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Monday, 29 June 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet has been arranged to take place on **Tuesday, 7th July, 2020 at 6.00 pm** to consider the following business.

In light of the current Covid-19 pandemic and government advice on social distancing, the meeting will be held online and streamed live on the Council's [YouTube channel](#).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christie Tims', is written over a light grey circular background.

Christie Tims
Head of Corporate Services and Monitoring Officer

To: Members of Cabinet

Councillors Pullen (Chairman), Eadie (Vice-Chair), E Little, Lax, Smith, Strachan,
A Yeates and Cox



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MyStaffs App

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 1. | Apologies for Absence | |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | |
| 3. | The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the projected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. | 3 - 14 |
| 4. | Delivery Plan and Corporate Indicators | 15 - 22 |
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The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the projected financial impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement, Customer Services, Revenues & Benefits



Date:	7 July 2020
Agenda Item:	3
Contact Officer:	Anthony Thomas
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Email:	Anthony.thomas@lichfielddc.gov.uk
Key Decision?	YES
Local Ward Members	Full Council

Cabinet

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report considers the projected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's finances.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Cabinet notes the information contained in this report regarding the projected financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's financial position.
- 2.2. That Cabinet notes the grant provided by the Government in 2020/21 of (£1,036,009) to be used to offset additional spend and income reductions and approves an update to the MTFS.
- 2.3. That Cabinet also notes the grant support for the Reopening of High Streets Safely of (£92,501), its intended use through a phased approach across the District and approves an update to the MTFS.

3. Background

The National Context

- 3.1. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has already had a significant impact on local council finances, the effects of which will continue through the current period of lockdown and beyond. The financial impact will be due to both unforeseen but necessary, expenditure and reduced income from fees and charges, Council Tax and Business Rates.
- 3.2. At this stage, we can only estimate the impact and there are very few ways we can really understand what the long term impact on our economy will be, which parts will be most affected and how the Council Tax and Business Rates will recover.
- 3.3. The additional spend and reduced income leads to two immediate financial concerns; the cash flow position of the Council and its ability to meet the 2020/21 budget and beyond.
- 3.4. **Cashflow concerns** (More Temporary in Nature):
 - Cash flow is focussed on having sufficient cash in the bank to enable all payments to be made when due.
 - Concerns about negative cashflows can be addressed via short term borrowing, but there is a cost to this and so, over the past few weeks, government has made a series of announcements designed to alleviate the pressure on councils' cashflow position. These include additional grant funding, the upfront payment of some grants that would usually have been paid in instalments and allowing councils to postpone business rates payments to government.
 - Cashflow issues may continue to emerge as the crisis continues, for example, if car parking income remains reduced over the coming months.
 - The risk to this Council is heightened along with all Districts and Unitary Authorities, because we collect Council Tax and Business Rates (a billing authority) on behalf of all precepting bodies.

3.5. **Budgetary concerns** (More Permanent in Nature):

- The second immediate issue is the council's ability to meet the agreed 2020/21 budget and beyond, where the pandemic has caused variations from budget, and whether it is still possible for the council to fulfil its overall legal duty to maintain a balanced budget going forward.
- Cash flow concerns can quickly become budgetary concerns. In terms of income, a delay in payment may be agreed with a business (cashflow) however should the business fail to make the agreed payments and cease being in business this becomes a budgetary issue.
- Across the sector, it is unlikely that the majority of transformation projects aimed at closing Funding Gaps will be achievable (between **5%** and **10%** of the budget in 2020/21 and up to **20%** of the budget in the medium to longer term).
- The approach taken at this Council with transformation projects, is that savings are not included in the MTFs until they are delivered. As a consequence, there is currently no adverse impact on the MTFs resulting from non-delivery of these type of projects.

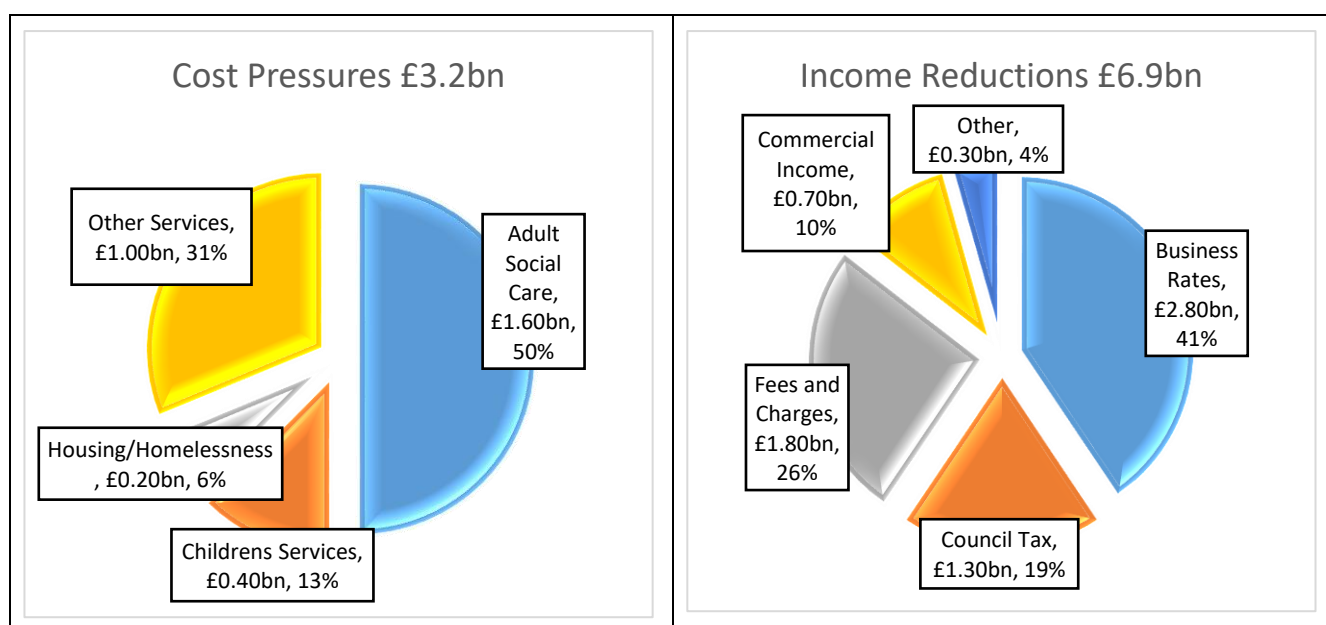
3.6. It should be noted that councils still have a legal duty to deliver best value and so will need to ensure that public money is spent wisely in its response to the pandemic and that the council does not incur additional costs that could reasonably be avoided. However, the scale of the crisis means that budget deficits are likely to be impossible to avoid and are also likely to increase in the event of only a gradual relaxation of public health measures such as social distancing.

3.7. If the government does not fully reimburse councils for their full losses, councils will find that their reserves will be depleted, or even exhausted, and ongoing savings will be required to refresh them to desired levels. Should the council be unable to balance its budget at the year end, any overspend will need to be met by reserves.

The Government Response

3.8. To assist the Government in understanding the financial impact, all local authorities were requested to complete a financial return to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 15 April 2020 using best estimates.

3.9. The results of this data collection exercise for all local authorities that responded are shown below:



3.10. It can be seen that income reductions at **£6.9bn** were more than double cost pressures at **£3.2bn**.

3.11. This ratio is likely to be significantly higher in District Councils who do not have responsibility for demand led services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services and are more reliant on income from fees and charges.

- 3.12. To provide an updated assessment of the financial impact, all local authorities were requested to complete a second financial return to the MHCLG on 15 May 2020, again using best estimates up to the 31 July 2020.
- 3.13. Government guidance and funding is still evolving, and definitive answers are not yet available, but ministers have made a series of undertakings to compensate councils in full for their additional costs as they respond to the crisis.
- 3.14. Additional funding of **£3.2bn** (£3.8bn if you include £0.6bn support specifically for the care sector) has been made available, though this is unlikely to be sufficient as the crisis continues. The sector is arguing for the government to provide additional grant funding to all councils to enable them to respond to the crisis and emerge from it with the capacity to resume local services and rebuild local economies. Additional financial freedoms and flexibilities would also enable councils to respond appropriately to their own local circumstances and local needs.

The Projected Financial Impact on the Council

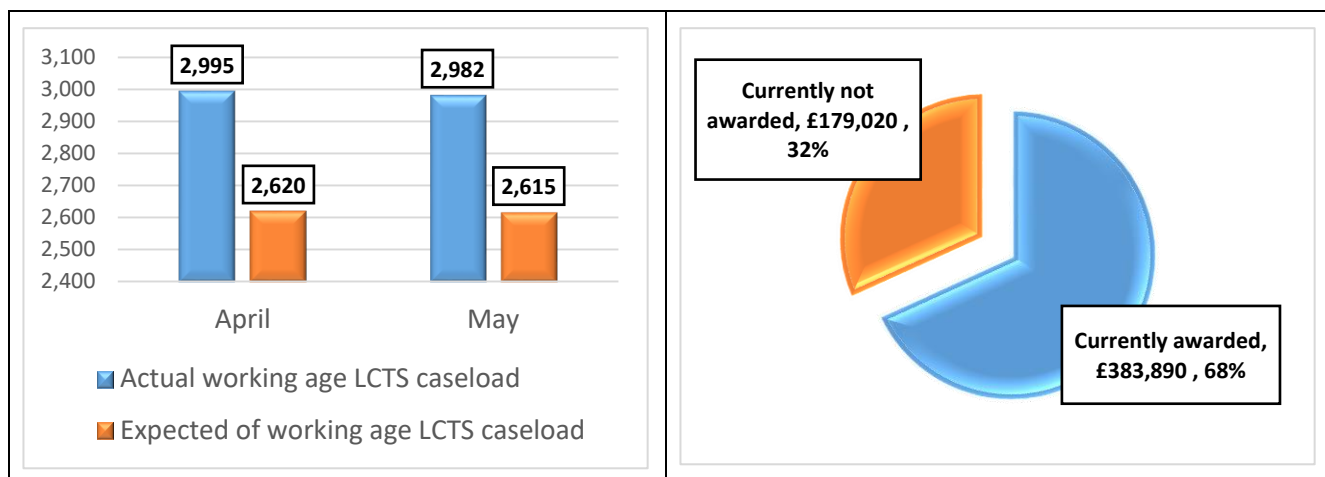
- 3.15. The overall impact is very difficult to predict especially identifying which financial impacts are cash flow (temporary) and which are budgetary (permanent) in nature. Therefore at this early stage, the financial impacts related to income are assumed to be those of a budgetary nature.
- 3.16. The impact will also vary by area, dependent on factors such as geography, demographics, services delivered and the nature of the local economy. However to a large extent, it will depend on how quickly the national and local economies return to normal levels of activity.
- 3.17. A full list of policy announcements we have received either to offset the financial impact to the Council or to passport to businesses and individuals is shown at **APPENDIX A**.
- 3.18. The annual income budgets contained in the MTFs approved by Council on 18 February 2020 (including the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund) are shown below:

	Collection Fund Annual Budget
Council Tax	(£71,410,668)
Net Business Rates Payable	(£36,755,000)
Total Income	(£108,165,668)

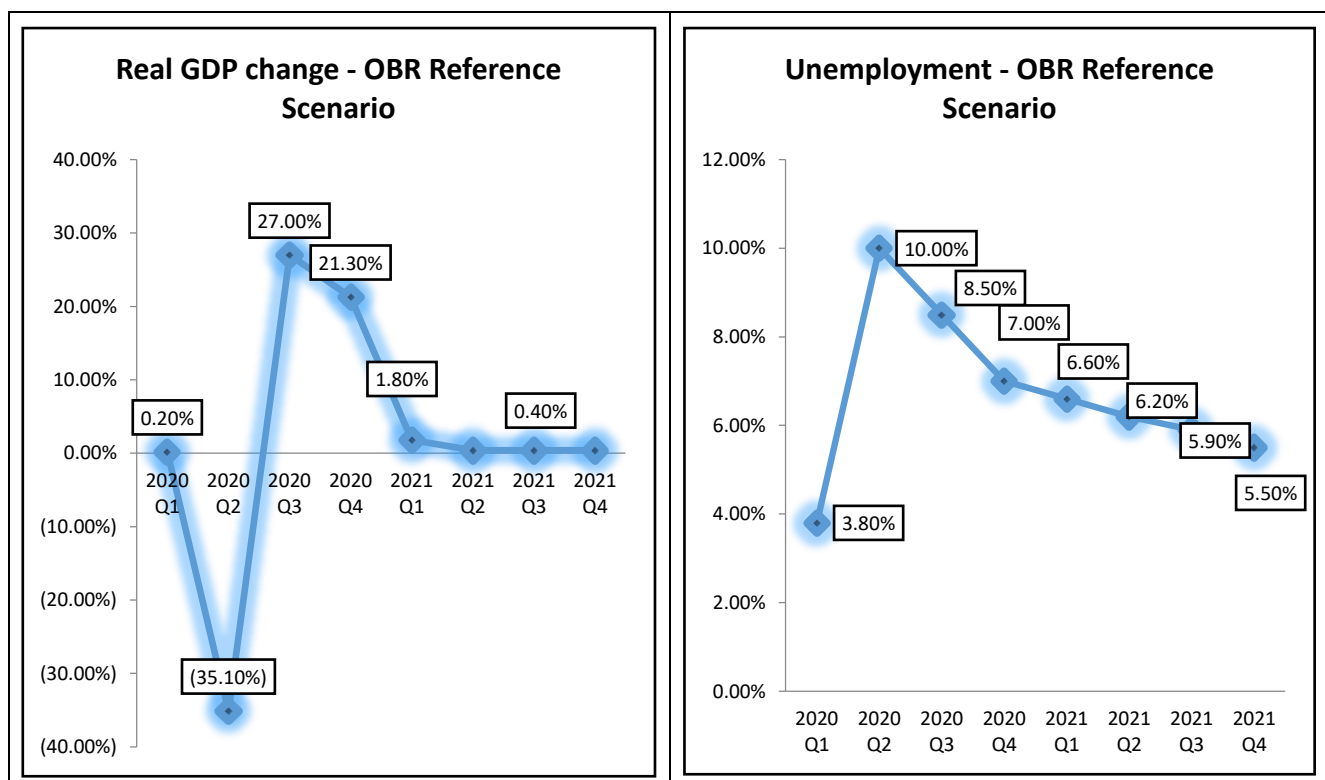
	This Council Annual Budget	May Variance
Total - Sales, Fees and Charges	(£9,561,140)	£212,954
Council Tax (LDC and Parish @ 13%)	(£9,026,124)	£16,858
Net Business Rates Payable (LDC @ 40%)	(£14,702,000)	(£102,929)
Total Income	(£33,289,264)	£126,883

- 3.19. The year to date performance for this Council's income streams up to the end of May 2020 is shown in more detail at **APPENDIX A**.
- 3.20. The government announced a significant increase in Business Rate Reliefs, and this has therefore reduced the Net Business Rates payable by **c£13m** in 2020/21.
- 3.21. We have also received (**£562,910**) from the government to provide hardship payments of up to £150 to all working age Council Tax Support claimants and this has reduced the amount of Collectible Council Tax.

- 3.22. The two charts below show the actual claimant numbers in April and May compared to the expected level (+14%) and the amount of Hardship payments that have been awarded to date:



- 3.23. Local unemployment has increased by **64%** from March to April, and the claimant numbers we are continuing to receive mean it is likely that the hardship funding awarded will be fully utilised and potentially exceeded.
- 3.24. The additional Local Council Tax Support cases could also have a longer term impact on future tax base growth assumptions together with a slowdown in housebuilding contained in the MTFs.
- 3.25. The Council has also received grant payments totalling (**£1,073,289**) to offset both cost pressures and income reductions. This consisted of a relative needs award of (**£37,280**) in 2019/20 and (**£1,036,009**) using a per capita based award (in two tier areas split 35% Districts and 65% Counties) in 2020/21.
- 3.26. To inform the income projections used in the Government financial returns we used economic projections provided by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) coronavirus reference scenario produced on 14 April 2020 and the Resolution Foundation “Doing more of what it takes Next steps in the economic response to coronavirus Report” produced in April 2020.
- 3.27. The OBR reference scenario related to Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and unemployment assumes a three month lockdown and a slow recovery throughout the remainder of the financial year and is shown in the charts below:



- 3.28. The Money Matters Report to Cabinet on 2 June 2020 identified cost pressures of **£12,550** and income reductions of **£50,000** related to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019/20.
- 3.29. The grant received in 2019/20 of **(£37,280)** was used to offset the cost pressures and therefore **(£24,730)** was transferred to an earmarked reserve for use in later years.
- 3.30. The Council has incurred additional costs and has seen a reduction in income from some fees and charges such as car parking and can also expect losses on Business Rates and Council Tax collection.
- 3.31. The projected financial impact informed by the OBR reference scenario and using the most recent information for 2020/21 only is:

Details	Impact (£)	Comments
Support for Leisure Partner	£104,000	Current agreement is to support for 3 months (the What if scenarios below, project the impact of longer periods of support based on LDC estimates)
Housing and Homelessness Support	£95,000	
Additional Hardship / Discretionary Housing Payments	£103,000	Impact is unlikely to manifest until later in the year when rent and furlough protections are withdrawn.
Additional costs of Waste Collection	£85,000	
ICT Support Costs for Remote Working	£32,000	Current agreement for support covers 3 months.
Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Building Cleaning and Other Costs	£12,000	
Bank Charges for Grant Processing	£3,000	
Transport for food deliveries	£6,000	
Project costs	£23,000	Delays in some projects result in additional costs.
Other costs	£125,000	Includes potential costs for overtime, agency/casual and overtime for essential workers.
Total additional Costs	£588,000	
Reduced Sales, Fees and Charges	£859,000	Based on OBR Projections for GDP with Car Parking income assessed as the highest risk.
Total excluding What if Scenarios	£1,447,000	

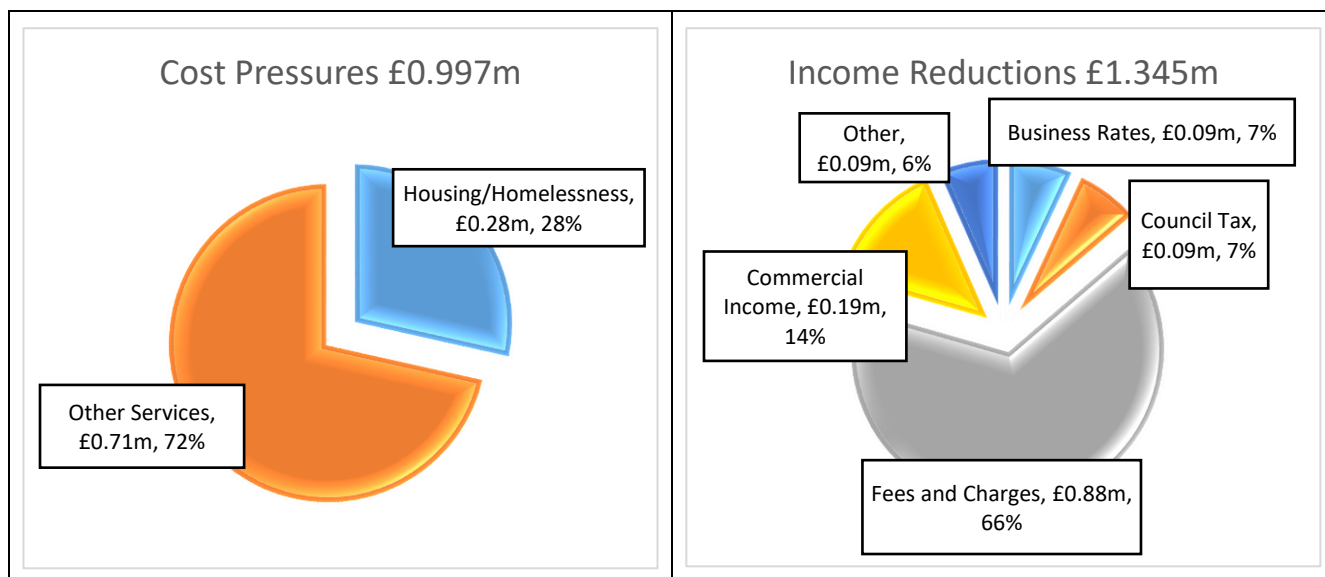
What if scenarios:	A	B	C
	Reduction in Collection Rates		
	1%	5%	10%
Projected reductions in Council Tax ¹ (LDC & Parishes 13%) included (will impact in 2021/22)	£92,000	£461,000	£921,000
Projected reductions in Business Rates ² (LDC 40%) included (will impact in 2021/22)	£93,000	£464,000	£928,000
	Other Time Based Assumptions		
Car parking income remains reduced for 6,9,12 months in line with April and May	£301,000	£884,000	£1,310,000
Hardship / Discretionary Housing Payments extend for 6,9,12 months	£86,000	£140,000	£186,000
Additional support for the Leisure Partner extends for 6, 9 12 months	£323,000	£593,000	£810,000
Total of What if scenarios	£895,000	£2,542,000	£4,155,000
Total including What if Scenarios	£2,342,000	£3,989,000	£5,602,000
Government Support in 2020/21 + Earmarked Reserve	(£1,060,740)	(£1,060,740)	(£1,060,740)

Total potential financial impact (assuming the inclusion of all What if scenarios)	£1,281,260	£2,928,260	£4,541,260
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¹ There is also £25,800 available in the Council Tax Collection Fund from 2019/20 to assist with reduced LDC income.

