



Name of meeting: Economy and Neighbourhood Ad-Hoc Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17th November 2022

Title of report: Local Centres Update

Purpose of report: To provide the Panel with an update on the Local Centres Programme with an additional focus on Cleckheaton.

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?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	No Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not Applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	1 st November 2022 - David Shepherd
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner – 3 rd November 2022

Electoral wards affected: Batley East and West; Cleckheaton; Heckmondwike; Holme Valley South

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

This report provides the Panel with an update on the Local Centres programme. In particular:

- Progress on master planning in all centres, emerging projects and anticipated next steps
- Focus on Cleckheaton

2. Information

Background and Introduction

- 2.1 In March 2021 Cabinet considered a report which proposed investing in town and village centres outside of Huddersfield and Dewsbury. The report was based upon an initial investment of £10m across the district.
- 2.2 The Initial Cabinet report – 16th March 2021- proposed that 4 key centres – Batley, Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike and Holmfirth be the focus for the initial round of investment – each being allocated £1.5m each.
- 2.3 The four town centres of Batley, Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike and Holmfirth provide a convenient next stage as they are the next largest and important centres as defined by work undertaken as part of the Local Plan. These four centres are important to Kirklees. They are either important town centres which provide a range of business, cultural, leisure and local retail facilities (Holmfirth) or are in areas where there is a greater expectation for local growth (Batley/Cleckheaton). They are also areas where there is already some other investment planned. For example, West Yorkshire Transport Fund (Holmfirth) or Transforming Cities Fund (Heckmondwike Bus Hub).
- 2.4 The proposal was matched with a clear process to follow. Essentially the key elements are:
- Ward members at the heart of the programme
 - Place Standard exercise to be undertaken
 - Investment/Master plan to be prepared for each centre
 - Projects to a value of £1.5m to be agreed
- 2.5 In addition to the above the report set out the types of projects that could be funded. This includes:
- supporting retail, employment, community, and local centre activity.
 - sustainable travel and climate change measures.
 - improved community safety.
 - culture, art, and leisure activities.

- public realm/landscaping, heritage, conservation, and better design.

2.6 The cabinet report can be found by following this link:

[V5 Final Small Centres Cabinet Report 16th March 2021.pdf \(kirklees.gov.uk\)](#)

Engagement – Place Standard

- 2.7 Part of the process to assemble a programme of investment for each of the identified local centres has been to undertake a stage of community engagement. To ensure that this is consistent across the four towns the Place Standard tool has been utilised. This encourages conversations about any place, using some simple questions. The questions help build up a picture across a number of themes. There are 14 themes in all ranging from moving around through to play and recreation to social contact and feeling safe.
- 2.8 The table below sets out the key dates for undertaking the exercise in each of the four centres.

Centre	Dates for Place Standard
Batley	Round 1 - 12 th July to 9 th August 2021
	Round 2 – Identifying Priorities - Feb 22
Cleckheaton	Round 1 - 1 st Sept to 11 th Oct 2021
	Round 2 – identifying Priorities – August 2022
Heckmondwike	Round 1 - 4 th Oct to 8 th Nov 2021
	Round 2 – identifying Priorities – May/June 2022
Holmfirth	Round 1 - 6 th Sept into Early Nov
	Round 2 – identifying Priorities – May/June 2022

2.9 The link to the Council's work in this area can be found below:

<https://howgoodisourplace.org.uk/our-places/>

Progress on Master Planning

- 2.10 As part of the process of developing projects and delivering the local centres programme Cabinet required master/investment plans to be developed for each of the four identified local centres. This approach will help set projects in a wider context and help create a plan for the future. This will in turn help to identify projects for delivery both as part of the local centres programme and for the life time of the plan.
- 2.11 The Place Standard results and the other engagement are important for informing the investment/master plans moving forward creating a clear link between engagement, planning and delivery.
- 2.12 Draft Masterplans have been prepared for all centres. Cleckheaton has been consulted upon; Batley is out to consultation at the present time;

Holmfirth will go live in November and Heckmondwike will follow in February 2023.

- 2.13 In addition to the masterplan work officers have supplemented this work with identifying and pursuing other funding to feed into the process. In Batley this has centred upon developing a significant Levelling Up Fund bid whilst in Cleckheaton funding has been sought from UKSPF to help develop future projects.
- 2.14 Activity in each centre since the completion of the Place Standard exercise is set out below including the route to adoption.

