

**Name of meeting:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 3rd December 2019  
**Title of report:** Dewsbury Town Centre - Better Spaces Strategy

**Purpose of report**

To seek approval of the Dewsbury Town Centre Better Spaces Strategy, its constituent proposals, including a Public Art Plan and approval of funds to implement these projects.

<b>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?</b>	<b>Yes</b>  <b>If yes give the reason why</b>
<b>Key Decision - Is it in the <a href="#">Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)</a></b>	<b>Yes</b>  <b>Expenditure over £250,000</b>  <b>KDN registered on 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 2019</b>
<b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> &amp; name</b>	<b>Karl Battersby - 25.11.2019</b>
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>	<b>Eamonn Croston - 6.11.2019</b>
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</b>	<b>Julie Muscroft - 28.10.2019</b>
<b>Cabinet member portfolio</b>	<b>Peter McBride - 11.11.2019</b>

**Electoral wards affected: Dewsbury East, Dewsbury West, Dewsbury South.**

**Briefing planned for 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 was cancelled. 9 Ward Councillors sent update on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2019.**

**Public:**

**(Have you considered GDPR?)** Yes. There are no GDPR implications.

## 1. Summary

### 1.1 This report seeks approval of

- A Better Spaces Strategy & Plan for Dewsbury Town Centre
- The associated delivery programme that sets out the timescales for activity that will deliver the overall strategy.
- A number of specific projects that are part of that strategy
- A Dewsbury Public Arts Plan
- The design and feasibility for future projects
- The funding to enable those projects to be implemented
- Delegated authority to enable officers to proceed to implement the schemes.

### 1.2 It describes 5 projects for which specific approval is required including the progressing work on the Town Park; 23, Northgate, Bond Street, the Library 'forecourt' and a Public Arts Plan.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

### Background

### 2.1 Cabinet on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 approved the Dewsbury Town Centre Strategic Development Framework (SDF) and its associated Delivery Programme. The SDF has 3 key aims related to:-

- Activity
- Attractiveness
- Accessibility.

### 2.2 The first objective of improving the attractiveness of the town centre is 'improving, creating and extending the public realm'. The first action under the better spaces heading of the Delivery Programme is to produce a comprehensive plan for improving and extending the public realm. The Better Spaces Strategy, attached at Appendix One to this report, sets out this strategy and plan.

### 2.3 Part of the strategy includes a Public Arts Plan for the town centre. The plan has a wider remit than simply 'public art' objects within the public realm, and it has the potential to make a significant impact on the look and feel of the town centre. (Appendix Two).

### 2.4 Progress to date

### 2.5 At the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 Cabinet approved funding for a 'spring clean' programme and several year one projects. The following 'spring clean' elements have been undertaken:-

- Painting of the Gazebos, Market Gates, the Bandstand and ornamental structures within the planting beds have been completed
- The roofs to Queensway and Kingsway Arcades have been refurbished and floors pressure washed
- The planting beds in Longcauseway and Market Place have all been renewed with new planting and kick rails.
- The pedestrian subway has been thoroughly cleaned and painted
- Alleyways on Foundry St have been cleared and deep cleaned.
- Window vinyl's have been applied to 5 empty shop units and buildings
- Road repairs to the 4 worst areas in the town centre have been completed.

- Street furniture – replaced heritage bollards outside the Town Hall and some in Market Place. Six new planters and four refurbished benches placed in Market Place.
- Currently painting heritage lighting and other ‘furniture’ on the Town Hall apron
- 45 new seats for the town centre have been ordered and should be in place for the new year.
- New bins are being trialled and subject to feedback, new ones will be ordered and installed before the new year.

2.6 Some of the items have not progressed as planned and these are described below:-

- Street lights and other illuminated signs – the January 2019 Cabinet approved the repainting of all the street lights in the town centre. A full audit of the street lights revealed that the lights were close to the end of their design life and that it would be more cost effective to replace the existing columns with new ones. Officers are currently preparing specifications in order to procure the new lights. Installation will occur during 2020.
- Footway repairs – the decision to renew all the street lights has meant that it would now be better to do the footway works after the new lights have been installed to avoid digging up newly laid paving.