² There is also £950,453 available in the Business Rate Collection Fund from 2019/20 to assist with reduced LDC income.

- 3.32. The total (including what if scenarios and excluding Government Support) of **£2,342,000** using assumptions at the more optimistic end of the spectrum is:



Managing any residual impact and recovery

- 3.33. To manage the projected implications of planned changes in the Local Government Finance regime, the Council had been increasing the level of its reserves and this has proven to be beneficial in managing the financial implications of the pandemic.
- 3.34. It is important to remember that the reasons for increasing general reserves as a result of the risks presented by increased Business Rate retention and the Fair Funding Review, still remain present although these reviews have been delayed by a further year.
- 3.35. As detailed previously, in the event government does not fully reimburse councils for their full losses, reserves will need to be utilised. This will have two further consequences:
- The ability to support the recovery phase will be limited or curtailed and;
 - Ongoing savings will be required to refresh general reserves back to desired levels.
- 3.36. The Approved Budget for total general reserves include the minimum approved level of **£1,600,000** plus a contribution from the Revenue Budget of **£579,310** in 2020/21 and New Homes Bonus above the 'cap' of **£411,000** in 2021/22 and **£280,000** in 2022/23.
- 3.37. The contribution from the Revenue Budget and New Homes Bonus contributions are not confirmed, and therefore, a projection excluding these sums is also provided.
- 3.38. The total projected general reserves taking account of the what if scenarios at 3.31 is shown in detail at **APPENDIX A** and in summary at 31 March 2025 below:

What If Scenario Green = in excess of the £1,600,000 approved minimum level and red is below.	Total Projected General Reserves 31/03/2025	
	Approved Budget £	Confirmed Only £
Total Projected General Reserves at 31 March 2021 (pre covid-19)	8,141,954	7,562,644
A – Total potential financial impact of £1,281,260	3,019,484	1,749,174
B – Total potential financial impact of £2,928,260	1,372,484	102,174
C – Total potential financial impact of £4,541,260	(240,516)	(1,510,826)

- 3.39. It should be noted that the Funding Gaps identified in the approved MTFs assume a contribution from Investment in Property and savings from the ICT Cloud project. The income/savings are currently at risk and therefore they will need to be reviewed as part of the refresh of the MTFs.

The Potential longer term impact on the Council's Financial Position

- 3.40. It is essential that the Council focus on the likely impact that the crisis, and its aftermath, will have on income levels both now and potentially into the future.
- 3.41. The COVID-19 crisis is likely to be long-lasting and far reaching, affecting more than one financial year. It could be difficult for councils to reduce their spending back to pre-crisis levels and income streams will not necessarily bounce back quickly, especially if the local economy is in recession.
- 3.42. This means that the assumptions underlying later years in the MTFS will almost certainly need to change, making the 'funding gap' for 2021/22 and beyond larger and are likely to include:
- Strategic partnerships where the funding levels agreed by the Council were based on assumptions made prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Business Rates income projections due to collection rates, growth, appeals, empty properties relief and other reliefs.
 - Council Tax income projections due to collection rates, growth and Local Council Tax Support.
 - Income projections for sales, fees and charges including car parking and property rentals.
 - Planning obligations (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy).
 - Investment returns from treasury and property.
 - Transformation and savings projects especially where they are focussed on income generation.
- 3.43. The Resolution Foundation has projected a reduction in long run GDP compared to the trend of between **3%** (3 months) and **7%** (12 months) depending on the length of the lockdown.
- 3.44. The application of these scenarios to the sales, fees and charges budget in 2020/21 (excluding investment income) would result in a reduction in income of **£250,000** or **£600,000** per annum.

Alternative Options	<p>In addition to the use of general reserves, there are also alternative options available to mitigate or manage the projected impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The potential redirection of earmarked reserves to support the response and recovery phases.• The consideration of alternative approaches and options to reduce or eliminate projected reductions in income and additional costs.																				
Consultation	<p>The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be reflected in the update of the MTFS that will begin to be considered from September 2020 onwards by Cabinet, Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee and Audit and Member Standards Committee.</p>																				
Financial Implications	<p>The Council currently has three strategic investments and their value has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic:</p> <table><tr><th>Details</th><th>Original Investment</th><th>Value 31 March</th><th>Value 30 April</th><th>Value 31 May</th></tr><tr><td>CCLA Property Fund</td><td>£2,000,000</td><td>£1,859,135</td><td>£1,827,527</td><td>£1,801,411</td></tr><tr><td>CCLA Diversified Income Fund</td><td>£2,000,000</td><td>£1,773,174</td><td>£1,837,322</td><td>£1,876,539</td></tr><tr><td>Ninety One Diversified Income Fund</td><td>£2,000,000</td><td>£1,823,558</td><td>£1,883,863</td><td>£1,910,515</td></tr></table> <p>The Council has established earmarked reserves to manage the risk of falls in value. There is also a statutory arrangement until 31 March 2023 that means any falls in value, in excess of the earmarked reserves, do not impact on general reserves.</p>	Details	Original Investment	Value 31 March	Value 30 April	Value 31 May	CCLA Property Fund	£2,000,000	£1,859,135	£1,827,527	£1,801,411	CCLA Diversified Income Fund	£2,000,000	£1,773,174	£1,837,322	£1,876,539	Ninety One Diversified Income Fund	£2,000,000	£1,823,558	£1,883,863	£1,910,515
Details	Original Investment	Value 31 March	Value 30 April	Value 31 May																	
CCLA Property Fund	£2,000,000	£1,859,135	£1,827,527	£1,801,411																	
CCLA Diversified Income Fund	£2,000,000	£1,773,174	£1,837,322	£1,876,539																	
Ninety One Diversified Income Fund	£2,000,000	£1,823,558	£1,883,863	£1,910,515																	

	<p>In the event the statutory arrangement is not extended and the earmarked reserves are insufficient, then residual falls in value would need to be offset through the use of general reserves.</p> <p>There were key assumptions related to funding included in the MTFS, and a number of these have subsequently been delayed or will require update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review of the New Homes Bonus during 2020/21 for implementation from 2021/22 will be delayed. • The increased level of the Business Rates retained by Local Government from 50% to 75% from 2021/22 (offset by reductions in other Government Grants) will be delayed. • The Business Rates Revaluation planned for 1 April 2021 will be delayed. • The level of Local Government funding and how funding is distributed to each Local Authority through a Fair Funding Review from 2021/22 will be delayed. • However at this stage, it is unclear whether the Business Rates reset element of the reviews will be implemented for 2021/22 (any growth currently retained above the Government Set Baseline is redistributed within Local Government as reflected in the MTFS).
<p>Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan</p>	<p>It is important to note that the MTFS is not only based on assumptions on the state of the national and local economies over the next four years but is also the financial expression of the council's policy. Therefore, every council is likely to have to fundamentally evaluate its Delivery Plans and MTFS in light of the pandemic.</p> <p>The pandemic has not been totally without some positive outcomes for the Council in terms of delivery of the Strategic Plan, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have demonstrated the ability to respond and change at pace where needed, something that can be further develop in the future to adapt and deliver change across the Council and its communities. • The Council's staff have shown the ability to rapidly change mind-set and culture, thereby demonstrating we can deliver services successfully through a virtual front-door and work both flexibly and remotely. • The pandemic has highlighted the current position in regards to the resilience and integrity of our ICT infrastructure, whilst also demonstrating areas for future attention in order to optimise the new normal. • It has shown the need for a modern office design, providing the catalyst to make changes which people are accepting of, without the normal change curve and inherent tensions. • Finally it has shown our ability to communicate with emotion and personality, and the positive impact this can have for our communities, for example, the positive response to our bin tag and social media campaign to assure our residents and businesses.

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	No direct implications.
Crime & Safety Issues	No direct implications.
Environmental Impact	No direct implications.
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	No direct implications.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	The financial impact is not fully reimbursed by Government and exceeds the reserves available resulting in a Section 114 notice	The use of general and earmarked reserves to fund any shortfall	Likelihood : Green Impact : Red Severity of Risk : Yellow
B	The Council cannot achieve its approved Delivery Plan for 2020/21	There will need to be consideration of additional resourcing and/or reprioritisation to reflect the impact of the pandemic.	Likelihood : Yellow Impact : Yellow Severity of Risk : Yellow
C	The resources available in the medium to longer term to deliver the Strategic Plan are diminished	The MTFS will be updated through the normal review and approval process	Likelihood : Yellow Impact : Yellow Severity of Risk : Yellow
D	Government and Regulatory Bodies introduce significant changes to the operating environment	To review all proposed policy changes and respond to all consultations to influence outcomes in the Council's favour	Likelihood : Green Impact : Yellow Severity of Risk : Yellow

Background documents

Medium Term Financial Strategy – Council 18 February 2020

Money Matters 2019/20 Review of Financial Performance against the Financial Strategy – Cabinet 2 June 2020

Returns submitted to MHCLG on 15 April 2020 and 15 May 2020 and associated working papers

Relevant web links

Lichfield District Council
Policy Announcements

Funding	When Announced	Allocation	Notes
Additional Funding 1 st Tranche £1.6bn	19 March	£37,280	Relative Needs Based Grant.
Additional Funding 2 nd Tranche £1.6bn	18 April	£1,036,009	Per Capita based Grant 35% Districts and 65% Counties in two tier areas.
Hardship Fund - £0.5bn	24 March	£562,910	Based on working age claimant numbers
Business Improvement Districts - £6.1m	1 May	TBD	
Homelessness Funding - £3.2m	17 March	£1,650	
Additional Business Rates Relief	Various Dates	£13,429,306	Council 40% share £5,372,000.
Small Business Grant Funding and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund	11 March, 17 March and 2 May	£19,396,000	Councils used to passport to eligible businesses in their area.
Cashflow measures	16 April	N/a	Early payment of grants and deferral of Government share of Business Rates for three months.
Discretionary Grant Fund	4 May	£951,000	The grant calculation is based on 5% of the funding that was paid to businesses under the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant Fund, as at 4 th May 2020.
Reopening High Street Safely Funding	24 May	£92,501	

Year to Date Performance of Income Streams in 2020/21
(Compared to the Updated Budget)

Lichfield District Council			
	Year to Date		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Total - Sales, Fees and Charges	(£2,676,096)	(£2,889,050)	£212,954
Council Tax (LDC and Parish @ 13%)	(£1,699,084)	(£1,715,942)	£16,858
Net Business Rates Payable (LDC @ 40%)	(£472,269)	(£369,340)	(£102,929)
Total Income	(£4,847,449)	(£4,974,332)	£126,883

General Reserves Projections

Approved Budget					
	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
Total General Reserves Year Start	6,391,644	8,141,954	8,046,414	7,477,134	6,083,194
New Homes Bonus in excess of the 'Cap'	1,171,000	411,000	280,000		
Contributions from Revenue Budget / (Funding Gap)	579,310	(506,540)	(849,280)	(1,393,940)	(1,782,450)
Total General Reserves Year End	8,141,954	8,046,414	7,477,134	6,083,194	4,300,744
COVID-19 What if Scenarios					
A	(1,096,260)	(185,000)			
B	(2,003,260)	(925,000)			
C	(2,692,260)	(1,849,000)			
Total Projected General Reserves Scenario A	7,045,694	6,765,154	6,195,874	4,801,934	3,019,484
Total Projected General Reserves Scenario B	6,138,694	5,118,154	4,548,874	3,154,934	1,372,484
Total Projected General Reserves Scenario C	5,449,694	3,505,154	2,935,874	1,541,934	(240,516)

Green = in excess of the £1,600,000 approved minimum level and red is below.

Confirmed Only					
	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
Total General Reserves Year Start	6,391,644	7,562,644	7,056,104	6,206,824	4,812,884
New Homes Bonus in excess of the 'Cap'	1,171,000				
Contributions from Revenue Budget / (Funding Gap)		(506,540)	(849,280)	(1,393,940)	(1,782,450)
Total General Reserves Year End	7,562,644	7,056,104	6,206,824	4,812,884	3,030,434
COVID-19 What if Scenarios					
A	(1,096,260)	(185,000)			
B	(2,003,260)	(925,000)			
C	(2,692,260)	(1,849,000)			
Total Projected General Reserves Scenario A	6,466,384	5,774,844	4,925,564	3,531,624	1,749,174
Total Projected General Reserves Scenario B	5,559,384	4,127,844	3,278,564	1,884,624	102,174
Total Projected General Reserves Scenario C	4,870,384	2,514,844	1,665,564	271,624	(1,510,826)

Green = in excess of the £1,600,000 approved minimum level and red is below.

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Delivery Plan and Corporate Indicators

Leader of the Council - Cllr Doug Pullen and Cabinet Member for Innovation, Commercialisation and Corporate Services - Cllr Andy Smith



Date: Tuesday, 7 July 2020

Contact Officer: Colin Cooke, Christie Tims

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Email: colin.cooke@lichfielddc.gov.uk,
christie.tims@lichfielddc.gov.uk

Key Decision? N

Local Ward Members N/A

Cabinet

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the council's new Delivery Plan and draft Corporate Indicators for formal approval by Cabinet.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the Delivery Plan (Appendix A) and underpinning draft Corporate Indicators (Appendix B).

3. Background

- 3.1 Our strategic plan, approved by full Council in February, sets out the long term vision for the council that shapes the activities and the impact we expect to make. It is high level and succinct for officers and residents to understand and remember.

We will work collaboratively to **enable people, shape place and develop prosperity** across Lichfield District.
We will be a good council that innovates and puts our customers at the heart of all we do.

 <p>Enabling people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to help themselves and others • to collaborate and engage with us • to live healthy and active lives 	 <p>Shaping Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to keep it clean, green and safe • to preserve the characteristics • to ensure sustainability and infrastructure 	 <p>Developing Prosperity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage economic growth • to enhance the district for all (visitors/residents/employers) • to invest in the future 	 <p>A good council that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financially sound • transparent and accountable • responsive and customer focussed
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- 3.2 The strategic plan is supported by our Delivery Plan (DP) set out at **Appendix A** which details all the activity which will take place as part of our performance management framework. This is informed by our corporate indicators (CIs) and a draft set are detailed in **Appendix B**.
- 3.3 This approach enables the council to have plans that can change and adapt over the term of the council rather than being fixed for the entire four year period and as such, allows the council to plan effectively but also to respond to external factors and the changing needs of our community. The priorities identified focus specifically on the next 12-18 months with some longer term goals also identified. They are of course only part of what we deliver and the more detailed work programmed for individual teams is specified in the relevant service plans.
- 3.4 The DP sets out how the outcomes articulated in the Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024 will be achieved for approval and to begin ongoing development and monitoring by Cabinet.
- 3.5 The DP is underpinned by service plans for each area of the Council and these will be managed by Heads of Service and the relevant portfolio holder. All actions are tracked using our Pentana performance management system in real time and are reported on a quarterly basis in line with money matters either as a briefing note or to the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the end of each year.
- 3.6 Following the disruption caused by the Covid 19 pandemic in recent weeks, some of the key projects have already been disrupted or delayed and a small number of actions have had to be removed from the plan. This will need to be reviewed in the coming weeks as the full impact of the pandemic and measures to control its resurgence are fully understood. It is proposed that a review is undertaken at the 6 month point to see how matters are progressing and how the council is dealing with the ongoing recovery work, any response work still in place and the progress on the priorities identified. In these uncertain times, whilst we want a plan in place to work towards and to give more detail to the strategic plan, we also need to bear in mind the likely changes that could occur due to circumstances beyond our control.
- 3.7 We also include a draft set of Corporate Indicators at Appendix B to allow members to consider the type of metrics we are seeking in support of the plan. These will need additional work over the coming months to develop meaningful measures to demonstrate our impact. These will be informed by local service planning developed as this year's Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) are undertaken with officers.
- 3.8 Some of our data is provided by third parties and are not in areas we directly control, but we feel has a direct bearing on helping us to measure the impact we have on the health of the district overall. These indicators will be finalised in the mid-year reporting cycle to establish a baseline as some metrics are delayed due to the pandemic.

Alternative Options	None. The council must have a plan to deliver the outcomes articulated in the strategic plan.
Consultation	Residents, stakeholders, members and staff have been consulted on the development of the new strategic plan and the outcomes required. This has been translated into deliverable projects. The delivery plan will continue to be reviewed in the coming weeks as the full impact of the pandemic response and recovery on our resources and capacity are understood.
Financial Implications	All activities and projects detailed within the delivery plan have been fed into the MTFS projections. Where costs are not yet fully understood, these will be subject to further decisions by cabinet or the relevant portfolio holder on a case by case basis,

	in line with standing orders.
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	The DP is the key mechanism to monitor delivery of the strategic plan 2020-2024.
Environmental Issues	There are no specific environmental issues arising from the production of the delivery plan. However, key aspects of the plan will deal with any environmental and climate change issues.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	Equality and diversity implications are dealt with at an appropriate time in the delivery of the actions such as undertaking an equality impact assessment (where relevant) to consider the impact on people with protected characteristics.
Crime & Safety Issues	Crime and safety issues are dealt with at an appropriate time in the delivery of the action.
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	A Privacy Impact Assessment has not been undertaken for the delivery plan as there are no data privacy issues from the plan itself. DPA's will be considered where appropriate in each of the projects listed.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
			State if risk is Red (severe), Yellow (material) or Green (tolerable) as determined by the Likelihood and Impact Assessment.
A	The plan is too ambitious and sets out aspirations we do not have the resources to achieve	The Delivery Plan has been developed in consultation with council officers and assessed and prioritised to deliver within our resources. This will need to be assessed during recovery.	Amber
B	The plan does not reflect the aspirations of members, stakeholders or residents.	The underpinning aspirations were developed by a cross party O&S working group and the councillor consultation that was tested via resident and stakeholder focus groups.	Green
C	That performance is not adequately/accurately recorded	We use a system called Pentana that allows managers and heads of service to capture and report on the latest performance position. All updates will be reviewed by the HOS and portfolio holder to ensure that they reflect the latest/most accurate position. Reports are also sent to the relevant Scrutiny committee.	Green
D	That the actions we are measuring are not contributing towards our strategic ambitions.	The Delivery Plan was created using the Strategic Plan as its backdrop, and each of the actions listed in our Delivery Plan directly link back to the Strategic Plan	Green
E	That ongoing changes to the plan mask poor performance	Each project extension will be fully scrutinised by Leadership Team and Cabinet to ensure that the reasons for the extension are valid and do not mask poor or below target performance.	Green
F	The pandemic response and recovery impacts on capacity to deliver any	The delivery plan will be reviewed as the full impact of the pandemic is	Red

	non-statutory duties	understood.	
G	Corporate indicator information we require does not become available	The CI's are currently in draft to allow development as information becomes available. These will be finalised through the quarterly reporting process and a review at mid-year.	Amber
H	The plan is not financially deliverable.	We have worked closely with the team developing the MTFS and will review the plan as information is available.	Amber

Background documents

<https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=1499&Ver=4>

Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee Agenda Pack 22 October 2019

<https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=1615&Ver=4>

Cabinet Agenda Pack November 2019

<https://lichfieldintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=1533&Ver=4>

Cabinet Agenda Pack 11 February 2020

<https://lichfieldintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=1549&Ver=4>

