

## GROWTH, INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL

15 November 2018

### OAKHAM TOWN TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

#### Report of the Strategic Director for Places

Strategic Aim:	Reaching our Full Potential	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	N/A	
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Ward Councillors	Mr R Alderman - Oakham South West Mr O Bird – Oakham South West Mr B Callaghan – Oakham South East Mr J Dale – Oakham North East Mr R Gale – Oakham North West Mr A Mann – Oakham North West Mr A Lowe – Oakham South East Mr A Walters – Oakham North East	

#### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Panel:

1. Endorses the Report of the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group and agrees the response of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel (Proposal at paragraph 5) for Council consideration.
2. Requests that officers undertake a high level feasibility study of the recommendations in the report in order to provide further detail regarding potential deliverability to Council in December.
3. Recommends to Council the approval of the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group Recommendations and Future Framework Report (Appendix A) including establishing a budget of £2000 for initial funding of the Partnership Group.

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To receive the final Report of the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group along with accompanying evidence.
- 1.2 To provide a response to the recommendations from the Group and refer to Council for approval.

## **2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 RCC Full Council resolved to set up a Task and Finish Group to consider the future regeneration of Oakham Town at its meeting on 15 January 2018. A link to this meeting can be found below:

<http://rutlandcounty.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=145&MId=1652>

- 2.2 The composition and terms of reference for the group were agreed by the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel at meetings on 15 February 2018 and 22 March 2018 respectively. The Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix C.

- 2.3 A website page has been created to provide updates and information on the work of the group, including a link to the terms of reference, and can be found at:

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/roads-and-highways/oakham-town-centre/>

- 2.4 The current membership, dates of the meetings, agenda's, presentations, reports and minutes can be found at:

<https://rutlandcounty.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=358>

- 2.5 The Group has met at least once a month from April through to October, with smaller informal sub-group meetings taking place between the main meetings in order to progress work on:

- Communications and Engagement
- An additional sub group was formed to look at emerging themes and recommendations (including model for future delivery)

- 2.6 Survey work was carried out between May and October 2018 which included Town Centre and Visitor Surveys, Business Surveys and an Online Survey. The evidence collected through this period has been compiled into the "Evidence Report" (Appendix B).

- 2.7 Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel are asked to review the report and evidence, provide feedback and consider recommendations on proposals to put forward to RCC Full Council.

## **3 REVIEW OF THE WORK UNDERTAKEN**

- 3.1 It is clear that extensive work has been done by the task and finish group in order to evaluate what the national picture looks like, in terms of the health and wellbeing of small market towns, and to look to transfer that best practice to the

consideration of the future of Oakham. The commitment to the task by the group is to be applauded.

#### **4 CONSIDERATION OF THE WAY AHEAD**

- 4.1 It is clear from considering the highlighted examples of best practice brought to the table that thriving market towns and other places are those where there is demonstrable ongoing buy in from all parts of the community. As such in this instance it is essential that in order to continue to promote the economic prosperity and future wellbeing of Oakham that the informal partnership that has effectively come together is appropriately reconstituted and perpetuated into the future. The County Council should be a committed and effective contributor to the proposed ongoing regeneration partnership.
- 4.2 The proposed Partnership structure is based around three distinct elements – two working groups that are focused upon what could be called managing the place i.e. the physical environment, with a suggested initial emphasis upon issues associated parking, signage, traffic and pedestrian issues – and around marketing the offer with emphasis upon enhancing the attractiveness to customers and encouraging economic vitality. There would also be an overarching group focussed upon coordination and communication. The County Council should be an active participant in all of these areas.
- 4.3 In their report the Task and Finish Group have suggested a new Oakham focussed ‘vision’ for each of the suggested areas for further investigation and related potential short and longer term actions to facilitate the delivery of that vision. It is suggested that the Panel needs to consider whether they can support that vision, and if such support can be forthcoming, then request RCC’s Officers (where the perceived responsibility for works in the suggested area rests with the Council) to consider the potential feasibility and cost of delivering the suggested responses.
- 4.4 If the Panel are minded to support that suggested approach it is anticipated that some initial high level feasibility work could be undertaken in time for the December Council meeting so that Members can be informed in more detail regarding potential deliverability.