2.7 Cabinet in January 2019 also approved some new public realm projects and these are at various stages on implementation, as summarised below: -

- Bespoke planters (Market Place) - at the time of writing these were being fabricated and should be in place by early December 2019
- Artist Intervention (wall along the Bus Station boundary to the ring road) - Artist Adrian Riley was appointed following an open tender. Design development and engagement is underway with expected completion February 2020
- Tree Lighting (Bottom of Daisy Hill) – final details of fixing being agreed with supplier and with installation expected December 2019 once autumn leaf fall has taken place.
- Lighting Display (Pedestrian subway) – a concept design has been endorsed and technical design is underway. Completion expected March 2020.
- Power Infrastructure for events (various locations) – this is to be timetabled to correspond with the installation of the new street lights.
- Green Streets Phase 1 (semi mature trees) – locations and design completed and consultation underway with statutory undertakers. Subject to agreeing details, then those that can be progressed, will be planted by April 2020.

2.8 It is now appropriate to consider public realm projects for year two of the programme and beyond.

### **Year Two Projects**

#### Library ‘Frontage’

2.9 The area in front of the Library has been identified as an area that would benefit from improvement to make it a more usable and more attractive space. An outline design has been produced and subject to Cabinet approval of a budget for the scheme it is proposed to implement a scheme during the financial year 2020/21.

#### Public Art Plan

2.10 This report seeks endorsement of a Public Art Plan for the town centre see Appendix 2). This document builds upon the Public Art Policy - Making Great Places: Making

Places Great' - Kirklees Public Art Policy approved 2017. The policy outlines the benefits that Public Art can make to the public realm and communities in general.

- 2.11 There is opportunity to deliver at least one piece of public art during 2020/21. Subject to Cabinet funding approval, more detailed work will be undertaken to deliver projects in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### **Town Park**

- 2.12 The original Strategic Development Framework published in 2010 contained an ambitious plan to create an urban park in the area between Dewsbury Minster and the Dewsbury Town Hall. This concept has been taken forward in the SDF approved by Cabinet in January 2019. The aim is to create an attractive and vibrant open space which should encourage more people to live, work or visit the town centre and spend more time here when they come to visit.
- 2.13 It is proposed to commission work to investigate the and the scope and nature of the potential park and the mitigation measures that will need to be undertaken to facilitate the scheme. This would involve consultation on the options identified. A revenue budget is requested to enable this work to be undertaken.

### **Pocket Park (site of 23, Northgate)**

- 2.14 The work on developing the Better Spaces Strategy has identified a shortage of 'green' open space in the town centre. There are a number of opportunities where new green space could be created. One of these is the site of the former Co-op Funeral parlour at 23, Northgate and the car park to the rear.
- 2.15 The site is currently unattractive in appearance. The building has been vacant for over 15 years and its condition and appearance has deteriorated over that time. The land to the rear, which is part of the same ownership, is used for contract parking. The adjacent stone sett street is unadopted and has been used in the past for unregulated free parking. The buildings condition is deteriorating and has been assessed as 'beyond economic repair' by the Valuation Office. The buildings and the immediate area around it, significantly detracts from the Council efforts to improve this part of Dewsbury Town Centre, via its substantial investment in the Pioneer building and implementation of the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI).
- 2.16 Due to the shortage of 'green' open space in the town centre; the location next to Kirklees College (Pioneer) building and the condition of this site, the it is proposed to create a 'pocket park' in this location. Preliminary landscape schemes have been drawn up and subject to approval by Cabinet it is proposed to consult on options and submit a planning application for the 'pocket park'. Appendix 3 contains details of the site and one of the outline designs.
- 2.17 The issue of the unregulated car parking on the unadopted settled street will be been resolved by the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order that prohibits parking. As part of the proposed pocket park, one of the options will seek to relay the stone setts. It is proposed to acquire the whole site to enable the scheme to be undertaken.