Relevant web links

Strategic Theme	Strategic Outcome	Key Project	URN	Start Date	Due Date	Latest Update	HOS	PH
Enabling people	to help themselves and others	Bring the housing register in-house and finalise a revised allocations scheme to enable those in housing need to be able to continue to apply for rented properties to suit their needs	EP001	01/06/18	31/12/20	Since Covid restrictions have come into place we have been unable to progress this with Bromford. We are awaiting a response from Bromford.	GD	AL
		Provide a fit for purpose Disabled Facilities Grant scheme	EP002	01/04/20	31/03/22	We are working closely with the contractor to improve performance.	GD	AL
		Housing, Homelessness, and rough sleeping strategy 2019-2024	EP003	01/01/19	01/09/20	The Homelessness and rough sleeping section of the strategy was approved by Cabinet December 2019. Whole strategy endorsed by O&S 18.3.19. Decision taken Cabinet June 20 for approval after which it will need Full Council approval. A review of the strategy and action plan will be done after one year to reflect upon the impacts of Covid 19.	GD	AL
	to collaborate and engage with us	Design and deliver a communications and engagement strategy for the Council	EP004	01/03/20	31/07/20	Work has started on the creation. Insight and information is being gathers as well as good practice and examples from other organisations to inform the document.	BW	AY
		Public participation in council meetings	EP005	03/03/20	31/10/20	Template developed with Oct 19 Cabinet. Revisions to standing orders being considered in context of virtual meetings.	CT	DP/AL
	to live healthy and active lives	Friary Grange Leisure Centre (New agreement and refurbishment)	EP006	04/12/19	30/11/20	New Agreement completed. Works out to tender	BP	EL
		Parks Plan (including Transfer of Burntwood parks)	EP007	01/04/20	31./03/2021		BP	RC
		Support the development of a project for a greenway between Lichfield and Brownhills	EP008	01/05/19	31/03/21	The project is on hold due to CV19. Once able to reconvene the project group will be asked for a lead to drive forward the work. LDC have all of the documentation and proposals as well as potential funding streams and can support delivery.	BW	AY
	Covid 19 Response & Recovery	Shield vulnerable people, facilitate 3rd sector and partners to cope and support local, regional and national initiatives.	EPC19	01/04/20	31/05/21	Plan published with our commitments	All	DP
Shaping Place	to keep it clean green and safe	Dry recycling contract	SP001	01/04/20	31/03/22	Awaiting summary of market engagement - initial indications suggest a challenging market	BP	RC
		Collect food waste	SP002	01/04/20	31/12/23	Await publication of Govt Waste Strategy	BP	RC
		Climate change pledge	SP003	31/12/20/19	31/12/30	Work is in hand to assess the CO2 emissions for the Council and the districts a whole. This will provide a baseline against which to assess progress. County wide workshop with Keele university is in preparation. Activity has been affected by Covid -19. this has seen a reduction n Co2 emissions and in improvement in air quality . Those prioritised in the delivery plan that impact on this target have been identified. All cabinet and O&S reports now include impact on environment.	DT	AY
		Trade waste	SP004	01/04/20	31/03/22	Approach approved by O&S 03/03/20; further work on hold due to Covid	BP	RC
	to preserve the character and appearance of the district	Mitigate impact of H52	SP006	01/04/20	31/12/26	The Government has recently issued the notice to proceed with the main works for Phase 1 and Parliamentary stages for Phase 2a have been resurrected. LDC officers are in dialogue with H52 reps to understand work programme for Phase 1 as it impacts on the district.	CJ	EL
	to ensure sustainability and infrastructure needs are balanced	Review Local plan	SP007	01/04/20	31/12/21	Outcome of consultation on Preferred Option to be reported to members in June and a suggested change to the Local Development Scheme (Local Plan timescales) to Cabinet in May. Work on the evidence base to underpin a draft Plan is on-going.	CJ	IE
	Covid 19 Response & Recovery	Support social distancing and other environmental factors to prevent further spread and meet future needs.	SPC19	01/04/20	31/12/21	Plan published with our commitments	All	DP
Developing Prosperity	to encourage economic growth	Prepare an Economic Development strategy	DP001	01/04/20	31/03/24	Work on drafting an ED Strategy had commenced prior to events relating to CV19. This work will now need to be reviewed in the light of the impacts of CV19 on business and the local economy	CJ	EL
	to enhance the district for all	Renewal of Garrick Agreement	DP003	01/04/20	31/03/21	Renegotiations to commence - financial context to be considered.	BP	RC
		Future Leisure Provision (New Lichfield District LC)	DP004	08/11/19	01/12/24	Progressing to schedule	BP	EL/RC
		Events and festivals policy	DP005	01/04/20	31/10/20	Initial scoping taking place and collection and analysis of data to inform policy	BP/CJ/ GD	IE
	to invest in the future of key localities	Burntwood developments	DP006	01/04/20	31/12/20	Discussions are on-going with the main private landowner that controls sites in the centre of Burntwood to determine re-development plans. Separately, the Council will shortly be commissioning a study to assess the opportunities for growth in Burntwood as a commercial centre.	CJ	IE
		City Centre Development (includes Birmingham Road site, Lichfield City Masterplan, Future development, Development Partnership, CCTV replacement, Three spires agreement)	DP007	01/04/20	31/03/24	Results of consultation on the draft city centre masterplan are due to be reported to a meeting of the EGED (O&S) Committee in June and then a report taken to July Cabinet for approval of the master plan and next steps. Priorities, work programme and resource implications will be determined by members post approval of the master plan (including CCTV and Car parking). Three spires and coach park negotiations underway. Demolition work on B'ham Road commenced January 2020, on hold due to Covid19, contractor indicated will be back on site on 11th May, programme to completion to be confirmed.	CJ	EL
	Covid 19 Response & Recovery	Administer support and grants to businesses to deal with the response. Develop recovery plans to rebuild economy.	DPC19	01/04/20	31/03/24	Post the distribution of monies to support eligible businesses and the provision of advice & guidance, work will be starting shortly on understanding the detailed impacts of CV19 on business and the local economy and preparing a suitable response.	All	DP

Strategic Theme	Strategic Outcome	Key Project	URN	Start Date	Due Date	Latest Update	HOS	PH
A Good Council that is:	financially sound	Procurement support	GC001	07/10/19	28/08/20	Cabinet agreed to extend the current interim procurement manager to 28 August 2020 - recruitment underway	AT	RS
		MTFS annual update	GC002	08/10/20	18/02/21	Start is Report to Cabinet and end is Full Council Approval	AT	RS
		Unqualified audited accounts	GC003	10/02/20	31/11/2020	the Government has extended the date for the completion of the accounts from 31 July 2020 to 30 November 2020	AT	RS
		Review finance & debtors system	GC004	11/09/19	08/04/20	the current crisis has meant this is progressing at a slower rate than anticipated due to resources being redirected to support the current response	AT/PL	RS
	transparent and accountable	Support local governance reviews	GC005	01/04/20	31/03/21	Parishes informed of the delay and those parishes with issues asked to identify for resolving on a case by case basis.	CT	AL
	responsive and customer focussed	Design and deliver a Digital strategy for the Council	GC006	01/03/20	31/07/20	Work has started on the creation. Insight and information is being gathers as well as good practice and examples from other organisations to inform the document.	BW	AS
		Deliver people strategy	GC007	01/04/20	31/03/24	Year 1 underway, Y2 being scoped and funded. Will require review of HR service and support from all services.	CT	AS
		R&B structures and document management system	GC008	01/04/20	31/03/21	The DMS system has been purchased in the Northgate software but the data will need to be pulled through from civica into Northgate. Staffing structure not started (Due to Covid 19)	PL	RS
		Review elections service	GC009	01/06/20	31/12/20	Internal resource to support the review has been identified and scoping underway.	CT	AL

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Strategic Theme	Corporate Indicators	Source
Enabling people	Percentage of adults (aged 19+) that meet the Chief Medical Officer's recommendations for physical activity (150+ moderate intensity equivalent minutes per week)	Active Lives Survey
	% or respondents who have given unpaid help to groups, clubs or organisations	Feeling the difference survey (Staffs Police)
	% of the population who find it difficult or very difficult to cope on current income	Experian Data
	Percentage of households in fuel poverty	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Statistics
	Rough sleeping rate per 10,000 households	LDC
	Proportion of households in council tax arrears	LDC
	Number of days to process new claims - Local Council Tax Support	LDC
	Number of days taken to process changes in circumstances - Local Council Tax Support	LDC
	Number of days to process new claims - housing benefit	LDC
	Number of days taken to process changes in circumstances - housing benefit	LDC
	Number of customer accounts	LDC
Shaping Place	Housing affordability ratio (house price in relation to average salary)	ONS
	Number of new affordable houses built	LDC
	Net change in the number of houses	LDC
	% waste recycled	LDC
	Waste collected	LDC
	Trade waste collected	LDC
Developing Prosperity	Number of jobs (total employment)	ONS
	Number of working age population claimants of Job Seekers Allowance including Universal Credit	ONS
	Total value of RV	LDC
	New measure of retail/office floor space	LDC
	Number of business start-ups	ONS
	Vacancy rates - Lichfield city centre	LDC
	Vacancy rates - Burntwood town centre	LDC
	Number of visitors to the district	LDC

	Visitor spending	LDC
	Number of non domestic premises/ properties	LDC
A good council/Corporate health Indicators	Number of complaints	LDC
	% of council tax collected (in year - does not include arrears payments) & all year	LDC
	% of business rates collected (in year - does not include arrears payments)	LDC
	Level of General Reserves	LDC
	Efficiency of financial monitoring – quarterly financial monitoring reports to Cabinet and Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee and three Treasury Management reports annually to Audit and Member Standards Committee.	LDC
	Revenue outturn - does not vary by more than +/- £250,000 of the approved budget.	LDC
	Payments to suppliers – at least 90% of undisputed invoices have been paid within 30 days	LDC
	Efficiency of financial reporting – Draft Statement of Accounts produced, authorised and published by 31 May.	LDC
	Efficiency of financial reporting – Audited Statement of Accounts produced and authorised for issue by 31 July with an unqualified External Audit Opinion.	LDC
	Value for money – the External Auditors' unqualified Value for Money Judgement.	LDC
	Average number of days lost to sickness	LDC
	% staff turnover	LDC
	Number of council apprentices	LDC
	% of annual Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) completed.	LDC

Please note the lighter grey bars indicate these are Corporate Health Indicators that are not with LDC control

Lichfield City Centre Masterplan

Cabinet Member for Major Projects & Economic Development



Date: 7th July 2020

Agenda Item: 5

Contact Officer: Helen Bielby

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Local Ward: All Members

Members

CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In Summer 2019, following a competitive tender, consultants David Lock Associates (DLA) were commissioned to produce a Masterplan for Lichfield City Centre. Following the production of an Analysis, Issues and Options report in October 2019, a draft Masterplan was produced. This was subject to public consultation during January/February 2020 and the document was amended as a result of the feedback. The final document was submitted to LDC in March 2020 and duly considered by EGED O&S Committee.
- 1.2 In response to issues raised by the EGED Committee, further work has been commissioned that will provide advice in regards to the impact of Covid-19 on city centres and on the implementation of the Masterplan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet:
 - i) Notes the progress and submission of the final amended masterplan by consultants David Lock Associates; and,
 - ii) Notes the requirement to test the viability and deliverability of the masterplan as presented and,
 - ii) Notes the issues raised about the potential impacts of CV19 on centres across the country and the need to assess this in the context of Lichfield and the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan.

3. Background

- 3.1 David Lock Associates were commissioned by the Council in July 2019 to undertake work and formulate a Masterplan in respect of the future Lichfield City Centre. Following engagement with officers and members and external stakeholders based upon a detailed baseline assessment and analysis, issues and options exercise, a draft Masterplan was duly prepared.
- 3.2 The document envisages a 20 year implementation process and considers the Council's role in implementing and funding the key projects. The Masterplan is aspirational, whilst continuing to support and facilitate the vitality and characteristics of the city centre that make it attractive and popular. As well as supporting emerging planning policy, the projects set out in the Masterplan will also be used to shape the future of the city centre by encouraging appropriate land uses and public realm improvements to ensure Lichfield continues to prosper in a sustainable way which is sensitive to the city's character.

- 3.3 The Masterplan is a flexible framework rather than a rigid blueprint, setting out clear aspirations that the Council would like to achieve while being able to adapt to changes in the economy, required uses or other events that impact on city centres and development in general. This includes the impact of Covid 19. As with any masterplan it will be essential to keep it under review and ensure that the evidence base that supports it is still valid. In addition the implementation of any of the development schemes proposed within the Masterplan will be subject to rigorous viability and deliverability assessments and can be adapted and designed to meet the economic and community demands at that time. The plan is deliberately designed to evolve over the 20 years of its intended life as inevitably there will be significant socio- economic changes during this period.
- 3.4 Public consultation on the draft Masterplan took place from the 6th January 2020 to 3rd February 2020. This included a drop-in session over two days at the St Mary's Hub in the centre of Lichfield. A total of 141 responses were received from local residents and local interest groups and organisations via either online or via a paper questionnaire. In addition a number of organisations and individuals responded via letter or email.
- 3.5 All comments received as part of the consultation were noted and analysed. Changes to the document have been proposed by DLA as result of these comments. These include wording/sentence changes as well as other changes including in respect of some of the detail of the proposed development opportunities, the finer detail of which would be considered further via site development briefs or similar. For example, DLA responded to the representations regarding Bird Street car park redevelopment with proposed changes to the brief comprising an emphasis on (a) environmental enhancements in the short-term; with (b) a longer-term opportunity for comprehensive development. It is noted that the Masterplan Objectives, Masterplan Quarters, Transition Areas and Design Principles would remain broadly the same. As a result of the public consultation the document had a number of changes made to it and a final Masterplan was submitted to the Council in March 2020. This is attached at **Appendix A**. It is envisaged that the Masterplan, once approved, will be used as a base document, from which further plans/strategies for the finer detail regarding the development of the city centre will emerge.
- 3.6 In setting out the recommended approach, DLA carried out high level viability testing of the component proposals and have included suggestions and recommendations how the masterplan could be delivered. As would be expected given the nature of the masterplan and its contents – being of a high level nature - further work to confirm the viability and deliverability of proposals will need to be undertaken if the masterplan framework is to be duly supported and the Council wishes to pursue delivery of schemes/projects in line with this.
- 3.7 The EGED Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2020 raised the issue of the specific impacts of CV-19 on the national and local economy and centres like Lichfield. In the light of these it was suggested that the Council may wish to satisfy itself that the masterplan and the proposals set out within it remained robust and capable of delivery. As a consequence, DLA have been commissioned to provide advice in regards to the impact of Covid-19 on city centres generally and also in relation to the delivery of the Masterplan. This advice is attached at **Appendix B**.
- 3.8 The advice sets out an overview of relevant information as to the impact of CV-19 on city centres. It advises that there is now an increased awareness of the need for green space in city centres and a healthy outdoor environment. It also sets out that multifunctional spaces are needed, along with less need for office space due to more home working.

- 3.9 In terms of the Masterplan it sets out that whilst there is uncertainty, there is also opportunity and the flexibility of the Masterplan means that, whilst the ambitions within it are still relevant and appropriate, the Council is able to make changes to the proposals where necessary, to reflect the changes of demand and need. They state that Lichfield is well placed and indeed 'ahead of the curve' due to having a framework in place which can be used to underpin the recovery action plan.
- 3.10 The paper goes on to state that there is now chance to assess and undertake specific actions, for example, in relation to the delivery of a public realm strategy. The paper sets out that this could be a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to make lasting changes that will benefit health and wellbeing and help to combat climate change. The paper sets out many initiatives that could be included in such a strategy and are integral to the Masterplan and its overall objectives including green space provision, pavement widening/pedestrian priority streets, cycling lanes and storage and any reduced vehicle movements. The latter will also inform a car parking strategy which would reconsider the City's parking needs and provision, as well as drop off requirements reflecting the acceleration in on-line purchasing. Both of these strategies will assist in laying the foundations and providing guidance and information for the delivery of the Masterplan.
- 3.11 The paper recommends the delivery of development and buildings which would respond to the 'new normal'. These would potentially include a reduction in retail floorspace, bespoke rather than speculative office space, more green space, live/work dwellings with private outdoor space, more outdoor activity space, including space for bars and restaurants outside, and a reduction in car parking spaces. These types of refinements to development proposals would be picked up in any development brief and implementation of schemes at any of the locations identified as a matter of course.
- 3.12 In terms of specific development sites DLA advocate that the Birmingham Road Gateway could be reconfigured to allow for a larger footprint transport interchange, more outdoor space for bars and restaurants, more convenience retail and a reduced sized MSCP. It advises that the cinema and hotel market will need to be monitored closely. DLA also cite the Goldsmith Street in Norwich development and the Trent Basin in Nottingham housing schemes as good practice in terms of their private and public outdoor space and advocate that this type of residential development could be suitable for the Birmingham Road site. At Bird Street Courtyard there is opportunity for public space with other uses including leisure and car parking. At University West, the need for coach parking should be addressed within the car park strategy but sets out that the demand for the proposed use of the site for SME and start up business should be monitored further. Again any changes required will be picked up on a site by site basis as development occurs
- 3.13 It is also suggested that the public sector, and the funding that it can provide, will be called upon to take a more active role in delivery of development during the time in which the economy is rebuilding due to the extreme caution that private sector developers are likely to display.
- 3.14 The paper sets out that assessing development viability will be extremely difficult, although it is noted that there is likely to be a lot less competition for sites, especially those in non-prime locations. However they do state that small towns and cities, such as Lichfield, with green spaces and attractive centres are predicted to bounce back quicker from the effects of the pandemic than centres in larger conurbations. They advise that it is likely that there will be a period of development inactivity and much will depend on how well the CV-19 is kept under control and what a new normal will look like. Ongoing information gathering and monitoring of economic performance is key to the delivery of the Masterplan and its inherent parts.

- 3.15 Whilst Covid will inevitably affect our economy it is too soon to be specific about what the results will be either nationally or at a local level. The Masterplan, given its framework approach gives flexibility for each site to be considered carefully in light of the existing conditions of the market when it is bought forward for development. As David Locke Associates highlight the Masterplans overarching approach is still relevant and appropriate

Alternative Options	1. N/A
Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The draft Masterplan has been subject to public consultation as outlined in the main body of this report. Ongoing consultation and engagement with key stakeholders including local residents will take place going forward 2. At the Overview and scrutiny meeting on 9th June the following issues were raised and have been considered: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Covid 19 impact. The assessment has been undertaken by DLA and the report is attached, Paragraphs 3.7 -3.14 above refer. (b) There was discussion on the use of Council finding to support development schemes. It is accepted that it is too early in the process for such discussions and decisions to be considered. The Masterplan once adopted will provide a framework for individual site development and it is at that stage that viability and deliverability, including the councils role in it will be considered fully by Council . (c) the overall view was that the plan as presented was appropriate and should be taken forward
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Covid 19 report was undertaken from the Covid budget. 2.
Contribution to the delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Masterplan will particularly help support and deliver the Council's strategic objectives of developing prosperity and shaping places to benefit residents and business. 2. The formulation of the strategy's and implementation of projects will also assist in enabling residents and those who access services and facilities within Lichfield city centre to live healthy and active lives.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. None
Crime & Safety Issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. None
Environmental Impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. None directly from this decision, although some of the strategies and projects will be able to contribute to the Council's ambitions regarding sustainable development
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not applicable

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	The draft masterplan is not taken forward by the Council	Members have played an active part in the formulation of the document and have had the opportunity to provide consultation responses to the draft plan and therefore it should reflect the aims and objectives as set out previously	Yellow
B	Some of the proposals contained within the masterplan may not be welcomed by all stakeholders	The public consultation has demonstrated considerable support for the proposals included in the masterplan. Further public consultation may take place on specific development opportunities prior to statutory consultation via planning applications etc	Yellow
C	The proposals will require capital and revenue funding and this has not yet been included in the MTFS and may not be available	A budget will be drawn up and reported on regularly. Options for funding from other public bodies will be researched. Funding options for development projects will be further considered	Yellow
D	Officer resource may not be available and delivery of the projects may be delayed	Recruitment is taking place for a further team member within the Major Development Projects team. Further resource requirements will be identified in due course.	Yellow
E	A major overhaul of the planning system including the introduction of a zonal planning system may delay the implementation of the masterplan	Monitoring of government guidance on the reforms, potential to use Local Development Orders to ensure development is appropriate and delivered as needed	Yellow
F	The impact of Covid-19 on centres is not yet ascertained. Economic instability will have an impact on investment funding of major projects. Local government funding may also decrease and the ability to bring forward development projects may be severely hampered	Commercial property markets will be monitored and professional advice will be taken as necessary. Budgets will be monitored and work programmes will be adjusted to cater for the economic impact that the epidemic will have	Red

Background documents

Appendix A - City Centre Masterplan (DLA Associates)

Final Report (March 2020)

Appendix B – Lichfield City Centre Masterplan: Potential Impacts of Covid-19 Briefing Note (DLA Associates)
June 2020

Relevant web links

None

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LICHFIELD

CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN

MASTERPLAN REPORT

Prepared for Lichfield District Council

Produced by David Lock Associates

In collaboration with Integrated Transport Planning & Springboard

March 2020





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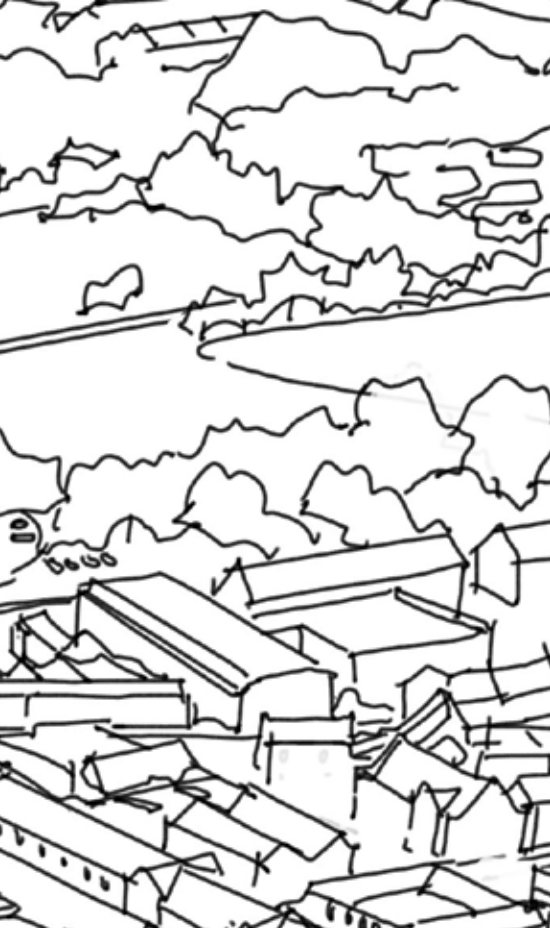


INTRODUCTION

What is the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan?

