the best opportunities for environmental sustainability. Integrated places where people can move around, meet, enjoy and participate are strong indicators for sustainable and vibrant places and communities. Well-connected communities where a good walking and cycling environment is provided helps improve air quality. Place-making with holistic objectives can create and establish excellent environmental sustainability.

Property and Asset Management

8.1 Property and Asset Management implications of individual schemes within the Vibrant City Centre and Vibrant District Centre programmes will be considered and acted upon as required

Risk Management

9.1 Risk management forms a key part of project and programme management within the Regeneration governance framework. Risks for individual schemes are and will be updated and reported regularly through the appropriate mechanism.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 This initiative will contribute towards Derby Plan's big ambition:

- Inspiring place to live by improving inner city areas
- Inspiring working life by improving skills and creating jobs