Batley

- 2.15 In Batley, masterplan work has been run in parallel to developing a much larger Levelling Up Fund bid to central Government. This was submitted in August this year and we await an outcome for this. The details of the bid are set out in the projects section below.
- 2.16 Key milestones achieved so far and those to be achieved are set out in the table below. Detail of masterplan material can be found in Appendix 1.

Key Milestones	Dates
LUF bid submitted	2 nd August 22
Final Masterplan sign off with Councillors	4 th October 22
Finalise consultation materials	7 th Oct – 17 th Oct 22
Consultation Live	21 st Oct – 21 st Nov 22
LUF Outcome	Expected Nov 22
Kirklees Council receives Consultation Feedback Report	21st December 22
Project Development	On-going since early 22
Finalise Batley Masterplan & Cost Plan	Feb 23
Expected Masterplan adoption	March 23

Cleckheaton

- 2.17 Work in Cleckheaton is most advanced and is subject to detailed discussion later in this report. The table below shows key activity to date and expected masterplan adoption dates. Detail of masterplan material can be found in Appendix 2.

Key Milestones	Dates
UKSPF bid submitted to WYCA for Spen Bottoms and Savoy Square	8 th June 22
Masterplan Consultation Live	29 th June – 29 th July 22
Consultation Feedback Collation	29 th July – 12 th August
Kirklees Council receives Consultation Feedback Report	7 th September 22
Ward Member Discussion – Next Steps	23 rd September 22
Further Target began Consultation (Facebook)	10 th October 22
UK SPF Outcome Expected	November 22
Project Development	Began July 22 onwards
Finalise Cleckheaton Masterplan & Cost Plan	November 22
Cleckheaton Masterplan Adopted	December 22

Heckmondwike

- 2.18 Of the four local centres Heckmondwike remains one of the more complex towns due to several other projects being delivered as part of the Transforming Cities Programme.
- 2.19 Whilst initial master planning has been undertaken this has stalled slightly as some of the identified schemes require more detailed examination of the highway impacts.
- 2.20 To help with this, officers have commissioned traffic modelling to be undertaken so that any scheme choices can be tested for deliverability ahead of moving to consultation. Once this has been completed

officers are able to progress forward with the first draft of the masterplan ready for consultation.

- 2.21 It should be noted that existing work to the bus station is an important part of this exercise.
- 2.22 Place Standard feedback is attached as Appendix 3 and the table below sets out progress and milestones to date and the expected Masterplan adoption.

Key Milestones	Dates
Officer Workshop on Masterplan Concepts	1 st April 22
Masterplan Development	April – November 22
Commission Traffic Model	July 22
Traffic Surveys	September 22
Base model completed	October 22
Decision on Masterplan Materials	November 22
Prepare Consultation Materials	December 22
Consultation Live	February 23
Kirklees Council receives Consultation Feedback Report	March 23
Project Development	Began July 22 onwards
Finalise Masterplan & Cost Plan	April 23

Holmfirth

- 2.23 Holmfirth also has other investment via the Holmfirth Access project which will be delivered during 2023. The Master planning and emerging projects seek to complement this work. Appendix 4 sets out some of the masterplan material and the table below shows milestones to date.

Key Milestones	Dates
Stakeholder events with key community organisations	July 22
Ward forum held	July 22

Update session provided to Holme Valley Town Council	Aug 22
Summary of findings shared with attendees and ward members	Aug 22
Development of draft masterplan	Aug 22 – October 22
Promotional Materials to be installed in and around Holmfirth	Early November 22
Consultation live 4 pop up sessions offered for people to ask officers any questions on the proposals	17 th November 22 to 17 th Dec 22
Masterplan pack (inc. covering letter, masterplan, questionnaire) sent to every household/business in the ward	Arriving for 14 th Nov
Officers/Consultants to collate feedback findings	14 th Dec 22 – 9 th Jan 23
Summary of findings from Masterplan consultation shared with ward members	End of Jan 23
Summary of findings from Masterplan published	Feb 23
Final Masterplan shared for sign off with ward members	End of Feb 23
Masterplan adopted	March 23

Emerging Projects

- 2.24 Alongside the investment/master plan stage are officers are opening dialogue on potential projects to be developed. This process helps to identify a range of projects and opportunities with the aim being to deliver key projects with the identified Cabinet funding and create a pipeline of projects into the future which are developed to a point where, should new funding become available, they can be delivered.
- 2.25 It is also important to understand where other funding is being committed to those centres so that the local centres funding can complement and add value.
- 2.26 The emerging projects for each centre are highlighted below.