- 1.1 Lichfield District Council has appointed a team of town planning and urban design specialists, led by David Lock Associates (DLA), to produce a new masterplan for Lichfield city centre. The DLA team are supported by Springboard (city centre characterisation specialists) and Integrated Transport Planning (ITP).
- 1.2 The masterplan will be an important document that will shape the future growth of the city centre, set out opportunities for enhancing the quality of the city centre environment and the range of different uses it offers, and provide a prospectus for investment in Lichfield. The District Council consider the masterplan to be a key means of enhancing what is already a strong and vibrant city centre, and its preparation underscores the importance of the city centre as an asset for residents of Lichfield, visitors to the city, and those who work in Lichfield.
- 1.3 The masterplan is being prepared in order to add detail to and help implement policies set out within the emerging Local Plan, the aspirations contained within the Lichfield City Centre Development Strategy and Action Plan and the objectives of the Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan. The masterplan is supported by a Delivery Strategy, to help ensure that proposals in the masterplan are both achievable and deliverable. The masterplan will be considered as part of the Local Plan review process and any future Development Briefs for specific sites.





- 1.4 The District Councils' aspirations are to build upon the City of Lichfield's existing offer as a key location within the District and a focus for investment and growth:

Lichfield City Centre will be promoted as a strategic centre by improving its range of shopping, leisure, business, cultural, education and tourist facilities whilst sustaining and enhancing the significance of its historic environment and heritage assets and their setting.

Preferred policy: Lichfield economy, Local Plan Review – Preferred Options and Policy Directions, 2019



- 1.5 As well as supporting emerging planning policy, the projects set out in the masterplan will also be used to shape the future of the city centre by encouraging appropriate land uses and public realm improvements (the streets, public spaces and everything contained within those spaces) to ensure Lichfield continues to prosper in a sustainable way which is sensitive to the city's character. The city centre will continue to be a vibrant place that people enjoy for a variety of reasons, as a home, a place to relax and shop, for recreation or to work.
- 1.6 The masterplan is part of the wider work by local public services and partners to manage growth in Lichfield to improve and support the economy, encourage more jobs, enable housing development, create opportunities and support the well-being of communities. As such the masterplan draws together a range of related and complementary initiatives covering economic development, community activities, leisure and well-being, access and movement, accommodating growth and preserving and enhancing the historic and cultural environment of the city.
- 1.7 With this in mind, the masterplan is a flexible framework rather than a rigid blueprint, setting out clear aspirations that the District Council would like to achieve while being able to accommodate potential future need. This will be subject to the work of all partners as well as the availability of funding. It is an enabling document, providing opportunities for beneficial investment and change, but mindful of protecting those qualities that make Lichfield special, particularly its historic environment.





Preparation of the Masterplan

- 1.8 The masterplan has being prepared in three main stages:

STAGE ONE: BASELINE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

- 1.9 The first stage was analysis and review of all existing information about the city centre. This stage of the masterplan built on work already undertaken by the District Council, including issues identified through previous stakeholder and community engagement exercises, particularly those which focussed on the Birmingham Road site in Spring 2019.
- 1.10 The evidence base has been supplemented by a number of initial one-to-one conversations with key officers, local elected members, members of the project group and key stakeholders. The 'Analysis, Issues and Options Report' is the culmination of the stage one work. The report has been published in advance of the draft masterplan and is available to view on the District Council's website.

STAGE TWO: DRAFT MASTERPLAN

- 1.11 The second stage was the preparation of a draft masterplan, which has been informed by the issues and options identified in stage one. Six key objectives were developed from the issues and options identified. These objectives have shaped the development of the masterplan. Development opportunities and public realm priorities have also been identified to help meet these six objectives.
- 1.12 The masterplan is aspirational whilst continuing to support and facilitate the vitality and characteristics of the city centre that make it attractive and popular. The masterplan is also practical and, importantly, deliverable. The masterplan identifies short, medium- and longer-term opportunities, to ensure it is also achievable and deliverable within the 2040 timescale of the Local Plan.
- 1.13 The Draft Masterplan report was subject to a four-week period of consultation and engagement with residents of, businesses and services in, and visitors to the city, as well as other stakeholders.

STAGE THREE: FINAL MASTERPLAN

- 1.14 The third and final stage involved revisions to the masterplan, based on the outcomes of the consultation. The final masterplan will be published by the Council, to help guide future development within the city centre.

MASTERPLAN CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

Understanding Lichfield – Key Themes

- 2.1 The historic city of Lichfield is located in Staffordshire, around 18 miles to the north of Birmingham. Lichfield is well connected to the local and strategic highway network, and is served by two railway stations, Lichfield City and Lichfield Trent Valley. Lichfield District has a population of a little over 100,600 of which 32,000 live in the city. The city has a strong history with the city skyline dominated by the cathedral which is the only three spired medieval cathedral in England. The city's market was first chartered in 1153, and the market square is another historic focus in the city centre.
- 2.2 In order to fully appreciate the rich and varied context of Lichfield, and to provide a robust evidence base from which to inform the city centre masterplan, a comprehensive baseline review and analysis has been undertaken by the project team. The review and analysis focused on three main areas:
- Background documents comprising existing studies, appraisals, policies and plans (the 'evidence base' for the city centre) including physical character and function on its strengths, opportunities and historic growth;
 - The property market in Lichfield and its place 'characterisation' and 'footfall signature' to understand the city's primary role and function; and
 - Access and movement around the city centre.
- 2.3 From the review and analysis, a number of key themes have been identified, which are summarised below. In addition, information on the city's signature, and accessibility are also summarised on the following pages.



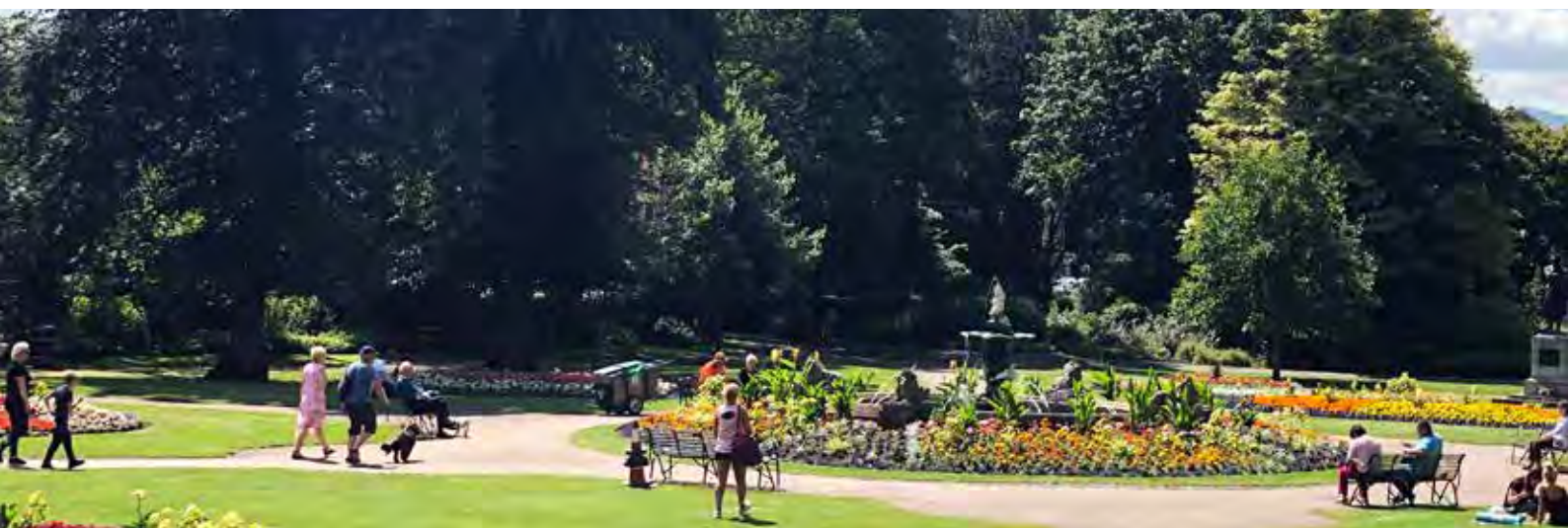
Preserve & enhance the historic environment

- 2.4 Lichfield is a historic cathedral city with a significant number of heritage assets (including the Grade I Listed cathedral) located within the Lichfield City Conservation Area. The historic character and quality of the centre is a key attractor for visitors.
- 2.5 It is important that any new development is sympathetic to the historic character of the city. It is also important to ensure that views of important historic buildings, including the spires of the cathedral, St Mary's church and St Michael's church are retained across the city centre, and consideration given to where new vistas could be introduced.



Support & provide a vibrant mix of uses in the city centre

- 2.6 The combination of residential, commercial, cultural, visitor and religious uses ensures that Lichfield has a vibrant and prosperous city centre with a special character. Whilst Lichfield does not contain many of the national retail chains and stores typical of larger towns and city centres, niche and artisan retail are a key component of Lichfield's character. This means Lichfield has a unique retail offer to attract visitors.
- 2.7 Lichfield city centre benefits from an existing night-time economy, particularly at weekends. New development should seek to complement, not compete with, the existing offer. Where new retail is introduced, the focus should be on niche, independent retailers, as part of a wider mix.
- 2.8 Nationally, most high streets and city centres are shifting towards a more experience-led offer. Leisure uses and restaurants are key considerations and the evidence review suggests a need to cater for a younger demographic. Improving the leisure offer, could increase dwell time and attract visitors from a wider catchment area.
- 2.9 At the time of writing, Lichfield District Council has resolved to provide investment towards the provision of a new leisure facility in Lichfield and to undertake repairs and maintenance to keep the Friary Grange Leisure Centre open in the short to medium term. A site for a new facility in Lichfield needs to be identified by the Council. This has been considered in developing the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan and some commercial leisure uses do form part of the overall development mix at on the Birmingham Road Gateway site. Such uses, combined with retail, residential, business and hotel uses have a much greater potential to generate value on the site ensuring that proposals are commercially viable and capable of delivery. Deliverability is a key consideration for the draft City Centre Masterplan. Leisure Centres are typically bulky buildings which often provide blank frontages to the surrounding public streets and spaces and require a large amount of car parking. This would provide a poor entrance to the southern gateway of Lichfield. Alternative, suitable sites are being considered by the Council beyond the city centre of Lichfield.





Enhance the tourism economy

- 2.10 The city centre is well positioned to meet the leisure and cultural needs of Lichfield and the wider sub-region, through its existing range of leisure and cultural venues, including the Garrick Theatre, the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum, Erasmus Darwin House and the cathedral.
- 2.11 Festivals, concerts and the light illuminations over the festive period are extremely popular, but the city centre has the capacity to accommodate more events and visitors. The provision of a multi-purpose community venue to host a programme of cultural/arts events could also cater for a variety of different uses, including by existing local groups and commercial businesses. In addition, hotel and other types of visitor accommodation would encourage longer stays.
- 2.12 Existing facilities, such as public toilets, are not considered adequate to serve the city's population and its visitors. There are too few facilities, and the existing are often unpleasant. Public facilities should be clean, attractive and convenient to use to enhance the visitor's overall experience and to encourage repeat visits.
- 2.13 Lichfield city centre has a strong tourism-based economy. However, parts of the city centre can feel disjointed due to poor legibility and signage, particularly between Lichfield City Train Station and the cathedral. The gateway into the city is unattractive, and visitors may miss out on some of the city's attractions, due to difficulties in navigating their way around the city centre.
- 2.14 For a cathedral city with such a range of attractions, Lichfield is not as widely known as a visitor destination as it might be. There should be a drive towards raising the profile of Lichfield as a destination, highlighting what the city has to offer to encourage a greater number of visitors. This could be linked with other major attractors in the nearby area, such as Drayton Manor Theme Park and the National Memorial Arboretum, to encourage visitors to spend longer periods of time in Lichfield.



Support commercial activity

- 2.15 Job creation in the city centre promotes local employment and helps to reduce the level of out commuting to neighbouring towns and cities. There is an increasing demand for flexible, small scale offices in Lichfield to support SMEs and start-up businesses. Providing for such office floorspace could work towards attracting and retaining a younger demographic to the city centre and in enhancing links to South Staffordshire College.

Maintain a public realm and open spaces of the highest quality

- 2.16 Lichfield city centre has a variety of public spaces, including Market Place, Beacon Park, Minster Pool and Stowe Pool which are valued by the existing community and by visitors. These important spaces should be maintained and enhanced. There is the potential to extend the provision of landscape planting and public spaces within the heart of the city centre, to encourage dwell time.

Characterising Lichfield – City Signature

2.17 It is important to understand Lichfield's role and function as a centre to be able to identify appropriate uses which will support and complement its growth in a sustainable way, over the coming years. For Lichfield to maximise its potential and future-proof itself, it is critical that it adopts strategies that are appropriate for its "signature" (as set out more fully in the 'Analysis, Issues and Options Report').

2.18 An analysis has been undertaken by Springboard of Lichfield's pattern of usage in terms of pedestrian footfall. Historically, town and city classifications have been based on supply side factors only, e.g. the number of retail units. However, the significant shifts in consumer demand that have occurred between online and bricks and mortar has resulted in significant changes in town and city centre occupancy, rendering these historic classifications out of date. Analysing a city in terms of its usage is more relevant in today's multi-channel trading landscape (i.e. town and city centres today are no longer simply about retail).

2.19 Lichfield has a **Speciality** signature. One of the key characteristics of Speciality towns and cities is that footfall is as high or higher in the peak summer months than in December. This pattern of footfall is a consequence of the key characteristics of speciality towns and cities which comprise:

- An Anchor which is not retail, e.g. heritage
- Attracting visitors but serve local population
- Having longer dwell time
- Focus is on protecting identity and positioning
- Offering something unique and special

2.20 Lichfield is the only city in its subregion (as illustrated in Figure 1) that is defined as a Speciality town/city. This offers Lichfield an opportunity to differentiate itself from other towns and cities, and to deliver a unique offer that capitalises on its Speciality signature type.

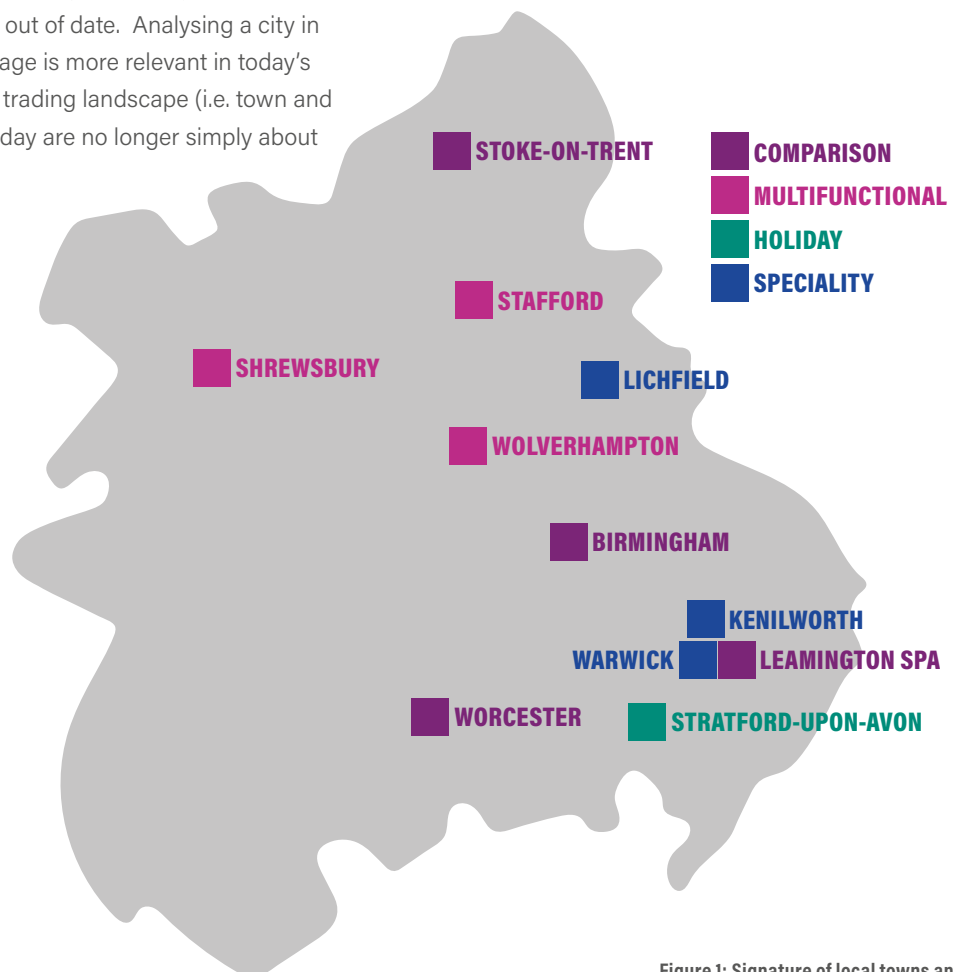


Figure 1: Signature of local towns and cities

Getting around Lichfield – Access & Movement

TRAVELLING TO & FROM LICHFIELD

- 2.21 Lichfield strongly benefits from being well-connected to Birmingham, London and the rest of the UK by rail and road. This serves the city centre by encouraging tourists to visit, and workers to commute inwards and outwards. It is important to consider the quality of these key gateways, particularly ensuring that they are safe, attractive and convenient to use.
- 2.22 Congestion on Birmingham Road and St John Street needs to be addressed and the proposed Lichfield Southern Bypass aims to alleviate some of this congestion by removing through trips from the city centre. Congestion impacts the experience of car, bus and coach movements through the city, but also the safety of pedestrians and cyclists alighting from Lichfield City Train Station.
- 2.23 The city centre is well served by a variety of car parks but suffers from a perception that there is a scarcity of parking spaces. In fact, information on car park availability and usage across the city centre suggests that overall capacity is good for a city the size of Lichfield, but that the most popular locations such as Bird Street operate over capacity.
- 2.24 Given that Lichfield has a compact and walkable city centre it will be important to better distribute usage across the various parking facilities and thus reducing the perception of parking scarcity. Real time information signage to existing car parks would direct visitors to car parks with available capacity, to help ensure that all locations are suitably utilised. Improvements to coach drop-off and parking locations are required to promote increased group travel. In addition, improving signage and wayfinding around the city centre will help people navigate their way around, reinforcing the compact character of the city centre and giving people confidence to explore further whilst at the same time promoting active and sustainable modes of travel.

- 2.25 Sustainable transport is a key consideration, shaping how infrastructure improvements can be used to encourage more sustainable means of travel, be it walking, cycling or the use of public transport. Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging points could also provide an additional option, to help promote the up-take of more sustainable modes of travel.

MOVING AROUND THE CITY CENTRE

- 2.26 Lichfield benefits from being compact in form, with Lichfield City Train Station providing access to Lichfield cathedral and the historic city core within a 10 minutes' walk. Improved pedestrian and cycle routes and cycle parking facilities are required, including along Birmingham Road, to help to encourage people to walk and cycle and utilise public transport services, rather than rely on the private car.
- 2.27 There is the opportunity to review existing pedestrianised areas within the city to provide greater clarity on those areas which are pedestrianised and those which are not. Pedestrianised areas within the city centre need to be carefully considered to balance the needs of those requiring access to blue badge parking spaces and also allowing for access to servicing areas.
- 2.28 The city centre is widely recognised as being poorly signposted, with little to no means for visitors to easily identify the best route to reach the city's key attractions. In seeking to promote the city as a tourist destination, it will become increasingly important to provide clear, legible signage and wayfinding across the city centre.

What does the Masterplan Propose?

2.29 The masterplan is structured around the following four core proposals. These proposals have regard to the analysis undertaken and the issues that need to be addressed to maintain the city centre as a vibrant, successful and valued place.

1. MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES

Six masterplan objectives have been identified.

The aim of the objectives is twofold: firstly, to help capture and address identified issues in the city centre; and secondly to help underpin projects and proposals set out in the masterplan and how they contribute towards addressing identified issues.