### **Key pedestrian Routes – Bond Street & Railway/Bus Station Link**

- 2.18 The Dewsbury Strategic Development Framework identifies Bond Street as the primary pedestrian route from the railway station and associated car parks, to the centre of the town. The street has several historic buildings, some of which are listed and the roadway and footpaths from Union Street to Wellington Road are finished in stone setts and traditional Yorkshire pavers respectively. Overall this gives an historic feel to most of the street. The significance of the street is recognised in the Heritage Action Zone.

2.19 The pavements on Bond Street are narrow and the street itself is dominated by on-street car parking. In order to improve this key pedestrian route it is proposed to widen the southern footway and introduce appropriate planting along the street to emphasise the importance of the route and to complement the plans for more residential use in this area. This may require the removal of some of the on street car parking and this will be seen in the context of the broader car parking strategy for the town centre. This report seeks approval to develop design options and consult on these and implement a preferred scheme.

## **Public Art**

2.20 Public Art can play an important role in making a town more attractive and memorable and could help provide a USP for Dewsbury. Kirklees Public Art Policy 'Making Great Places: Making Places Great' was approved Cabinet in 2017 and provides the strategic context and rationale for using public art as a mechanism to support regeneration and wider corporate objectives.

2.21 One of the common features of successful public art is its relevance or response to a local context including the rich heritage and stories, diverse communities and local culture. Public art which is specific to a particular place, community or heritage adds to the unique identity and story of that place. This approach can apply to the way that artists engage people in a creative process and to the physical, ephemeral or permanent public art that is created. Following consultation, a Public Arts Plan for Dewsbury Town Centre has been produced, which is summarised at the end of the report (Appendix 4). Cabinet endorsement of this plan is requested.

2.22 The Public Arts Plan provides information on the types and proposed locations of public art in Dewsbury Town Centre. It is proposed to carry out a programme of public art in the town centre over the next 5 years. It is estimated that the overall programme would cost approximately £500,000 to implement. Officers recommend that an initial budget of £200,000 is created to make a start on the programme in 2020 - 2021. After the initial stage of work has been undertaken in years up to 2022, the programme will be reviewed and a request for funding of further work may be made at that stage.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **3.1 Working with People**

3.1.1 The SDF builds upon the substantial community engagement work undertaken in 2010 which shaped the plans proposed at that time. The key elements have been carried forward into the Better Spaces Strategy. As the programme and individual projects develop there will be further opportunities for the communities & stakeholders to comment at different stages of project development. An initial screening for an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is felt that any issues can best be considered in the delivery phase.

### **3.2 Working with Partners**

3.2.1 Partners will be important in delivering projects; through building local support for the schemes, helping ensure the long term sustainability of the proposals and securing external funding. Although the delivery is reliant on the Council taking the initiative on many of the projects, it requires the support of partners to maximise impact. It is proposed to work collaboratively with partners where this can be effective

### **3.3 Place Based Working**

3.3.1 The proposed Dewsbury Better Spaces Strategy, is focussed on Dewsbury Town centre. The SDF builds upon the substantial community engagement work undertaken in 2010 which shaped the plans proposed at that time. The key elements have been carried forward into this plan and Councillors in the 3 Dewsbury wards have confirmed the desire to see efforts focussed on improving Dewsbury Town Centre.

### 3.4 Improving outcomes for children

No Implications

### 3.5 Other policies and duties

3.5.1 The Better Spaces Strategy proposes to increase the levels of greenery within the town centre and will play a part in helping mitigate some of the impacts of climate change. The overarching Strategic Development Framework, within which the Better Spaces Strategy sits, promotes the greater use of the town centre, thereby making the most of existing assets in a location that is higher accessible to sustainable means of transport.

3.5.2 The public sector Equality Duty has been considered and these issues are best addressed at the development and design stage of individual projects.