Batley

2.27 Batley town centre is not only subject to local centres funding. There is also 'Streets for People' (SfP) funding allocated to Batley and a significant Levelling Up Fund (LUF2) bid was submitted to Government in the summer. All these concentrate on upgrading the town centre and being joined up to maximise impact and are subsumed in the masterplan currently being consulted upon.

2.28 In terms of LUF2. The council has made a bid to Government worth £14.28m. This will cover the following elements:

- Improvements to Commercial Street – 2 phases of work including a pedestrianised element.
- An improved Market Place/Cambridge Street to create better public and event space and better management of traffic through that part of town.
- A better and more accessible link between Commercial Street and Tesco supermarket.
- An uplift to the Council owned JBM building – also on Commercial Street.

2.29 All these projects can be delivered independently and currently have initial baseline designs. Visuals have been prepared and are part of the current masterplan consultation exercise. These can be accessed by following the following link:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/regeneration-and-development/blueprints.aspx>

2.30 Should LUF2 not be successful officers are currently progressing more detailed work on Commercial Street which combines the local centres and SfP funding to create a phase 1 project which addresses the concerns being raised through engagement and consultation exercises.

2.31 The masterplan has also identified, for the future, a number of other projects.

These include:

- Brunswick Street – public realm improvements.
- Events Programme – particularly linked to Market Place.
- A long-term Batley Park concept.
- Some town centre living opportunities.

Cleckheaton

2.32 Details of emerging schemes are set out below in section 2.47.

Heckmondwike

2.33 In Heckmondwike Transforming Cities Fund investment will help deliver a new bus station and some improvements to the highway network. There are also aspirations to bring the library into a more central space. Joining up funding will help connect the projects and ensure the changes are meaningful.

2.34 Emerging projects aligned with local centres funding in Heckmondwike are:

- A new library and potential public space in collaboration with the library service.
- An expansion of The Green to compliment work at the bus station – this involves some alteration of the road network. Therefore, this is being tested for deliverability. A traffic model is being assembled to carry out these.
- Better public realm in Market Place.
- Public space interventions at Firth and Green Park.
- A community garden initiative at Barber Street subject to discussions with landowners.
- Small scale vacant buildings and frontage scheme – potential grant regime.
- Improved signage.

Holmfirth

2.35 The Holmfirth masterplan consultation exercise is set for 14th November. Within the masterplan there are several opportunities for projects to compliment investment in the Holmfirth Access Plan. These are set out below:

- A riverside connections project – to help open access to the river in the centre of Holmfirth.
- A potential remodelling of the area around the bus station and central car park to create more public space.
- Smaller interventions such as a public art programme, support for a market, branding and wayfinding.
- A small transport package covering, a cycle hub, improvements to Bridge Lane, traffic calming and Holmfirth gateway treatments.

2.36 In addition, some long-term change sites have been identified such as the post office sorting office

A Focus on Cleckheaton

- 2.37 Of all 4 centres Cleckheaton has progressed the most including having undergone public consultation on the planned masterplan. Officers are planning to bring this forward for final approval in December 2022 and will then begin the work of developing and delivering the priority projects.

Masterplan Consultation

- 2.38 Consultation on the masterplan was conducted between 29th June and 29th July. The public consultation on the Cleckheaton masterplan aimed to be inclusive and engaging, to encourage the local community and stakeholders to provide their feedback.
- 2.39 A range of traditional and digital methods of engagement were offered to involve as many people as possible. This included:
- High visibility on street banner sites
 - Postcards to 'touch points' and businesses
 - Postcards handed out in person in the town centre
 - Letter to businesses in the town centre + 250m buffer
 - Posters into 'touch points' and community venues
 - Social Media posts announcing consultation was live
 - Press coverage
- 2.40 For household consultation postcards were posted to each household in the ward advertising the consultation, the drop-in sessions and a QR code and link to the online consultation platform.
- 2.41 For online consultation, a virtual masterplan and questionnaire was available online 29th June – 29th July. We also made the decision to leave it on past the date to try capture more responses.
- 2.42 In terms of physical consultation masterplan boards and questionnaires were made available at Cleckheaton Market and Library for the duration of the consultation.
- 2.43 4 Officer run drop-in sessions at the following locations:
- Saturday 2nd July - Cleckheaton Folk Festival - St Johns Carpark
 - Tuesday 5th July - Town Hall
 - Tuesday 12th July - Cleckheaton Market
 - Friday 15th July - Cleckheaton Library
- 2.44 People did verbally participate and viewed the masterplan online: visits to the online consultation platform were 2051 with attendance across the 4 drop-in locations estimated to be at around 220. However, whilst this participation was felt to be good the number of completed questionnaires was at around 45.