2. MASTERPLAN QUARTERS

In order to better understand the city centre, and provide a means of focusing investment, the masterplan identifies four overlapping city Quarters. These are based on patterns of existing activity and movement, the historic environment, and on places where investment should be targeted. They are interconnected by key movement routes and streets across and around the city centre.

3. MASTERPLAN OPPORTUNITY AREAS & PUBLIC REALM PRIORITIES

The masterplan proposes a number of projects and proposals which includes new developments, new streets and spaces, and enhancements to existing places in the city centre. The projects and proposals help reinforce the character of the city Quarters, diversify the range of uses and activities available in the city centre, and making it easier to arrive in the city centre and then move around it.

4. MASTERPLAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The masterplan design principles have been devised to help ensure that development coming forward in the city centre achieves high levels of quality commensurate with its outstanding historic character. The design principles should be read in conjunction with other local and national design policies.

Development that does not contribute to the character of the city centre, or enhances its vitality and viability, will not be supported by the District Council.

2.30 Further information on each of the masterplan core proposals is provided on the following pages.

Masterplan Objectives



OBJECTIVE 1: A STRONG HISTORIC CORE

- 2.31 Lichfield is a well-preserved historic cathedral city. This rich and varied historic environment is the defining characteristic of the city centre and is the primary draw for visitors to Lichfield. The masterplan aims to ensure that the historic fabric and environment of the city centre is valued, protected and enhanced. The majority of the city centre lies within the Lichfield City Conservation Area, which contains a high concentration of heritage assets. The medieval 'ladder' street pattern is evident in the central core of Lichfield.
- 2.32 The masterplan aims to ensure that development proposals not only conserve but enhance existing heritage assets and their wider setting. Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change, utilising a flexible approach. This will include the retention of existing views towards the spires of the cathedral and the potential to introduce new vistas.
- 2.33 Development within the city centre provides a unique opportunity to make a positive contribution to Lichfield's unique character and distinctiveness. A strong and successful centre helps support the rest of the city and provides many people with a positive key impression of Lichfield as a place.



OBJECTIVE 2: COMPLEMENTARY & SUPPORTING USES

- 2.34 Lichfield is characterised as a "Speciality" city. For Lichfield to maximise its potential and future-proof itself, it is necessary that the development opportunities identified in the masterplan are appropriate for its speciality signature.
- 2.35 Lichfield should seek to attract demand for new complementary uses to strengthen the existing vibrant mix of city centre uses. Niche independent retailers and the restaurant offer is what makes Lichfield unique and the masterplan aims to continue to support this offer. The masterplan proposes to emphasise a 'circuit of destinations' within the city centre including cultural, leisure, tourism and retail places, which themselves form distinct locations and will encourage longer visitor stays.
- 2.36 The masterplan identifies opportunities to provide for new housing to provide greater housing diversity (including affordable housing) in the city centre and to ensure that it is populated at all times of the day and into the evening.



OBJECTIVE 3: WELCOMING GATEWAYS

- 2.37 The experience of arriving in Lichfield is crucial in helping to shape people's perception of the city centre. The masterplan aims to ensure that the transition from being a passenger to a pedestrian is efficient, safe and welcoming.
 - 2.38 Parts of the city centre can feel disjointed due to poor legibility and signage, particularly between Lichfield City Train Station, Lichfield Bus Station and the Cathedral. In seeking to promote the city as a tourist destination, it will become increasingly important to provide clear, legible signage and wayfinding across the city centre.
 - 2.39 The masterplan aims to make the city centre easy to understand, through public realm improvements such as consistent signage so that visitors can easily identify the best route to reach the city's key attractions. The masterplan will encourage key sites to accommodate clear routes, to help direct pedestrians and cyclists around the city.
 - 2.40 The masterplan proposes new land uses, enhanced streets and spaces and better connectivity, particularly for sustainable modes of transport, providing opportunities to significantly improve the first impression of the city. Enhancements to bus facilities as part of a wider transport hub, to include Lichfield City Train Station will be achieved through targeted development opportunities and public realm interventions identified within the masterplan.
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OBJECTIVE 4: VIBRANT STREETS & SPACES

- 2.41 The public realm comprises the streets, footpaths, squares, green spaces, parks and other external urban spaces that are publicly accessible. The quality of the public realm should be such that they feel safe and pleasant to use by all types of users, including children, older people and those with mobility issues. Public realm improvements are identified in the masterplan which will help to enhance the quality and character of the public realm, equalling the high standards already set in places in the city centre.
- 2.42 Lichfield city centre has a variety of public spaces including Market Place, Beacon Park, Minster Pool and Stowe Pool which are valued by the existing community and by visitors. The masterplan aims to protect these important spaces and to extend the provision of landscaping and civic spaces within the heart of the city centre, to encourage dwell time.
- 2.43 The streets and spaces of the city centre are as much about the character and appearance of Lichfield as they are about access and movement. The masterplan continues to support a mix of different uses, set within streets and spaces which offer a safe, exciting and attractive place to spend time in.
- 2.44 The masterplan aims to ensure that the basic structure of the city centre is effective, establishing development parcels capable of delivering a strong pattern of land uses and activities. The mix of uses are supported through improvements to transport and movement in and around the city centre.
- 2.45 By identifying different sites that can accommodate a range of different land uses, new housing, business and employment, as well as tourism and leisure opportunities, the masterplan helps support the economic prosperity of Lichfield. In this way it will contribute towards making the city centre a more vibrant and attractive place and destination.



OBJECTIVE 5: QUALITY ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT

- 2.46 The design, quality and appearance of the public realm is an important component in defining the character of a place, in shaping people's perceptions of place and in linking together key destinations and attractions within a city centre. The masterplan identifies public realm improvements to enhance connectivity between the Birmingham Road Gateway and the city centre, both visually and physically. These improvements must be sensitive to existing residents with regard to noise and light pollution.
- 2.47 As a compact city centre, the masterplan aims to improve pedestrian and cycle routes and wayfinding to help encourage people to walk and cycle and utilise public transport services, rather than rely on the private car, which in turn would ease car traffic congestion. This will contribute towards providing opportunities for improving health and wellbeing, through making it easier and more attractive to walk or cycle. Facilities to encourage more cycling – wayfinding, parking and storage – are also addressed as part of the masterplan.
- 2.48 The masterplan aims to improve safety for pedestrian users by providing clarity with respect to areas of the city centre with pedestrian-priority and those parts where streets accommodate both pedestrian and vehicle movements. This will need to be balanced with the needs of those requiring access to blue badge parking spaces and to servicing areas, to ensure the city centre functions on a practical level.



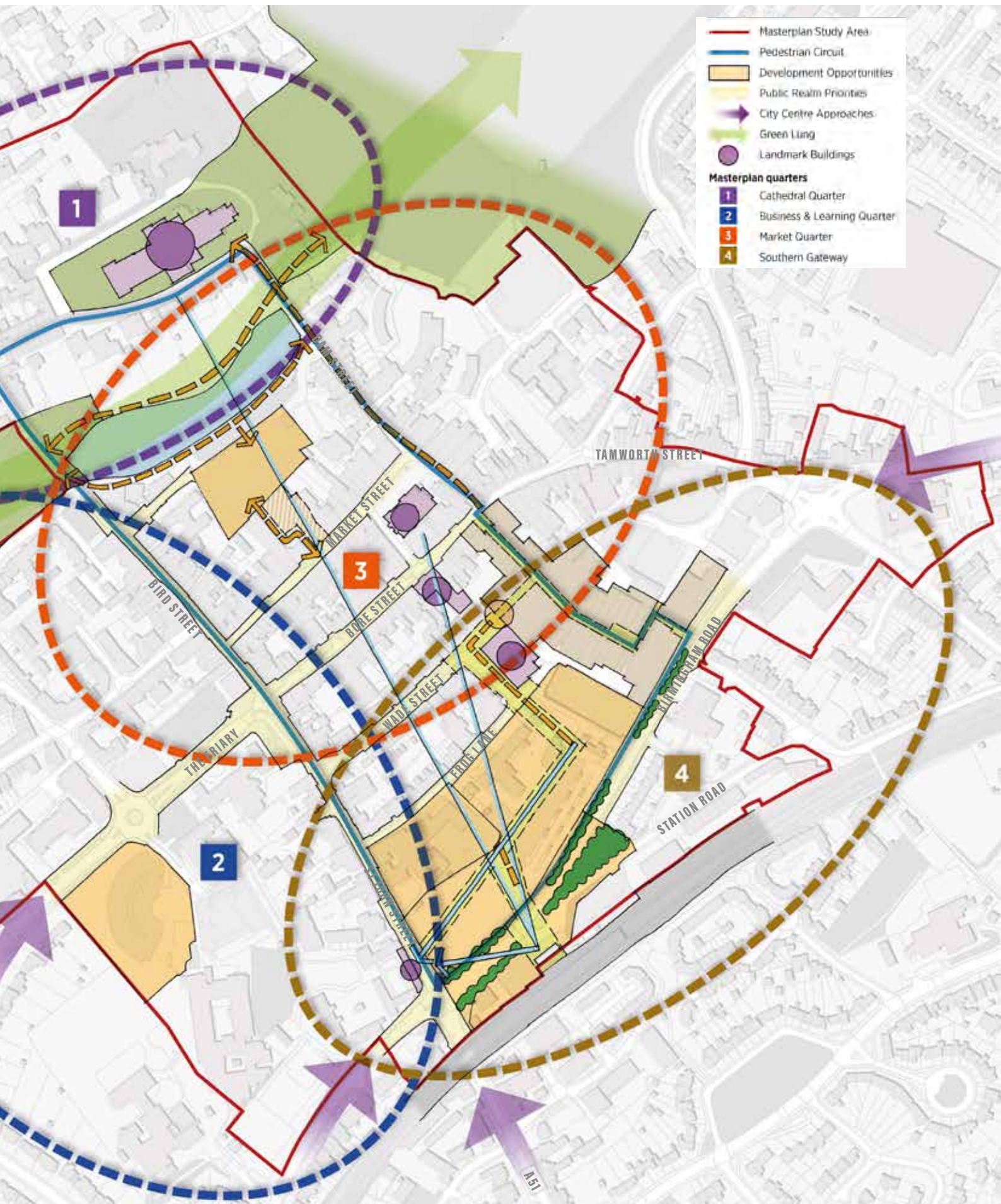
OBJECTIVE 6: THE 'GREEN' & SUSTAINABLE CITY

- 2.49 Green infrastructure (which includes open spaces, water bodies and landscape planting) provides many benefits, including:
- Improving people's physical and mental health;
 - Reducing air pollution;
 - Protecting against climate change to help reduce flood risk i.e. by utilising sustainable drainage measures (Sustainable urban Drainage Systems; SuDS) to manage storm water;
 - Providing comfort in urban environments – for instance trees provide shade and cooling;
 - Encouraging active travel i.e. using a form of travel such as walking, cycling and accessing public transport which involves physical activity; and
 - Providing opportunities for people to enjoy their leisure time.
- 2.50 The setting of the city centre is greatly enhanced through the presence of Beacon Park, Minster and Stowe Pools and landscaping. The masterplan aims to maintain, enhance and extend, where possible, the network of open spaces and landscaping within the city centre to provide benefits to residents, workers and visitors and increase biodiversity net gain.
- 2.51 The masterplan encourages the use of exemplary landscaping and the provision of open space and planting of native vegetation, together with SuDS including innovating paving treatments (e.g. permeable paving). As well as providing a drainage function, SuDS also contribute to amenity and enhance habitat creation and wildlife.
- 2.52 Specific building design features and construction measures can be incorporated to reduce energy demand. This includes both passive measures such as providing passive shading and south-facing windows, as well as active measures such as highly efficient boilers or high efficiency lighting. New development will be required to meet the mandatory requirements of sustainable development set out in Building Regulations (or equivalent future standard).
- 2.53 The masterplan aims to encourage the use of sustainable forms of travel, by improving connectivity to bus and rail links and enhancing pedestrian connectivity throughout the city centre.

Masterplan Quarters – Ensuring a Comprehensive Approach

- 2.54 The masterplan proposes a comprehensive and coordinated approach to maximise the potential of the city centre. This will facilitate the delivery of new development and public realm improvements which are designed to complement and connect with one another.
- 2.55 This approach enables growth to be planned in a sustainable way. This is particularly the case when considering city-wide strategies and improvements, such as public transport facilities, highway improvements and car parking provision. In so doing, the masterplan will give certainty to the development industry over what is expected within the city centre, helping to deliver the aspirations for Lichfield articulated through local policy.
- 2.56 In order to achieve a comprehensive approach, the masterplan has identified four distinct but overlapping city Quarters. The four city Quarters comprise the Cathedral Quarter, Market Quarter, Business and Learning Quarter, and the Southern Gateway Quarter.
- 2.57 The Quarters are defined, in part, by the established character of different parts of the city centre, its historic development, and by the prevailing mix of uses present. They provide a means of targeting investment ensuring that development opportunities and public realm priorities contribute to helping further enhance the character of each quarter but also the attractiveness and appeal of the wider city centre.
- 2.58 The Quarters are connected by key streets and spaces across the city centre. As well as performing a practical access function the streets and spaces also lend distinction to different locations in the city centre, helping people to find their way around Lichfield. They include the city's important green parks and spaces which are such an important part of the identity of Lichfield, specifically the Minster Pool, Stowe Pool, and Beacon Park. Together the Quarters, streets and spaces help define the city centre, are deeply embedded in its history and identity, and provide a robust framework for making decisions about its future.







CATHEDRAL QUARTER

- 2.59 This Character Area is focused on the area around the Cathedral, which also includes Lichfield Cathedral School, Erasmus Darwin House and residential dwellings located on The Close. This Character Area contains a rich mix of historic assets, most notably the Grade I listed cathedral.
- 2.60 An attractive backdrop is afforded to this area by the green 'lung' of Minster Pool, Beacon Park and Stowe Pool, which connects the cathedral with the Market Quarter. This setting is fitting of the cathedral's prominence and heritage status and its visibility provides an iconic landmark across the city.
- 2.61 The cathedral area should be maintained and protected whilst allowing for environmental enhancements including enhanced pedestrian routes and directional signage to further strengthen its important role within the city.

MARKET QUARTER

- 2.62 Representing a significant part of the city centre in terms of its role and function, the Market Quarter is used by a range of visitors, businesses and residents. The Market Quarter encompasses Bird Street, Market Street, Conduit Street and Bore Street.
- 2.63 This Quarter contains a mix of retail, commercial, café and restaurant uses as well as the Market Place which greatly contribute to the city's vibrancy. The niche and artisan shops, restaurants and cafés provide a unique offer to attract visitors and this should be maintained and strengthened with complementary new uses.
- 2.64 Within the heart of the city there are many important buildings including the Guildhall (Grade II) and St Mary's Church (Grade II*) which contribute to its' special historic character. The medieval 'ladder' street pattern is evident in this central core, providing important pedestrian routes. Any new development should seek to respond to the setting and built form character of the city.
- 2.65 There is an opportunity to improve the environmental quality and attractiveness of streets and spaces within the Market quarter, including through a consistently high quality of street furniture and paving. Interventions should also be made to enhance pedestrian comfort and safety by redressing the balance between the car and pedestrian.





BUSINESS & LEARNING QUARTER

- 2.66 The business and learning functions are focussed to the south-western part of the city. This encompasses South Staffordshire College/ Staffordshire University, Queen's Croft High School and the Police Mutual Offices, which is a major employer in the city.
- 2.67 There are existing linkages with the College/ University and Lichfield, due to their proximity to the central core of Lichfield. There is the potential to develop these linkages, to accommodate students, graduates and relevant businesses from the University and College.
- 2.68 Whilst this area predominantly focuses on business and learning, parts of this Quarter are also residential in character, with recent high-quality housing schemes at Chapter House on Monks Close and St John's Almshouses on the Birmingham Road.
- 2.69 The business and learning uses within this Quarter should be maintained, and opportunities pursued to rationalise the area of car parking at University West Car Park to make more efficient use of this land for new uses, alongside the car parking area.

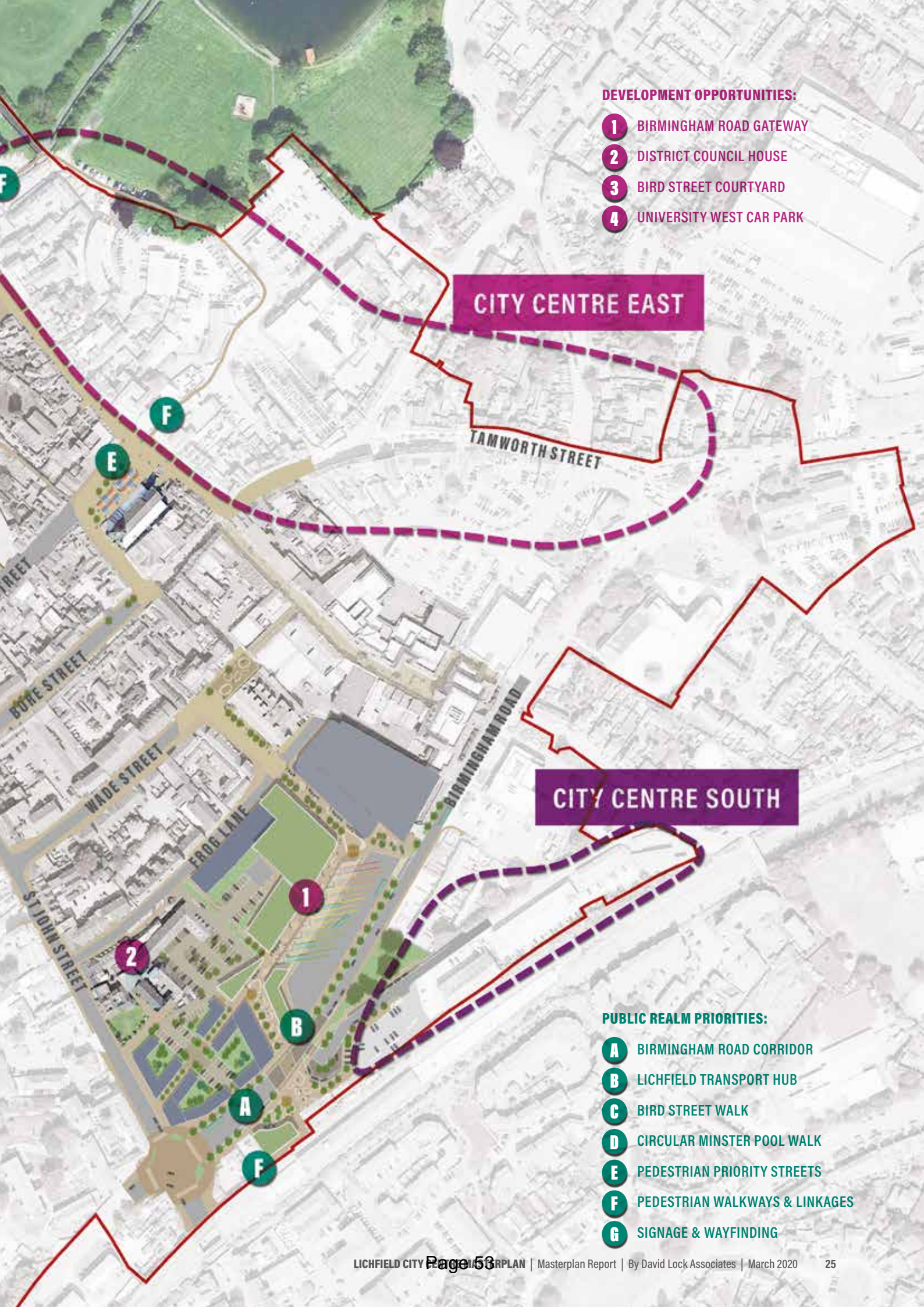
SOUTHERN GATEWAY QUARTER

- 2.70 The Southern Gateway Quarter is focussed around Lichfield City Train Station, Lichfield Bus Station and the Birmingham Road which provides the southern approach to Lichfield. This is a key entrance into the city for visitors arriving by train, bus and car. It is important that the transition from being a driver or passenger to a pedestrian shapes a positive first impression of Lichfield.
- 2.71 Currently, this key approach does not signal arrival into the city centre, with poor public realm and evident areas of disconnect for pedestrians travelling between this Area and the Market Quarter. This greatly impacts upon the visitor arrival experience.
- 2.72 The Birmingham Road provides a significant barrier to pedestrian movement into the city which needs to be addressed. The quality of the Bus Station and car parks also require improvement. A scheme of public realm improvements around Birmingham Road would be significant in revitalising the Gateway and linking in with the city centre.
- 2.73 The availability of the Birmingham Road Gateway site for future development provides the opportunity to 'stitch' together pedestrian links between Lichfield City Train Station, the heart of the City and the cathedral.
- 2.74 This Quarter contains the heritage buildings of the Hospital of St John (Grade I) and part of Lichfield District Council's offices, including the Council Chamber (Grade II). The spires of the Cathedral and St Mary's Church are visible from the Birmingham Road and these important vistas should be maintained and enhanced through the configuration of any new uses on the Birmingham Road Gateway site.



