

Name of meeting: Cabinet
Date: 29th May 2019
Title of report: Assembling land and property – Huddersfield Town Centre

Purpose of report:

This report requests that Cabinet considers the opportunity to acquire a Strategic Freehold Asset (subject to leases) in Huddersfield Town Centre in line with the Huddersfield Town Centre Masterplan.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes - this report is likely to result in expenditure significantly exceeding £250K.
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes - Public Report with private appendices
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Karl Battersby - Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure - 20 / 05 / 19
Is it also signed off by the Service Director (Finance)?	Eamonn Croston - Finance and Accountancy - 17 / 05 / 19
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft – Legal Governance and Commissioning – 17 / 05 / 19
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner - Corporate Cllr Peter Mc Bride - Economy

Electoral wards affected: Newsome

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public with Private Appendices

(Exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It was considered that the disclosure of the information would be contrary to confidential terms and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and providing greater openness and transparency in relation to public expenditure in the Council's decision making.)

GDPR – no personal or sensitive data; or other information covered by GDPR is included in this report

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The Council has been preparing a draft master plan for Huddersfield Town Centre, which will be launched for public engagement in the coming weeks. Town centres and the high street are experiencing long term structural changes and therefore a new forward thinking approach is required to support vibrancy and the Council's strategic objectives. The proposed purchase of a strategic asset will help achieve these objectives.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The Council has been developing the draft master plan with involvement and engagement within the council and with stakeholders. The ambition is to set out a number of key transformational projects that will shape the town in the long term.
- 2.2 The master plan is vital to changing the town centre. Latest commentary at a national level, through the Grimsey Review and the High Streets Report led by Sir John Timpson, show clearly that a return to a reliance on retail is no longer an option. To survive and evolve towns need to offer other attractions based on leisure, culture and community facilities. This offer needs to embrace our heritage, our architecture and be unique to Huddersfield.
- 2.3 The emerging draft master plan recognises this change and proposes a series of key interventions to improve the attractiveness of the town, create spaces where people want to be and bring new change through redevelopment to bring in new uses.

3. **Information required to take a decision**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Council acquires a strategic freehold asset (subject to leases) in Huddersfield Town Centre. A detailed private report with a number of appendices will be considered by Cabinet on 29th May 2019 as the information is exempt in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
- 3.2 Section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides the legal framework for Councils to acquire land for the purposes of any of their functions or the benefit, improvement or development of their area. The proposed acquisition will provide an opportunity for the Council to deliver on the early phases of the masterplan to implement targeted investment and improve the offer of the town centre.

4. **Implications for the Council**

4.1 **Working with People**

The draft Huddersfield Town Centre Masterplan will be launched for public consultation in the coming weeks and will involve extensive engagement with residents, businesses and all interested parties to help shape and influence the future direction of Huddersfield Town Centre.

4.2 Working with Partners

The draft master plan has been prepared with input from partners and stakeholders and following the launch and a period of public engagement, it will be considered by Cabinet at a future date. As we then move into the design, development and delivery phases, it will be critical that partners and stakeholders continue to be engaged on project specific proposals to ensure that they are co-designed and co-produced.

4.3 Place Based Working

It is recognised that one size does not fit all and whilst Huddersfield is a principal centre for the district, it has its own distinctiveness which needs to be harnessed and built on. It is intended that the Council will work with its communities to ensure that their aspirations are built into the proposed regeneration of the town centre.

4.4 Improving outcomes for children

The masterplan has families and young people at its heart – it considers a whole range of initiatives that enable families to live in, work and enjoy the town.

4.5 Legal

The Council's Disposals and Acquisitions Policy sets out the general principles that govern strategic acquisitions, including having regard to prudent commercial practices. External consultants have been appointed to provide a Red Book Valuation for the proposed purchase, which is contained within the private report as it is exempt information.

4.6 Financial

Capital funding for investment in Huddersfield Town Centre is contained within the Capital Plan for 2019/20 to 2023/24, which was approved by Council in February 2019. The revenue implications of the proposed strategic purchase are contained within the private report as this is exempt information.

4.7 Human Resources

The HR implications of the proposed strategic purchase are contained within the private report as this is exempt information.

5. Consultees and their opinions

5.1 This report has been subject to discussion with the Council's Executive Team, Lead Cabinet Members, Legal Services and Strategic Finance and all concerned are supportive of the proposed strategic acquisition.

6. Next steps and timelines

- 6.1 If the Officer recommendations are approved, Officers will seek to complete this matter as soon as possible. This will allow the council to plan for the implementation phases of the proposed draft master plan.

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

- 7.1 An acquisition of this strategic asset will provide an opportunity for the Council to control the ownership in a key part of the town centre and support the implementation of the draft town centre master plan.
- 7.2 The Officers recommendation, having regard to the detail in the private appendices, is to complete the purchase of this strategic asset.

7.3 Cabinet are requested to:

- (a) Consider the content of the public and private report / private appendices and:
- (b) Approve the strategic acquisition as detailed in the red line boundary attached as a private **Appendix B**, and in line with the Agreed Heads of Terms as shown in private **Appendix C** for no more than the stated maximum price shown in the private report and attached private **Appendix E**;
- (c) Approve the required capital funding from the Strategic Priorities allocation for Huddersfield Town Centre as identified in the Council's approved Capital Plan for 2019/20 to 2023/24;
- (d) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director - Economy and Infrastructure and Service Director - Legal, Governance and Commissioning to negotiate and agree the final terms for the acquisition of the asset identified in the private report / appendices;
- (e) Delegate authority to the Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning to enter into and execute any agreements or instruments relating to the acquisition of the asset identified in the private report / appendices;
- (f) Delegate authority to the Service Director for Economy and Skills to undertake the strategic and operational management of the proposed strategic purchase, working with the Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning, to agree relevant operational leases and terms.

8. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

- 8.1 The Portfolio Holders for Corporate and Economy recommend that Cabinet:-
- (a) Considers the content of the public and private report / private appendices and:
 - (b) Approves the strategic acquisition as detailed in the red line boundary attached as a private **Appendix B**, and in line with the Agreed Heads of Terms as shown in private **Appendix C** for no more than the stated maximum price shown in the private report and attached private **Appendix E**;

- (c) Approves the required capital funding from the Strategic Priorities allocation for Huddersfield Town Centre as identified in the Council's approved Capital Plan for 2019/20 to 2023/24;
- (d) Delegates authority to the Strategic Director - Economy and Infrastructure and Service Director - Legal, Governance and Commissioning to negotiate and agree the final terms for the acquisition of the asset identified in the private report / appendices.
- (e) Delegates authority to the Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning to enter into and execute any agreements or instruments relating to the acquisition of the asset identified in the private report / appendices;
- (f) Delegates authority to the Service Director for Economy and Skills to undertake the strategic and operational management of the proposed strategic purchase, working with the Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning, to agree relevant operational leases and terms.

9. Contact officers

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10. Service Director responsible

Angela Blake - Service Director - Economy and Skills-
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11. Attachments

Private Appendix A – Private report on the proposed strategic acquisition
Private Appendix B – Red line boundary plan for the proposed strategic acquisition
Private Appendix C – Agreed Heads of Terms
Private Appendix D – Tenancy Schedule
Private Appendix E - Valuation Report