2.45 In general terms 62% strongly agreed or agreed with the Masterplan proposals. In terms of three main principles. Feedback provided the following:

- A Green sustainable town – 74% agreement
- A connected and active town – 60% agreement
- An inclusive diverse town – 66% agreement

2.46 A further, later consultation campaign was launched in October following conversations with Ward Councillors to build on the first round of engagement. This was focused on targeted Facebook adverts that asked people to show whether they were in support of specific concepts proposed in the Cleckheaton Town Centre Masterplan. The 5 projects selected were the ones that most polarised/engaged people.

Cleckheaton Project Proposals

2.47 Several project ideas are being promoted in the masterplan. These are:

- Improved public space at Savoy Square with improved relation with Market frontage.
- Managed Park/Natural space at Spen Bottoms and a new entrance to park area.
- Better connections from/to the town from the Greenway via Cross Crown Street.
- Works to Cheapside providing a link between the Greenway and Spen Bottoms – includes a new crossing across Bradford Road helps to complete the East / West route.
- Creating town centre gateways - on the four main approaches into Cleckheaton.
- Church Street improvements.
- Netherfield Works – business/creative/workshop space.

2.48 In terms of the three most favoured projects these were:

- Spen Bottoms.
- The Market and Savoy Square.
- The Park entrance.

2.49 The follow up exercise outlined in paragraph 2.46 was used to understand project preferences. Here Spen Bottoms gained 97% support and Savoy Square 85%.

Further funding to Support Projects in Cleckheaton

2.50 Officers are awaiting a funding bid to UKSPF which will assist in the development the identified priority projects. This will be in addition to the Council's Capital allocation.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

As part of the local centres process the Council has undertaken a series of engagement events through the Place Standard exercise to seek information to feed into this process as well as wide ranging contact as part of the master planning exercise. Individual projects at the delivery stage will also include an engagement phase.

3.2 Working with Partners

The Place Standard exercise set out to be as inclusive as possible and reach out to a wide range of audiences. Individual projects will engage partners as required to ensure that delivery is aligned with community expectations. The potential for overlapping working with external funding partners has already been identified.

3.3 Place Based Working

Place-based Working is a core element of Kirklees Council's Corporate Plan. The process of supporting our town and village centres is an important part of strengthening communities and place in a way that is informed by our citizens. To ensure that we deliver the right projects the Place Standard approach and the ensuing master planning process will help us to assemble a range of local information and intelligence to help us achieve the best outcomes. This will assist in understanding areas better, their networks and the assets within them and then will be used to deliver solutions and outcomes.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has adopted a 'net zero' carbon emissions target for 2038. All projects delivered will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the right principles are applied to ensure they achieve or come as close to this objective as possible. Town Centre projects are being asked to specifically address climate mitigation actions, including providing shaded space, recycling material, biodiversity opportunities and active travel to cut down Co2 emissions.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

The regeneration of town and village centres requires a family friendly emphasis. The projects being delivered should reflect the need encouraging families back into the towns. Where possible, children are being involved in the consultation, for example with school-based workshops.

3.6 Other (Legal, Financial or Human Resources)

The bringing forward of projects involves considerable financial, legal and human resources to achieve. The service is reliant on a skilled core group of council staff working alongside numerous other council service areas, bringing in other specialist skills where appropriate.

4. Next steps and timelines

These are set in section 2 of this report.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

Officers recommend that this update is noted, and that work continues to develop investment/master plans and projects for the identified centres.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder has been consulted with regard to the contents of this report and supports the officer recommendation.

7. Contact officer

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8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Cabinet Paper – Small Centres – 16th March 2021

9. Strategic Director responsible

David Shepherd – Strategic Director Growth and Regeneration

10. Attached documents

Appendix 1 – Batley Masterplan
Appendix 2 – Cleckheaton Masterplan
Appendix 3 – Place Standard Feedback for Heckmondwike
Appendix 4 – Holmfirth Masterplan