CITY CENTRE WEST





DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

- 1** BIRMINGHAM ROAD GATEWAY
- 2** DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSE
- 3** BIRD STREET COURTYARD
- 4** UNIVERSITY WEST CAR PARK

CITY CENTRE EAST

TAMWORTH STREET

CITY CENTRE SOUTH

PUBLIC REALM PRIORITIES:

- A** BIRMINGHAM ROAD CORRIDOR
- B** LICHFIELD TRANSPORT HUB
- C** BIRD STREET WALK
- D** CIRCULAR MINSTER POOL WALK
- E** PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS
- F** PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS & LINKAGES
- G** SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

Masterplan Development Opportunities and Public Realm Priorities

- 2.75 The masterplan has identified a number of Development Opportunities and Public Realm Priorities which collectively will deliver an enhanced city centre offer for people living, working and visiting Lichfield. The Development Opportunities will also contribute to delivering the Public Realm Priorities that are also identified within the masterplan.
- 2.76 The Development Opportunities have been identified having regard to known sites that are available and following discussions between the Council and other stakeholders. The masterplan establishes a strong framework within which development proposals can be shaped and ultimately assessed by the Council. The Development Opportunities and Public Realm Priorities are explained in more detail in Sections 3 and 4 of this report.
- 2.77 It is important to note that should other sites come forward within the city centre that have not at this stage been identified, they will be assessed having regard to the contribution they make to the overall city centre masterplan. The Development Opportunities comprise:

BIRMINGHAM ROAD GATEWAY

A mix of new uses including a Bus Station, alongside public realm enhancements to create a revitalised southern gateway to Lichfield.



BIRD STREET COURTYARD

A mix of new housing and commercial opportunities (a café/bar/restaurant/community uses) to animate Minster Pool Walk with car parking spaces continuing to be provided to the southern part of the Bird Street Car Park site.



2.78 Seven Public Realm Priorities have also been identified to deliver wider improvements to patterns of movement and quality of place. They comprise:



DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSE

Providing enhancements to the District Council House to consolidate the existing office areas to provide a more efficient work space and to provide for additional commercial/community uses.



UNIVERSITY WEST CAR PARK

A rationalised area of car parking to accommodate parking for coaches and new small-scale offices, suitable for SMEs and start-up businesses.

BIRMINGHAM ROAD CORRIDOR

A The Birmingham Road forms a key element of the Gateway, signalling the southern entrance to the City centre.

LICHFIELD TRANSPORT HUB

B The public transport facilities will be important in presenting a first impression of Lichfield, as people transition from being a passenger to a pedestrian.

BIRD STREET WALK

C Bird Street Walk forms an important pedestrian connection between Bird Street and Market Street where environmental enhancements should be focused.

CIRCULAR MINSTER POOL WALK

D Providing the pedestrian link through the green 'lung' of the City, a new footpath to the north of Minster Pool will facilitate a circular walk.

PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS

E Interventions within the pedestrianised areas of the Market Quarter will improve safety for pedestrian users.

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS & LINKAGES

F There are barriers to pedestrian movement within certain areas of the city which would benefit from enhancements to the public realm.

SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

G Clear and consistent signage and wayfinding across the city centre will make it easier for people to navigate their way around Lichfield.

Masterplan Transition Areas

2.79 In addition to the Development Opportunities and Public Realm Priorities that have been identified as part of the masterplan, there are also three Transition Areas. These are located at the periphery of the masterplan area and although they do not present specific proposals never-the-less they are important in providing a future opportunity for enhancement.

2.80 The three Transition Areas comprise: **City centre East**; **City Centre West**; and **City Centre South**. Where proposals come forward for each, they will be assessed against the opportunities set out below as well as the masterplan objectives and design principles.





CITY CENTRE EAST

2.81 The City Centre East Transition Area is located on the eastern edge of the masterplan area and runs between Birmingham Road to the south and Reeve Lane and Cross Keys to the north. The area is characterised by a mix of commercial and residential premises and includes extensive areas of public and private car parking. Pedestrian routes, particularly giving access to Tesco to the east, as well as the extensive park around Stowe Pool, cross the site. Key opportunities could include:

- New development to establish a finer grained pattern of development with greater overlooking of adjoining streets and spaces where this would not harm the significance of heritage assets.
- Establishing a better interface between the parkland around Stowe Pool and the rest of the city centre – this could include better signage and wayfinding, opportunities for additional events space as part of the parkland, and temporary camping facilities to accommodate visitors at one of Lichfield's many festivals.
- Additional tree planting along the edge of the Stowe Pool parkland to enhance visual amenity and improved biodiversity in the city centre.

CITY CENTRE WEST

2.82 The City Centre West Transition Area is located to the north west of the city centre masterplan area. It is located in the area between Swan Road and Shaw Lane. The area is characterised primarily by the edge of Beacon Park, as well as various properties access from Beacon Street. Key opportunities should include:

- Enhanced wayfinding and signage to Beacon Park more effectively linking it to the proposed circular route around Minster Pool and Stowe Pool beyond.
- Select infill and redevelopment opportunities on brownfield sites designed to overlook the park and establish an attractive edge where this would not harm the significance of heritage assets.

CITY CENTRE SOUTH

2.83 The City Centre South Transition Area is focused around Station Road. This mixed-use edge of city location provides parking, commercial space, and residential uses and is located within close proximity to the Train Station. Should the opportunity arise, the area could be more intensively developed to provide new business premises or residential development, in a sustainable and accessible location.

Masterplan Design Principles – Ensuring Design Quality

- 2.84 The masterplan is underpinned by design principles to ensure that development in the masterplan area is of a consistently high quality, building on the guidance contained in the National Design Guide and the Lichfield Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). These principles build upon the masterplan objectives to help guide the design process of all new development in Lichfield city centre.



ONE. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN QUALITY

- 2.85 Lichfield is a historic city with a number of heritage assets which should be protected and enhanced. New development should be sympathetic to the historic character of the city and local architectural influences.
- 2.86 High-quality contemporary architecture can contribute to the attractiveness and character of Lichfield. This is particularly true where contemporary design is of a scale, massing and height that is appropriate to its context.
- 2.87 The ground floor of new buildings should seek to enliven adjoining streets and spaces through the positioning of doors and windows. 'Active' ground floor uses such as spill-out cafe space in appropriate locations and public uses can help to achieve this as well as the use of balconies on upper floors. Commercial uses will be particularly important along the Birmingham Road, St John Street and Frog Lane to provide opportunities for the street to be overlooked by people in adjacent buildings, thus increasing passive surveillance within the city centre, to improve safety.
- 2.88 An interesting and dynamic roofscape can add visual interest. Ventilation arrangements, air conditioning, lighting, and servicing equipment must be carefully designed and integrated into the overall structure of buildings and should be masked from public view points, particularly onward vistas of the cathedral.
- 2.89 Landmark buildings can help signal important locations in the city centre, such as the corners of junctions between main streets, or key public spaces. They also emphasise the role or status that a particular building has within the city. Landmark buildings are not necessarily tall buildings but include those of special architectural quality and character, those that have distinctive and memorable features (e.g. chimneys) or house special and unique uses. The Garrick Theatre and St Mary's Church are both examples of landmarks in the city centre.
- 2.90 The pattern of different building heights and the location of landmarks play a significant role in helping people to intuitively understand how to reach their desired destination from any point in the city centre. New development must reinforce this pattern, adding to the character, identity and legibility of the city centre. The masterplan identifies locations where landmark buildings will be appropriate and where particular features and corners should be emphasised through the design of buildings.



TWO. MATERIALS AND DETAILING

- 2.91 A palette of high-quality materials will help to firmly establish the character and identity of the masterplan area, both in respect of the public realm and the built form of buildings and structures. High quality materials that are unique to the city centre, or emphasise a particular location within it, must be utilised. This will help to build upon the existing character of Lichfield.
- 2.92 In the masterplan area, a restrained palette of materials should be specified, including red brick and clay tiles as used at the Garrick Theatre and the housing schemes at Chapter House on Monks Close and St John's Almshouses on the Birmingham Road. The image of place will be reinforced by built form, construction materials, decorative detailing, such as balconies, public art and even basic features such as windows and doorways. These features will also assist in making the area legible, familiar and distinctive. Attention must be paid to the design and detailing of new development.
- 2.93 Bin and recycling storage facilities are important details that are often overlooked in new development resulting in impractical and unsightly bin and recycling storage enclosures. Particular regard must be given to design of these features with storage provided within the building envelope, or as an integral structure designed and specified as part of the building. Adequate design and provision for commercial premises and apartments will be a particularly important consideration. All bin and recycling storage areas must be accessible to refuse vehicles.



THREE. ATTRACTIVE & USABLE PUBLIC REALM

2.94 A clutter of lampposts, servicing boxes, bollards and signage undermines the quality and attractiveness of the public realm and can also act as a confusing barrier to people wishing to access the city centre. Design simplicity is therefore an important consideration. The removal of unnecessary elements and the co-ordination of signage and street furniture is an important aim. This must include a co-ordinated approach to signage and wayfinding across the city centre.

2.95 All too often pedestrians are forced to cross streets and public spaces via the least direct route. A basic principle in the design and layout of all crossings and public spaces should be following the lines that people want to take, not forcing alternatives that then have to be guarded using safety barriers which contribute to street clutter. This will be particularly important for pedestrian cross-routes around the city centre linking together key parts of the city, including crossing the Birmingham Road, St John Street and Swan Road.

2.96 Tree planting complements the public realm by providing visual delight, increased biodiversity, and shade. At present tree planting is most prominent around Minster Pool and the

cathedral. Further opportunities for tree planting in these and other locations will be encouraged through the masterplan to help emphasise the identity of different parts of the city centre. Consideration must be given to future maintenance, overshadowing and leaf drop in selecting locations and species. Opportunities for other types of planting will also be encouraged in the city centre.

2.97 Robust, low maintenance and timeless design must be a key component of any public realm works. A co-ordinated but limited palette of surface materials, such as stone and brick pavements, as evident in Conduit Street, Tamworth Street, Breadmarket Street and parts of Bore Street and Market Street, will provide a strong setting for development. This will help to give a unified appearance to the city centre.

2.98 The specification of street furniture components such as lamp stands, bus shelters, litter bins and seating, must also add to the overall identity, quality and character of the city centre. Consideration must be given to long term maintenance in the specification of materials and street furniture, as well as being robust enough to accommodate different requirements to enliven the city centre e.g. banners, Christmas lights and decorative planting.



FOUR. DESIGNING FOR HEALTH

- 2.99 New development within the masterplan area should seek to promote an active and healthy city centre. Lichfield is a compact city centre with all destinations within a short walk of each other, which provides opportunities to promote walking and cycling and use of public transport.
- 2.100 Active travel brings a number of health and wellbeing benefits, including physical activity, improved air quality and stress alleviation. Safe and accessible walking and cycling routes should be provided within new developments, along desire lines and providing direct connectivity with key destinations. These routes should be designed to be overlooked by buildings, well-lit and well-marked to encourage people to walk and cycle. Pedestrian and cycle links between the Train Station, the City Core and the Cathedral require improvement to maximise the opportunities of the compact form of Lichfield, as identified through the Public Realm Priorities.
- 2.101 The co-location of public, community and leisure facilities within Lichfield can help to facilitate ease of access for all people. Opportunities to explore the potential to co-locate facilities should be utilised, particularly in bringing forward new development at the Birmingham Road Gateway.
- 2.102 Opportunities to provide new areas of public space should be developed, as set out in the Public Realm Priorities. Streets and public spaces can help to boost the sense of community and civic pride, when designed to encourage social and physical activity. Landscaping and public spaces can also offer areas for relaxation and contact with nature which can improve mental health and wellbeing.
- 2.103 Further guidance on how Lichfield can be designed for health can be found in the following guidance documents:
- 'Putting Health into Place' by NHS England (2019); and
 - 'Active Design' by Sport England (2015).

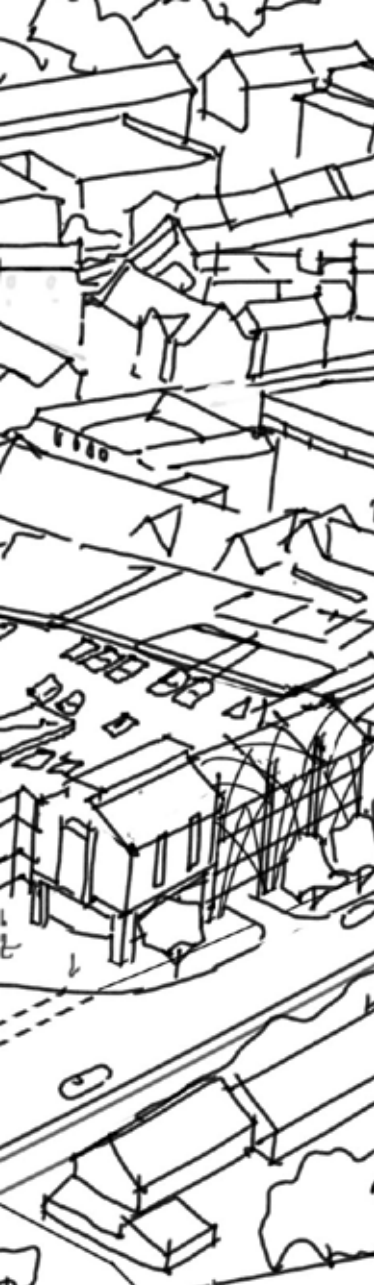






03

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



- 3.1 This section of the masterplan provides guidance on the four key Development Opportunities that have been identified within the city centre. In describing the Development Opportunities, reference is made to the following:

Existing Uses: this summarises the existing land uses found on the site.

Development Aspirations: this sets out the rationale, form and type of development that could be brought forward on the site and provides an indication of the potential quantum of different uses that may be accommodated on each site.

Key Design and Development Considerations: this details the important elements of the design and development which require careful thought to ensure new uses can be accommodated sensitively, in response to the historic city centre context.

- **Mix of Uses:** indicates the mix of different city centre uses that could be accommodated flexibly on the site.
- **Access Points & Entrances:** provides guidance on the main points of pedestrian and vehicular access to the site.
- **Key Building Elevations & Active Edges:** sets out where the most important and prominent building elevations should be located, and the main active edges which will accommodate principal entrances, shop windows and café and restaurant seating areas.
- **Storey Heights:** guidance on the height of buildings proposed on the site having regard to prevailing heights in the immediate location, scale, height and massing in addition to having regard to maintaining views to the spires.
- **Important Corners:** important corners will be emphasised through the design of the built form, through either height or other detailing. They will typically be located on prominent junctions close to busy streets and pedestrian routes, giving prominence to important places.
- **Parking & Servicing:** indicates where and how parking provision should be made, where it is accessed from, and how the site is serviced, for instance to allow for deliveries.

Implementation Issues: sets out known relevant issues for bringing the site forward for development, for example existing site features to be retained. These are also included in the Delivery Strategy in section 5.

1. BIRMINGHAM ROAD GATEWAY

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



EXISTING USES

- 3.2 Land adjacent to Birmingham Road comprises of several sites, including:
- the former police station
 - the bus station and associated car parking and coach drop off/ pick-up/ parking area
 - the multi-storey car park
 - the former Tempest Ford garage and showroom
 - the area in front of Lichfield City Train Station, including the taxi rank and area of car parking.
- 3.3 The Birmingham Road multi-storey car park provides 322 short-stay parking spaces with an additional 10 spaces for blue badge holders and 12 compact vehicle bays. The parking area within the Bus Station provides for 61 spaces with an additional 2 spaces for blue badge holders. The surface car parking off Birmingham Road provides 34 parking spaces with one additional space for blue badge holders.

Illustrative artists' impression



DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

- 3.4 The Birmingham Road site is the most significant development opportunity in the city centre. It will be reconfigured to provide a new city centre quarter, one that enhances the experience of arrival into the city centre by all modes of transport, and introduces a new mix of leisure, residential, and commercial development opportunities to Lichfield. A new bus station, station forecourt, multi-storey parking will be provided alongside public realm enhancements to create a revitalised 'Southern Gateway' for Lichfield.
- 3.5 The Birmingham Road Gateway will provide a mixed-use development, with the potential to provide for:
- A new bus station providing around eight bays, with 'pavilion' building (to include public toilets and bus service information, and cycle parking and storage) and a coach drop-off/ pick-up point providing around four spaces.
 - A new cinema together with other leisure and restaurant uses at ground floor.
 - An hotel.
 - Small-scale commercial business space together with a limited amount of convenience retail.
 - Residential apartments and houses with provision of a proportion of affordable homes.
 - A replacement multi-storey car park accessed from Birmingham Road providing around 480 spaces.
- 3.6 Coach pick-up and drop-off bays on Bird Street and Castle Dyke will be removed and re-provided at the new Bus Station, to enhance pedestrian accessibility and safety on these roads. This will help to encourage visitors to walk through the city from the Bus Station to spend more time in Lichfield. The compact form of the city centre supports this, with the Cathedral being only a c. 10 minutes' walk from the Bus Station.

- 3.7 The configuration of the built form must respect the setting and view corridors of the surrounding Listed buildings, including the Grade I Listed Hospital of St John (and associated Master's House to its rear), the Grade II Listed parts of the District Council House as well as the wider setting of the Grade I Listed Cathedral and the overarching Conservation Area which covers the majority of the site. The view corridors of these Listed buildings are indicated on the Public Realm Strategy (see Figure 1 overleaf). New buildings will be required to be of an appropriately high quality.
- 3.8 The Birmingham Road Gateway site is interdependent with the development opportunities identified as part of the District Council House. The redevelopment of this site will help to integrate complementary community and civic uses within the city centre.
- 3.8 The development of the Birmingham Road Gateway will also contribute to delivering the following Public Realm Priorities identified overleaf:
- **Public Realm Priority A - Birmingham Road Corridor**
 - **Public Realm Priority B - Lichfield Transport Hub**

KEY DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- **Mix of Uses:** a new bus station with 'pavilion' building and coach drop-off/ pick-up spaces. A replacement multi-storey car park on the same site of the existing multi-storey, fronted by active commercial uses to the ground floor.
- A new cinema, hotel and a supporting café/ restaurant offer will be located centrally within the site. New housing will provide a frontage to Frog Lane. Segregated parking to the rear will be provided for residents and hotel visitors.
- On the western edge, small-scale offices with apartments above will be sensitively designed in response to the Grade I Listed Hospital of St John.



- **Access Points and Entrances:** vehicular access will be retained from Birmingham Road to access the Bus Station, new multi-storey car park and Station Road.

A new gateway crossing will be provided from the new Station Square across the Birmingham Road to provide a safe and attractive pedestrian route into the Market Quarter, overlooked by adjacent development.

Wade Street and Frog Lane will continue to provide vehicular access to housing on those streets and the District Council House. It will also provide service access for the hotel, cinema and leisure development as well as new residential development to the western part of the site.

Lichfield City Train Station (and associated taxi and visitor pick-up/drop-off) will be accessible via Station Road.

- **Key Building Elevations and Active Edges:** new development frontages to be provided to the Birmingham Road, Frog Lane and St John Street (as well as the central pedestrianised street) to activate these important routes. Development will be carefully designed to manage the interface between proposed restaurants and the bus station to provide an attractive outlook.

Development will be laid out to establish clear blocks of development distinguishing between the public fronts of buildings and more private rear amenity areas.

- **Storey Heights:** proposals should have regard to the existing vistas to and from the spires of the Cathedral and St Mary's and the potential for new development to create new vistas, including to the Hospital of St John.

Development located in proximity to the Hospital of St John should be no more than 2 storeys in height. Elsewhere development up to 4 storeys is considered appropriate for the majority of the site, subject to vistas of the spires being maintained and enhanced.

- **Important Corners:** important corners and/or public realm treatment will be provided to emphasise the gateway crossing point adjacent to Station Square, including as part of the Bus Station pavilion building and hotel. The building on the corner of Birmingham Road / St John Street must be sensitively designed in response to the setting of the Hospital of St John.

- **Parking and Servicing:** The existing multi-storey car park will be replaced with a new multi-storey car park in its place accommodating some displaced parking from Bird Street Car Park (see Development Opportunity One), the Bus Station and Birmingham Road.. Pricing and future management of the car park, including provision for drop-off facilities will be considered by the Council. Blue badge holder bays will be provided adjacent to Station Square, as part of the pick-up/ drop-off area.

Parking associated with new housing on Frog Lane will be provided to its rear. Parking for guests of the hotel and associated servicing will be provided to the rear of the hotel.

Parking for the residential development to the western part of the site will be accessed from Frog Lane and be provided within development blocks.

An area for servicing will be provided just off Birmingham Road, adjacent to Station Square.

Coach pick-up and drop-off bays will be provided at the Bus Station. Coach parking will be re-provided as part of Development Opportunity Four.