### 3.6 Financial

3.6.1 The table below summarises the resources requested.

<b>Table One: Budget Estimates for Better Spaces activity referred to in this report</b>			
Scheme/items	Activity	Budget Est £	Estimated Timescale for Delivery
Library 'Frontage'	Design and Implement Scheme	£340,000	2020-2021
Town Park	Feasibility and Consultation	£100,000	2020-2021
Pocket Park - Northgate	Purchase, demolition, design, implementation.	£500,000	Dependant on acquisition of site.
Bond Street – widening of footways and related public realm improvements.	Outline design, options & , consultation	£40,000	2020-2021
Public Art	Commissioning and delivery of a programme of public art.	£200,000	First stage 2020/21 – 2021/22.
<b>All schemes/items</b>		<b>£1,180,000</b>	

3.6.2 It is proposed that the £1.18 Million is funded from the capital plan allocation for 'Strategic Regeneration of Town Centres – Dewsbury'. Taking into account the proposal to invest £320,000 into Dewsbury Sports Centre, also on today's agenda, this would leave £9.357 Million available to fund other projects that do not yet have a specific capital allocation e.g. Market, Town park, Arcade. Further reports detailing these individual projects and the resources required, will be brought to Cabinet in due course.

## 3.7 Legal

3.7.1 Comments are incorporated into the main body of the report.

## 4. Consultees and their opinions

4.1 It is proposed that the majority of the individual projects identified in this report will be subject to public consultation.

## 5. Next steps and timelines

5.1 Following Cabinet approval it is proposed to take forward the individual projects and initiatives described in this report. This will include, among other things:-

- appointing consultants to undertake further work on defining the options for the Town Park, the transport mitigation measures and undertaking consultation on these matters.
- bringing a further report to Cabinet on the pocket park proposed on the site of 23, Northgate and applying for planning permission(s).

## 6. Officer recommendations and reasons

6.1 That Cabinet

(1) Approve the Dewsbury Town Centre Better Spaces Strategy & Plan as described in this report and set out at Appendix One.

Reason: To provide a long term vision and framework for the improvement of the public realm in Dewsbury Town Centre.

(2) Approve the principle of creating a 'pocket park' on the site of 23, Northgate and authorise officers to take the steps necessary to deliver this scheme, including acquisition of the site and submission of a planning application and to note the intention to bring a more detailed report to Cabinet on this matter in the near future.

Reason: To enable the project to be implemented.

(3) Authorise officers to progress feasibility and development work of the projects contained within the Better Spaces Strategy and Plan.

Reason: To provide authority and funding certainty in order to progress the differing strands of work related to the Delivery Programme.

(4) Approve the Public Arts Plan described within this report and authorise officers to implement schemes described.

Reason: To support the objectives of Strategic Development Framework and Better Spaces Strategy.

(5) Approve the capital expenditure of £1.040 Million towards the projects described in this report and that this is funded from the approved Capital Plan allocation for 'Strategic Regeneration of Town Centres – Dewsbury.

Reason: To provide funding to enable elements of the Delivery Programme to be delivered

(6) Approve expenditure of £140,000 to cover the costs on feasibility and consultation on key projects and that this be funded from the 'Aspirational Regeneration of Major Town Centres – feasibility' budget in the approved Capital Plan

Reason: To provide funding to enable elements of the Delivery Programme to be delivered.

## 7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

7.1 The Portfolio Holders for Economy and Culture and Environment support the proposals in the report.

## 8. **Contact officer**

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## 9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Cabinet Report 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 "Dewsbury Town Centre: Strategic Development Framework & Delivery Programme"

Dewsbury Town Centre: Strategic Development Framework & Delivery Programme.  
<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/regeneration-and-development/pdf/dewsbury-strategic-development-framework.pdf>

'Public Art Policy - Making Great Places: Making Places Great' - Kirklees Public Art Policy 2017  
<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/pdf/public-art-policy.pdf>

## 10. **Strategic Director responsible**

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