#### **5 PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The Task and Finish Group Recommendations Report sets out a series of recommendations under Section 9 (Appendix A). The Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel are asked to consider these recommendations and decide if they should be referred to Council.
- 5.2 The Scrutiny Panel may wish to provide its response to the recommendations for Council consideration. Taking each recommendation in turn, proposed responses have been drafted below which can be incorporated into the Report to Council should the Panel wish to endorse the report and forward for Council approval:

Recommendations from the Task and Finish Group	Response of the Scrutiny Panel
<p>Confirm their acceptance of the Evidence-base Report and its validity to determine regeneration priorities for Oakham.</p>	<p>That the Panel positively endorses the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group and accepts the Evidence-Base Report in terms of its positive contribution to the enhanced understanding of many of the current issues affecting Oakham. However, whilst being meritorious the report can only ever form part of the applicable evidence base because it will obviously be supplemented from other sources.</p>
<p>Support a community engagement process to ensure consultation with stakeholder groups and the wider community.</p>	<p>That the Panel also positively endorses the need for an extended community and stakeholder consultation process, where applicable, through a communication, consultation and engagement strategy developed by the Partnership Group</p>
<p>Agree the creation of an Oakham Regeneration Partnership by January 2019, comprising the following working groups (as detailed above, pp14–19):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Parking, Signage, Traffic &amp; Pedestrian Issues.</li> <li>b) Place-making, Enterprise &amp; Marketing.</li> <li>c) Co-ordination and Communication.</li> </ul>	<p>That the Panel supports the potential creation of an Oakham Regeneration Partnership and recommends that the Council commits to being a proactive and engaged partner in any such an arrangement.</p>
<p>Agree the following support for the work of the Oakham Regeneration Partnership to enable it to deliver town benefits as set out in the Task and Finish Group’s recommendations, with measurable improvements by June 2020, including some ‘quick wins’ by September 2019,:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Help to develop and maintain a communications strategy</li> <li>b) Financial management of projects by allocation of budgets and sourcing of external funding.</li> </ul>	<p>That the Panel agrees that the Council, as an active participant, should commit appropriate targeted resources, on an equitable basis, in order to support the work of the partnership. The levels of any such contribution will also need to recognise the nature of the contributions from other partners and acknowledge the financial and other pressures already placed upon Council resources.</p>

<p>c) Input in feasibility planning and expertise in project development from relevant council officers.</p> <p>d) Initial funding of £2,000 for admin, postage, printing, paper etc.</p>	
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## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The views of the Oakham Business Community, Visitors, Town Centre Users and the general public have been sought through a series of surveys as detailed in the Evidence Report (Appendix B)
- 6.2 All representative members on the Task and Finish Group have been asked to consult with their respective organisations throughout in order to keep them informed about the work of the Group and emerging issues and recommendations. Each member has also been asked to confirm their organisations budgetary processes and access to funding for future delivery of the future framework.

## **7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1 The Panel can endorse the report or make alternative recommendations to Council.

## **8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications for this report as the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel do not have any decision making powers and therefore cannot allocate any funding.
- 8.2 There is no dedicated budget set aside to support this initiative although the Council may well be able to offer support for appropriate proposals as they come forward from the Partnership Group, that accord with its adopted aims and ambitions.

## **9 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 There is no legal provision for Task and Finish groups. This group has therefore operated within the rules set out in the RCC Constitution and all members agreed to be subject to the RCC Members Code of Conduct.
- 9.2 Meetings have been held in public, with agenda's and minutes published on the RCC Website.
- 9.3 Task and Finish Groups do not have decision making powers, therefore any decision (on the wording of the final report, for example) has been undertaken through consensus, not by a vote.
- 9.4 Recommendations arising from the Task and Finish Group are subject to comment and endorsement by the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel for Rutland County Council and the relevant decision making bodies for the other organisations that send representatives and will be involved in implementing the

actions arising from the report.

- 9.5 The Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel does not have any delegated decision making powers, but can submit a formal report for consideration by Council under Procedure Rule 201 of the RCC Constitution.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed because there are no risks/issues to the rights and freedoms of natural persons.

## **11 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

## **12 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no community safety implications.

## **13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications.

## **14 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14.1 To provide the response of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Panel to the Report from the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group and recommend that Council considers the response of the Panel and approves the recommendations in the report.

## **15 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 15.1 There are no additional background papers.

## **16 APPENDICES**

- 16.1 Appendix A - Oakham Town Task and Finish Group Recommendations and Future Framework.
- 16.2 Appendix B - Oakham Town Task and Finish Group Evidence Base Report.
- 16.3 Appendix C - Oakham Town Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference.

**A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.**