The servicing access to the Three Spires Shopping Centre via Frog Lane will be maintained.

Provision for cycle storage, refuse and recycling bins should be integrated into the built envelope of buildings.





IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

3.9 The Birmingham Road multi-storey car park is regularly inspected to ensure the car park is structurally sound to operate. Its demolition should therefore form an early phase of the overall development strategy for land adjacent to Birmingham Road. A replacement car park will need to be provided for ahead of Development Opportunity Three due to the displacement of some parking provision from Bird Street Car Park.

3.10 The Birmingham Road Gateway site is owned by Lichfield District Council. Development is likely to be a medium term opportunity. Prior to bringing forward this development opportunity, discussions will need to take place with a number of stakeholders, including:

- Staffordshire County Council as highways authority, regarding any changes to the highway proposed as part of Public Realm Priorities A and B;
- Bus operators within Lichfield, to minimise disruption to the operation of bus services;
- The train operator at Lichfield City station, to minimise disruption to the train station;
- Taxi operators within Lichfield, to minimise disruption to the accessibility of taxi's;

- Lichfield District Council, regarding their wider land interests at the District Council House (Development Opportunity Two);
- The Three Spires Shopping Centre, as an adjacent operator and landowner; and
- The Garrick Theatre, as an adjacent operator.

3.11 Phasing of this Development Opportunity as conceived in the Masterplan is proposed in four main parts: phase 1 could provide the residential development to the western part of the site and fronting Frog Lane. Phase 2 could provide the redeveloped car park along with some leisure and restaurant uses, with phase 3 potentially providing the leisure scheme (comprising hotel, cinema, restaurants and residential development). The final phase would likely be implementation of the new Bus Station.

3.12 Regard must be had to the setting of the surrounding Listed buildings, including the Grade I Listed Hospital of St John (and associated Master's House to its rear), the Grade II Listed parts of the District Council House as well as the wider setting of the Grade I Listed Cathedral and the overarching Conservation Area which covers the majority of the site. New buildings will be required to be of an appropriately high quality.

2. DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSE

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



EXISTING USE

- 3.13 The existing District Council House accommodates the offices of Lichfield District Council which are in part Grade II Listed. This includes the Council Chambers which occupies the former school building, to the south of the site. A terrace of former residential properties on St John Street also forms part of the office accommodation with No39 St John Street also being Grade II Listed.
- 3.14 The District Council House is formed of cellular offices and meeting rooms alongside the historic, former residential layout of the period buildings forming part of the premises. The office space is currently underutilised, dated and difficult to navigate.
- 3.15 Car parking for Council staff is provided to the rear of the main building.

DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

- 3.16 Retaining the Council offices in the city centre will be important in maintaining a civic presence in the city centre and in providing civic services in an accessible location for the public. Council employees and visitors also make a valuable contribution to the city centre economy. Therefore, the importance of the continued presence of the Council offices in the city centre should not be overlooked.
- 3.17 There is an opportunity to make enhancements to the District Council House to consolidate the existing office areas to provide a more efficient work space and to provide for additional revenue generating commercial, residential and community uses. This would act as a catalyst for the wider growth of complementary uses, including small-scale office space within the adjacent Birmingham Road Gateway site, providing an economic boost to the local economy.
- 3.18 The main building will continue to provide office accommodation for Lichfield District Council. The buildings located fronting onto St John Street could provide a self-contained serviced office space or be converted for residential use. The Council Chamber and associated space could be converted to provide a self-contained venue for hire, with the attractive courtyard garden providing outdoor and breakout space. The central section of the building, dating from the 1930's and fronting onto Frog Lane, could be refurbished to also provide commercial office space or community uses, including for use by local groups associated with organising events and festivals. The remainder of the building which dates from the 1980's would be refurbished for continued use by the Council.

3.18 The configuration of the built form must respect the setting and view corridors of the surrounding Grade II Listed buildings and the wider setting of the Grade I Listed Cathedral and the overarching Conservation Area which covers the majority of the site. The view corridor of the Cathedral is indicated on the Public Realm Strategy (see Figure 1 overleaf). New buildings will be required to be of an appropriately high quality.

3.19 Development Opportunity Two could accommodate:

- Consolidated office space for Lichfield District Council within existing building.
- Conversion of part of the buildings on St John Street to provide a self-contained serviced office or residential conversion.
- Conversion of part of the buildings (including the Council Chamber) to provide a self-contained venue for hire.
- Refurbishment of the central section of the building dating from the 1930's to provide a self-contained commercial and multi-purpose community space.

KEY DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- **Mix of Uses:** the main building will continue to provide office accommodation for Lichfield District Council. The refurbishment of the ancillary buildings could provide a self-contained serviced office or residential conversion; a self-contained venue for hire; and a multi-purpose community space.
- **Access Points and Entrances:** vehicular and pedestrian access will be retained from Frog Lane.
- **Parking and Servicing:** parking and servicing will continue to be accessed from Frog Lane. In the evening and at weekends when the venue is in use, the District Council House car park could be used by visitors, where practicable.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

3.20 The District Council House is owned by Lichfield District Council. The District Council House will need to be delivered in phases to minimise disruption to the operation of the Lichfield District Council. Regard must be had to the setting of the Grade II Listed buildings as well as the overarching Conservation Area which covers the site.

3. BIRD STREET COURTYARD

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



EXISTING USES

3.21 The Bird Street car park is located to the south of Minster Pool, to the west of Dam Street, to the north of Market Street and east of Bird Street. The existing vehicular access to the car park is provided from Bird Street. This doubles up as the servicing access for those commercial units which back on to the car park. There are also a number of pedestrian routes which connect the car park with the surrounding streets. The Bird Street car park provides 169 short-stay surface-level parking spaces with an additional 8 spaces for blue badge holders.

DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

3.22 The site of the Bird Street car park provides an exciting opportunity to establish a fine grained, multi-use development at the heart of the Market Quarter. Proposals would see the retention of a significant amount of parking in one of the most used car parks in the city centre, together with retained service access to premises in Bird Street and Market Street. However, the public realm would be substantially enhanced to create a landscaped Courtyard, with tree and landscape planting introduced to break up the expanse of hard surfacing and potentially to enable a more sustainable surface water drainage system to be introduced. In addition, improvements to the strategic cycle network would be made along the existing Sustrans National Cycle Route 54 to include new surface paving and signage to provide a clearer, safer and more usable route.

3.23 A new mixed-use development to the north of the site could front onto the Courtyard. The development may provide a ground floor

of commercial uses that would front onto the courtyard parking, as well as providing openings onto the Minster Pool Walk and Memorial Gardens. New apartments could be provided above, with elevations enlivened through the use of full height windows and balconies. The configuration of the built form must respect the setting of surrounding Listed buildings and the overarching Conservation Area which covers the site, as well as views of the Cathedral.

3.24 In the longer term, a more comprehensive scheme could come forward at Bird Street Courtyard comprising adjacent land owned by the County Council and the reconfiguration or redevelopment of retail premises on Market Street. This would provide opportunities for the creation of new civic space linking Market Street and Bird Street Courtyard through to the Minster Pool, and allow for a wider mix of complementary uses to be introduced into the Market Quarter.

3.25 The development interventions at Bird Street car park will also contribute to delivering Public Realm Priority C – Bird Street Walk (see further detail overleaf), with the longer term aim of establishing a significantly enhanced pedestrian route between Larket Street, Bird Street Courtyard and the Minster Pool.

3.26 It is anticipated that the potential development capacity of the Bird Street Courtyard could provide:

- retained car parking spaces including a substantial element of blue badge provision;
- residential apartments at upper floor level; and
- commercial space at ground floor (cafe/bar/restaurant/small scale retail uses).

KEY DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- **Mix of Uses:** the northern part of the site could introduce new residential housing with commercial uses to the ground floor to further animate the Minster Pool Walk. Appropriate commercial uses could comprise the provision of a café, bar, restaurant or community uses. The southern part of the site would continue to provide parking spaces including blue badge spaces and servicing for surrounding commercial units.
- **Access Points and Entrances:** vehicular access will be retained from Bird Street, with pedestrian access from Minster Pool Walk, Dam Street, Market Street and Bird Street.
- **Key Building Elevations and Active Edges:** new development could provide a frontage to Minster Pool Walk. Proposals should reflect the prominent location of this development opportunity to the Cathedral and be sensitively designed.
- **Storey Heights:** Proposals should have regard to the prevailing height of development in the locality with particular regard to vistas to and from the Grade I listed Cathedral. Heights will be determined through detailed design work, and maintain views to the Cathedral.
- **Important Corners:** a careful and considered design response should be given to emphasise the prominent north-west corner of the site, as the principal access into the site from Bird Street. Commercial units providing the gateway route for pedestrians to Minster Pool Walk should be designed in such a way as to enhance natural surveillance.

- **Parking and Servicing:** parking and servicing would continue to be accessed from Bird Street. Some of the parking spaces will be retained with others re-provided at the new multi-storey car park on Birmingham Road (see Development Opportunity One). Provision for cycle storage, refuse and recycling bins should be integrated into the built envelope of the new buildings.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

- 3.27 Bird Street car park is owned by Lichfield District Council. The Council also own two retail premises fronting onto Market Street (currently occupied by New Look and B&M). Staffordshire County Council own an adjoining site to Bird Street car park. Prior to bringing forward this development opportunity, discussions will need to take place with a number of stakeholders, including:
- Lichfield District Council, regarding the part relocation of parking spaces;
 - Lichfield City Council, as the adjacent landowner of Minster Pool Walk;
 - Historic England and Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Team; and
 - Operators of the adjacent commercial units, to minimise disturbance to the operation and servicing access of these units.
- 3.28 Bird Street car park has the highest occupancy rates of all car parks within the city and is often effectively full at peak periods. Development on this site will displace some of the existing car parking spaces to a new multi-storey car park to be provided as part of Development Opportunity One. Parking would also be dispersed to other locations in the city centre, which are less well utilised. This would be allied to improved



signage and coordination of parking across the city centre. New development on this site will therefore need to be co-ordinated with Development Opportunity One, to minimise disruption. As a result, development is likely to be a medium to longer opportunity.

- 3.29 Regard must be had to the setting of the surrounding heritage assets, including the Grade I Listed Cathedral as well as the overarching Conservation Area which covers

the site. New buildings will be required to be of an appropriately high quality.

- 3.30 Consideration will also need to be given to the potential existence of archaeological remains within the site and the need to ensure that any potential archaeological remains are recorded and conserved, as appropriate.
- 3.31 Any new development will be required to maintain and enhance on-site drainage.



4. UNIVERSITY WEST CAR PARK

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



EXISTING USES

- 3.32 The University West car park is located to the south of The Friary, to the west of Monks Close and north of South Staffordshire College. The existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses to the car park are provided from Monks Close.
- 3.33 This car park provides a number of long-stay surface-level parking spaces.

DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

- 3.34 The site of the University West Car Park provides the opportunity to rationalise the area of car parking to accommodate parking for coaches.
- 3.35 Visitors forming part of organised tours are an increasingly important factor in the visitor economy of Lichfield. The limited number of existing coach parking spaces in the Bus Station is a potentially limiting factor to the number of coach trips visiting Lichfield.
- 3.36 Coaches can be parked up at the Bus Station for a couple of hours at a time which provides a poor gateway into the city, particularly for those arriving from Lichfield City Train Station. The peripheral location of the University West car park, albeit only a 3 minutes' walk to Bore Street, would be better suited to accommodate coach parking.
- 3.37 The northern part of the site could introduce new small-scale offices, suitable for SMEs and start-up businesses. Alternatively, residential development could come forward on this part of the site, either associated with the university or for private sale or rental. The central part of the site will accommodate coach parking spaces and car parking. The site would also be suitable for additional hotel accommodation in the city.

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

- 3.38 Development Opportunity Four has potential development capacity to accommodate coach spaces and other parking, commercial business space aimed at SMEs and start-ups, education uses, hotel accommodation, or residential development that could comprise apartments or town houses.

KEY DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- **Mix of Uses:** the northern part of the site will introduce new small-scale offices, suitable for SMEs and start-up businesses.

The central part of the site could accommodate coach parking spaces and car parking.

- **Access Points and Entrances:** vehicular and pedestrian accesses will be retained from Monks Close.
- **Key Building Elevations and Active Edges:** new development should provide an elevation to The Friary/Monks Close.
- **Storey Heights:** office development to be two to three-storeys in height.
- **Important Corners:** development should provide an important corner building to emphasise the frontage to The Friary/Monks Close.
- **Parking and Servicing:** the site will accommodate coach parking as well as public car parking. The office accommodation will be provided with ancillary parking provision. Any displaced car parking at the University West Car Park could be accommodated within the Friary multi-storey car park which is generally under-capacity.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

3.39 The University West Car Park is not publicly owned and therefore this Development Opportunity is subject to agreement and negotiation with the relevant landowner.

3.40 If coach parking is not able to be delivered at the University West Car Park, Development Opportunity One allows sufficient flexibility to accommodate coach parking bays as part of the new Bus Station. The re-location of coach parking within the city centre to this site would however help to maximise the potential of Development Opportunity One to deliver a mix of uses at the Birmingham Road Gateway.



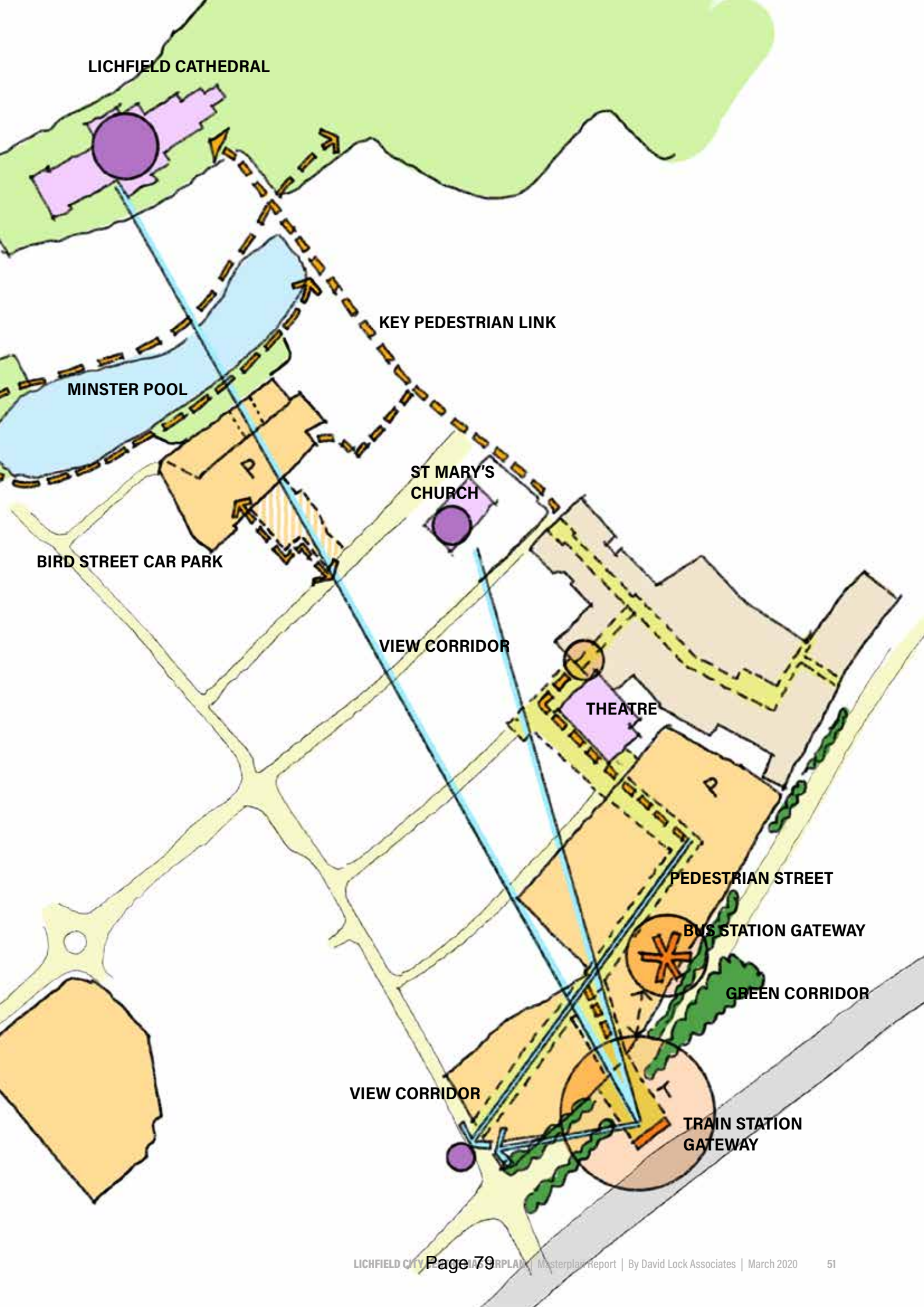


04

PUBLIC REALM PRIORITIES

- 4.1 This section of the masterplan provides guidance on the seven Public Realm Priorities that have been identified within the city centre, to deliver wider improvements to patterns of movement.





LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

KEY PEDESTRIAN LINK

MINSTER POOL

BIRD STREET CAR PARK

ST MARY'S CHURCH

VIEW CORRIDOR

THEATRE

PEDESTRIAN STREET

BUS STATION GATEWAY

GREEN CORRIDOR

VIEW CORRIDOR

TRAIN STATION GATEWAY

A. BIRMINGHAM ROAD CORRIDOR

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



4.2 The highways function (carriageway and associated vehicles) of Birmingham Road is its overriding feature. This provides a poor public realm for pedestrians, particularly as there are limited pedestrian crossing points that follow the natural desire line into the Market Quarter. There is currently no controlled crossing for pedestrians at the junction between Birmingham Road and St John Street, which presents safety concerns for pedestrians. This provides a poor 'entrance' to the City. Enhancements will be dependent upon the completion of the Lichfield Southern Bypass which will free up capacity on the Birmingham Road corridor enabling works to take place.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

4.3 The Birmingham Road forms a key element of the Gateway, signalling the southern entrance to the city centre. Public realm interventions should be made to the Birmingham Road

Corridor, to improve pedestrian accessibility between Lichfield City Train Station and the heart of the city centre:

- A gateway crossing for pedestrians and cyclists across Birmingham Road, aligned to provide views of St Mary's Church and the spires of the Cathedral from Lichfield City Train Station.
- An enhanced visitor drop-off/pick-up area, with blue badge holder parking and taxi rank directly adjacent to a new Station Square.
- A new 4-way signal-controlled crossing at the egress of Station Road and the Bus Station with Birmingham Road, to allow ease of access and safe movement for all transport modes (pedestrians, cyclists, buses, taxis & vehicles).
- Potential new pedestrian crossing points at the Birmingham Road/ St John Street junction.
- Enhanced street tree planting along Birmingham Road.



B. LICHFIELD TRANSPORT HUB

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



KEY IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.4 This intervention is about improving the layout and facilities of the Bus Station and Train Station to make it a more integrated transport hub. It also includes the provision of improved bus service information, such as real time passenger information to indicate at bus stops when the next bus is due. Closely associated with this intervention is the need to improve the quality of the connections across the Birmingham Road (Public Realm Intervention A – Birmingham Road Corridor).
- 4.5 Lichfield Bus Station is located on Birmingham Road, north of Lichfield City Train Station. The passenger experience at the Bus Station is poor. It is also difficult for buses to turn right out of the Bus Station into existing traffic flows on the Birmingham Road, as the junction is not signal controlled.
- 4.6 Lichfield City Train Station provides a gateway into Lichfield by train, although there is a disconnect between the Station, the wider public transport links and the wider City. The Station forecourt is dominated by the carriageway and parked cars, making it difficult for pedestrians to safely navigate their way out of the Station.
- 4.7 The pedestrian route from Lichfield City Train Station into the Market Quarter is not inviting, with only one formal pedestrian crossing across the Birmingham Road. The footpath narrows along parts of the route, with lamp posts often cluttering the route which can act as a confusing barrier to people wishing to access the city centre.

- 4.8 The public transport facilities will be important in presenting a first impression of Lichfield, as people transition from being a passenger to a pedestrian. Enhancements to the public realm should be made to enhance the experience of arrival into Lichfield:

- Improved integration of Lichfield City Train Station and the new Bus Station to provide efficient, safe and convenient access for pedestrians.
- Enhanced coach drop-off and pick-up bays as part of the Bus Station (with coach parking provided as part of Development Opportunity Four).
- An enhanced public realm to provide a clear and welcoming pedestrian route from Lichfield City Train Station into the heart of the city centre, overlooked by adjacent development.
- A new Bus Station 'pavilion' building located directly opposite Lichfield City Train Station to encourage linked trips and usage of public transport.
- A new Station Square to provide an enhanced entrance to Lichfield City Train Station for visitors.
- A new cycle hub at the station to enhance the facilities available to cyclists.
- An enhanced taxi rank, directly adjacent to Station Square.
- Potential shared cycle path along Birmingham Road adjacent to the Bus and Train Stations that could be adapted to fit with proposals currently being worked up for cyclists by Staffordshire County Council along the corridor.

- 4.9 The delivery of public realm improvements as part of the Lichfield Transport Hub is inherently linked with those complementary improvements identified in Public Realm Priority A (Birmingham Road Corridor).



C. BIRD STREET WALK

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:

4.10 The existing public footpath which connects Bird Street Car Park with Market Street is uninviting, poorly lit and not overlooked by adjacent development. This contributes to making this route feel unsafe, particularly for pedestrians using this route at night.



Images above: © www.pinterest.com

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

4.11 Bird Street Walk forms an important pedestrian connection between Bird Street and Market Street. To enhance this important pedestrian connection, environmental enhancements should be made to Bird Street Walk:

- Improved street lighting along its route.
- New planting and rain garden/Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) within Bird Street Car Park (Development Opportunity Three – Bird Street Courtyard) and new planting within Bird Street Walk, to create a green corridor extending from Minster Pool Walk.
- Use of colour and street furniture to enliven the space.
- Should the opportunity arise the reconfiguration or redevelopment of premises fronting Market Street could allow for the widening of Bird Street Walk. It would also provide the opportunity to create a new, wider pedestrian route linking Market Street, Bird Street Courtyard and the Minster Pool



Images: © www.greatplacesincanada.ca

D. CIRCULAR MINSTER POOL WALK

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



KEY IMPROVEMENTS

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:

4.12 Minster Pool Walk to the south of Minster Pool provides an attractive route within the city for pedestrians. This Walk connects the two important green spaces of Beacon Park and Stowe Pool with the city centre. Careful regard must be had to the setting of the Grade II* listed War Memorial in the Garden of Remembrance.

4.13 To encourage longer stays and to further strengthen this green 'lung' of linked green spaces, public realm enhancements should be made to Minster Pool Walk:

- Provision of a new footpath to the north of Minster Pool Walk, to enable a circular walk to be established.
- Additional street lighting to ensure the extended route is well-lit, whilst cognisant of the wider setting of the Listed Cathedral.
- Active development frontages (i.e. a café, a bar, a restaurant or community uses at ground floor level) could be created as part of Development Opportunity Three (Bird Street Courtyard), to enhance the feeling of safety through activation of this route (e.g. spill-out café space and windows overlooking Minster Pool Walk).
- In addition, improvements to the existing strategic cycle route through Bird Street Courtyard are proposed to improve east/west cycle provision across the city.



E. PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



KEY IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.14 Within the city centre, there are a number of “pedestrianised” streets including Bird Street, Dam Street, Market Street, Bore Street, Breadmarket Street, Conduit Street and Baker’s Lane. With the exception of Baker’s Lane, each of these streets is accessible to blue badge holders and for loading/servicing of commercial units within the central part of the city.
- 4.15 People walking around the central part of the city are often unaware that vehicles can also drive down these streets, which can create safety issues. There is a need to redress the balance between the car and pedestrian, whilst balancing the needs of those requiring access to blue badge holder bays and to servicing areas.
- 4.16 Data on vehicle flows shows that in the peak hours of 10:00-11:00 on a Friday and 08:00-09:00 on a Saturday, up to 80 vehicles and 68 vehicles respectively are often travelling within Tamworth Street, Dam Street, Market Street and Bore Street. Most of these vehicles are circulating to find parking spaces on Bore Street, via the one-way system which directs traffic along Conduit Street, Market Street and Breadmarket Street on to Bore Street.
- 4.17 To improve safety for pedestrian users, improvements should be made to the pedestrianised parts of the city centre:
- The closing of Conduit Street, Market Street and Breadmarket Street to through-traffic, except for permit holders and loading vehicles. Blue badge parking spaces could also be relocated to Bird Street Courtyard or other nearby car parks .
 - Introducing street furniture and public realm interventions such as timber bollards (potential use of automatic bollards) and clear street signage to signal to all users those areas which are pedestrianised and those which are not.
 - Review enforcement of restricted access to vehicles around Market Place and consider options for the redirection of traffic in this location.



F. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS & LINKAGES

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



KEY IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.18 The masterplan advocates walking as the priority means of travel, providing safe and convenient access to the city centre. This means thinking about how people walk from the bus stops, train stations, taxi ranks and car parks as well as from their homes and places of business.
- 4.19 In certain areas of the city, there are barriers to pedestrian movement, including across significant streets. This makes it difficult for pedestrians to easily and safely move around the city. In a number of these areas, the highways function of the street (the carriageway and associated vehicles) have priority over pedestrians, and there is no formal crossing point to facilitate safe crossing.
- 4.20 In other parts of the city, enhancements to the urban environmental quality, through a consistent approach to street design, furniture, landscape and street lighting would enhance the attractiveness of the city centre.
- 4.21 Public realm interventions should be made to enhance existing pedestrian connections, to encourage visitors to dwell longer and to explore the wider assets of Lichfield:
- **Bird Street / Swan Road junction** – to make it easier and safer to cross Swan Road from Bird Street, to access Beacon Park and the northern part of the city centre. This could include a formal pedestrian (zebra) crossing and the narrowing of the carriageway (and the enlargement of the footpath) to emphasise the pedestrian crossing.
 - **Birmingham Road / St John Street junction** – the introduction of toucan pedestrian crossings across each arm of the junction to enable pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross St John Street and Birmingham Road.
 - **Bird Street / Bore Street / The Friary junction** – provision of safe pedestrian crossing points across Bird Street and Bore Street where these streets intersect with The Friary. This could include formal zebra/ toucan pedestrian crossings.
 - **Walkways to Cross Keys and Stowe Pool via alleys** – improvements to these pedestrian routes to enhance safety. This could include improved street lighting and signage to direct pedestrians to and from the city centre.

G. SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES TO BE MET:



KEY IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.22 The city centre is widely recognised as being poorly signposted, with little to no means for visitors to easily identify the best route to reach the city's key attractions.
- 4.23 In seeking to promote the city as a tourist destination, it will become increasingly important to provide clear, legible signage and wayfinding across the city centre.

- 4.24 Clear and consistent signage and wayfinding should be provided across the city centre to make it easier for people to navigate their way around Lichfield:
- Provision of clear and consistent signage/wayfinding across the city centre, including potential use of public art or Totems.
 - New signage from the Lichfield Transport Hub, to direct visitors to the heart of the city centre.
 - New signage at key intersections and public spaces to signal key locations within the city centre.
 - New signage at the Cathedral, to direct visitors to the heart of the city centre and the Lichfield Transport Hub.

- 4.25 Despite Lichfield's extensive programme of festivals and events, many people are not currently aware of what is on offer within the City. A wider Marketing Strategy should be developed to provide visitor information not only within Lichfield through new signage, but also in raising Lichfield's profile through marketing and social media to encourage people to visit.



05

DELIVERING THE MASTERPLAN

Introduction

- 5.1 The masterplan for Lichfield has identified a number of projects and proposals including new developments and public realm improvements which are designed to complement and connect with one another. Development opportunities have been explored having regard to known sites that are available and following discussions between the Council and other stakeholders. This section sets out a delivery strategy for those development opportunities and public realm projects set out in Sections 3 and 4 of this report.



Delivery Strategy

- 5.2 Implementation of the masterplan will take place over a number of years. The success of the masterplan will be dependent upon a realistic and focussed approach to enabling development. Creating an environment of certainty, by unlocking obstacles to delivery, will enable the market to take commercial schemes forward with confidence.
- 5.3 The delivery strategy seeks to identify the obstacles to be overcome, and to prioritise delivery in a way that acts as a catalyst. The masterplan sets out a strong framework for delivery of change in the city centre. The proposals concentrate on major areas of change and the supporting strategies that help ensure the city centre functions as a whole.

Viability

- 5.4 Masterplan delivery is dependent on a number of elements working together and viability is a key component in considering development opportunities. Viability will be influenced by a number of factors when taking the opportunity sites forward. These factors may include, but are not limited to:
- Residential/commercial values;
 - The pursued delivery route for securing affordable housing (see Appendix 1);
 - Whether the affordable element of the schemes deliver any value;
 - The potential for certain aspects of the infrastructure to be value engineered; and
 - The potential for elements of a scheme to deliver an income.
- 5.5 As part of the development of the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan, the viability of an appropriate mix of uses and density of development has been assessed. The purpose of the process is to ensure overall deliverability within a flexible framework appropriate to the local property market, and to seek to maximise the potential for value generation.
- 5.6 The sites have been the subject of a high-level indicative viability appraisal. This is a process of assessing whether a scheme is financially viable, by looking at whether the value generated by a development is more than the cost of developing it. The appraisals seek to identify whether the sites are fundamentally viable and deliverable, taking into account the development value, the known costs, land value and developer return. They do not constitute formal valuations and should not be considered or relied upon as such.
- 5.7 The baseline provides an analysis of the prevailing property market conditions in the locality of Lichfield, including residential and commercial sales values, commercial rental values and yields and building costs. This data has been used to assess the scheme development values in the appraisals.
- 5.8 Additional intelligence was gathered in respect of cinema and hotel development and leisure uses, tapping into our knowledge of the expectations of operators and an analysis of similar developments to establish the potential value of these elements.

- 5.9 In respect of the costs side of the appraisals, industry standard development assumptions relating planning and professional fees, surveys, the costs of finance, and assumptions as to the appropriate level of developer's profit were adopted alongside BCIS (Building Cost Information Service) construction costs. At this stage, the costs associated with enabling development to proceed cannot be assessed to any degree of accuracy. The costs that have been excluded are:
- any site acquisition costs, or (if required) compulsory purchase costs;
 - any business relocation costs, such as the acquisition of a relocation site, costs of providing a replacement building, and any business disturbance compensation;
 - any off-site costs, such as those associated with significant highways alterations;
 - any "abnormal" costs associated with for example listed buildings, cleaning up contamination, or unusual ground conditions;
 - the approach to the provision of carbon compliance measures and investment in allowable solutions; and
 - associated infrastructure/public realm costs.
- 5.10 No detailed site surveys have been undertaken at this stage.
- 5.11 For each relevant development opportunity, it has been assumed that affordable housing will be provided with a mix of tenures at a policy compliant level (40%).
- 5.12 The residential market in Lichfield is robust, demonstrating higher sales values than surrounding areas in the region. This generates a positive underlying baseline land value for the residential elements appraised. The healthy values indicate a market demand and clear potential for delivery.
- 5.13 Commercial development is more challenging in the current economic climate. However, where the Council has ownership of the opportunity sites, the value of the land can be reflected in a number of ways in the appraisals to facilitate an overall viable development; either by using positive values created from residential development to cross-subsidise commercial elements or by putting the land in at nil value as part of a joint venture approach.
- 5.14 Where there are significant additional costs to be met, such as those identified above, the levels of value generated overall may not be sufficient to address all the cost requirements. Further detailed work will be needed at the appropriate stage to assess the extent of any shortfall. This is commented on in more detail below.
- 5.15 Although cross-subsidy of the public sector infrastructure has not been considered as part of the appraisal process, there is an opportunity to assist delivery in conjunction with contributions from relevant public sector agencies.

Implementation process

- 5.16 The table identifies the areas of major change which represent the key priorities for action over the next 20 years.
- 5.17 It sets out the potential uses; links between Development Opportunities and Public Realm Priorities; issues and obstacles; and indicative project duration and any anticipated phasing of masterplan projects.

SOUTHERN GATEWAY QUARTER			
Project	Description	Ownership	Potential linkage with Public Realm Priorities & improvements
Birmingham Road Gateway	<p>A new bus station, with 'pavilion' building and a coach drop-off/pick-up point.</p> <p>A cinema.</p> <p>Hotel accommodation.</p> <p>Small-scale commercial business space with a limited amount of convenience retail.</p> <p>Residential apartments and houses (including affordable housing).</p> <p>A replacement multi-storey car park (around 480 spaces).</p>	Council Owned	<p>Link to improvements to the Birmingham Road Corridor, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gateway crossing for pedestrians and cyclists across Birmingham Road; a new 4-way signal-controlled crossing at the egress of Station Road and the Bus Station with Birmingham Road; and Enhanced street tree planting along Birmingham Road. <p>Link to improvements to the new Lichfield Transport Hub, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved integration of Lichfield City Train Station and new Bus Station; a new Station Square; enhanced visitor drop-off/pick-up area at Lichfield City Train Station, with blue badge holder parking and taxi rank adjacent new Station Square; Enhanced coach drop-off/ pick-up bays; and New Bus Station 'pavilion' building. <p>Link to improvements to pedestrian walkways and linkages, at the Birmingham Road / St John Street junction.</p> <p>Internal pedestrian and cycle linkages to existing routes.</p>
District Council House	<p>Consolidated office space for Lichfield District Council within existing building.</p> <p>Conversion of part of the buildings on St John Street to provide a self-contained serviced office and conference centre.</p> <p>Conversion of part of the buildings (including the Council Chamber) to provide a self-contained wedding/ occasion venue.</p> <p>Refurbishment of the southern office building to provide a self-contained commercial and multi-purpose community space.</p>	Council Owned	<p>Interface with Birmingham Road gateway site.</p>

Issues and Obstacles	Indicative Project Duration & any Phasing Implications	Outline process for implementation – actions for Lichfield District Council
<p>Known adverse ground conditions from former Tempest Ford garage use.</p> <p>Priority need to negotiate surrender of existing lease from the Three Spires Shopping Centre of multi-storey car park.</p> <p>Potential (short-medium term) impact of temporary loss of parking on revenue account. Some temporary parking could be provided on the former Police Station site.</p> <p>The expectation is that the multi-storey car park (MSCP) will be constructed in advance of the commercial elements of the scheme to ensure proper operation of the site. It is expected that some gap funding will need to be identified to facilitate this.</p> <p>Potential for direct Council-led development, possibly in conjunction with a development partner.</p> <p>Negotiations required with Staffordshire County Council, as highways authority, regarding any changes to the highway and in providing a new bus station.</p> <p>Negotiations required with Lichfield City Council, the Trustees of St John's hospital, bus operators, train operator, taxi operators, Three Spires Shopping Centre and The Garrick Theatre to minimise disruption to operators and adjacent landowners.</p> <p>New development to have regard to the setting of surrounding heritage assets and to minimise disruption to local residents and businesses.</p>	<p>Indicative timescale 5-7 years.</p> <p>Phased approach, subject to market demand and testing.</p> <p>Phase One: Residential apartments and small-scale business units (western section of site).</p> <p>Phase Two: Re-provision of MSCP along with some leisure and restaurant uses.</p> <p>Phase Two: Leisure scheme comprising hotel, cinema and restaurants, along with residential houses and apartments (central section of site).</p> <p>Phase Four: Re-provision of existing Bus Station with new facility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select delivery route i.e. Joint Venture (JV), traditional or hybrid approach (see Appendix 1). ▪ Seek Council approval of preferred approach. ▪ Development Brief. ▪ Negotiations with relevant stakeholders and adjacent landowners ▪ Negotiations required with Network Rail regarding any new development immediately adjoining Lichfield City railway station. ▪ Planning application ▪ Liaison with LEPs to explore funding opportunities for non-commercial elements. ▪ Identify other sources of match funding including S106 and CIL. ▪ Bring forward the site as a development opportunity. ▪ MSCP proposals will need to be informed by a city centre wide Car Parking Strategy to be prepared by Lichfield District Council and Staffordshire County Council.
<p>Required to be delivered in phases to minimise disruption to the operation of Lichfield District Council.</p> <p>New development to have regard to the setting of heritage assets within the Opportunity area.</p>	<p>1-2 years.</p> <p>Phased approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Option appraisal. ▪ Seek Council approval of preferred solution. ▪ Development Brief. ▪ Identify internal/external funding. ▪ Dialogue across departments within Lichfield District Council to enable a co-ordinated approach to delivery and to minimise disruption to Council. ▪ Preparation of Business and Marketing plans for new venue space. ▪ Marketing/Negotiations with potential occupiers of sub-let office space. ▪ Bring forward the site as a development opportunity.

MARKET QUARTER			
Project	Description	Ownership	Potential linkage with Public Realm Priorities & improvements
Bird Street Courtyard	<p>Public car park (around 55 parking spaces).</p> <p>Residential apartments (up to 12 apartments subject to planning).</p> <p>Commercial floorspace such as a café/ bar/ restaurant/ community uses (2 ground floor units).</p>	Council Owned	<p>Link to improvements to Bird Street Walk, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New planting and rain garden/ SuDS within Bird Street Courtyard; • Improved street lighting along Bird Street Walk; • Use of colour and street furniture to enliven Bird Street Walk; and • Should the opportunity arise the reconfiguration or redevelopment of premises fronting Market Street could allow for the widening of Bird Street Walk or provision of a new pedestrian link between Market Street and Minster Pool. <p>Link to improvements to pedestrian walkways and linkages, at Bird Street/ Swan Road junction.</p> <p>Active development frontages to be created as part of the Bird Street Courtyard Development Opportunity.</p>
Pedestrian Priority Streets/ improvements to pedestrian walkways and linkages	<p>The re-opening of Lower Bore Street to permitted vehicles (blue badge holders, permit holders and loading vehicles).</p> <p>The closing of Conduit Street, Market Street and Breadmarket Street to through-traffic, except for permit holders and loading vehicles.</p> <p>Introducing street furniture and public realm interventions such as timber bollards (potential use of automatic bollards) and clear street signage to signal to all users those areas which are pedestrianised and those which are not.</p> <p>Improvements to pedestrian walkways and linkages, at the Bird Street/ Bore Street/ The Friary junction.</p> <p>Improvements to pedestrian walkways and linkages, to Cross Keys and Stowe Pool via alleys.</p>	N/A	N/A - Public Realm Project

Issues and Obstacles	Indicative Project Duration & any Phasing Implications	Outline process for implementation – actions for Lichfield District Council
<p>Bird Street car park has the highest occupancy rate of all car parks.</p> <p>Displaced car parking spaces to be re-provided as part of a new multi-storey car park at the Birmingham Road Gateway.</p> <p>Proximity to existing trees could necessitate tree protection works at additional cost.</p> <p>New development to have regard to the setting of surrounding heritage assets and the adjacent registered Park and Garden.</p>	<p>Indicative timescale 2-3 years.</p> <p>Single Phase.</p> <p><i>NB – a later phase could consist of a more comprehensive scheme comprising adjacent land owned by the County Council and the reconfiguration or redevelopment of premises on Market Street.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development Brief. ▪ Dialogue with potential development partners re finance/ funding options for delivery. ▪ Planning application ▪ Dialogue within Lichfield District Council, regarding the part relocation of parking spaces. ▪ Negotiations with Lichfield City Council, as the adjacent landowner of Minster Pool Walk and the Garden of Remembrance. ▪ Negotiations with operators of the adjacent commercial units, to minimise disturbance to the operation and servicing access of these units. ▪ Identify other sources of funding including S106 and CIL. ▪ Bring forward the site as a development opportunity.
<p>Necessity for Traffic Regulation Orders (where necessary).</p> <p>Liaison with adjacent businesses affected by changes including access for customers and servicing.</p>	<p>Over lifetime of Masterplan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider development of Public Realm Design Guide ▪ Scheme design ▪ Implement Traffic Regulation Orders ▪ Develop funding strategy/business plans for funding applications to LEPs. ▪ Identify other sources of funding including S106 and CIL.

CATHEDRAL QUARTER

Project	Description	Ownership	Potential linkage with Public Realm Priorities & improvements
Improvements to Minster Pool Walk, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of a new footpath/ cycle route to the north of Minster Pool, to enable a circular walk to be established. Additional street lighting to new route. 		Public/ Private Ownership	N/A - Public Realm Project

BUSINESS & LEARNING QUARTER

Project	Description	Ownership	Potential linkage with Public Realm Priorities & improvements
University West Car Park	<p>A rationalised area of car parking.</p> <p>Coach parking (at least 10 coach parking spaces).</p> <p>Commercial business space, suitable for SMEs and start-ups (c. 1,800 sqm)</p>	Private Ownership	-

CITY CENTRE WIDE

Project	Description	Ownership	Potential linkage with Public Realm Priorities & improvements
Signage and Wayfinding Strategy	<p>To provide clear and consistent signage and wayfinding across the city centre and at key transport gateways.</p> <p>To provide improvement in legibility across the City Centre and to reinforce identity.</p>	N/A	N/A – Public Realm Project

Issues and Obstacles	Indicative Project Duration & any Phasing Implications	Outline process for implementation – actions for Lichfield District Council
<p>Land in multiple ownerships.</p> <p>New development to have regard to the setting of surrounding heritage assets and the adjacent registered Park and Garden.</p> <p>Existence of mature trees which could potentially require removal.</p> <p>Construction of new footpath in close proximity to Minster Pool.</p>	Indicative timescale 2-3 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negotiations with landowners. ▪ Scheme Design. ▪ Funding including s106 and CIL.

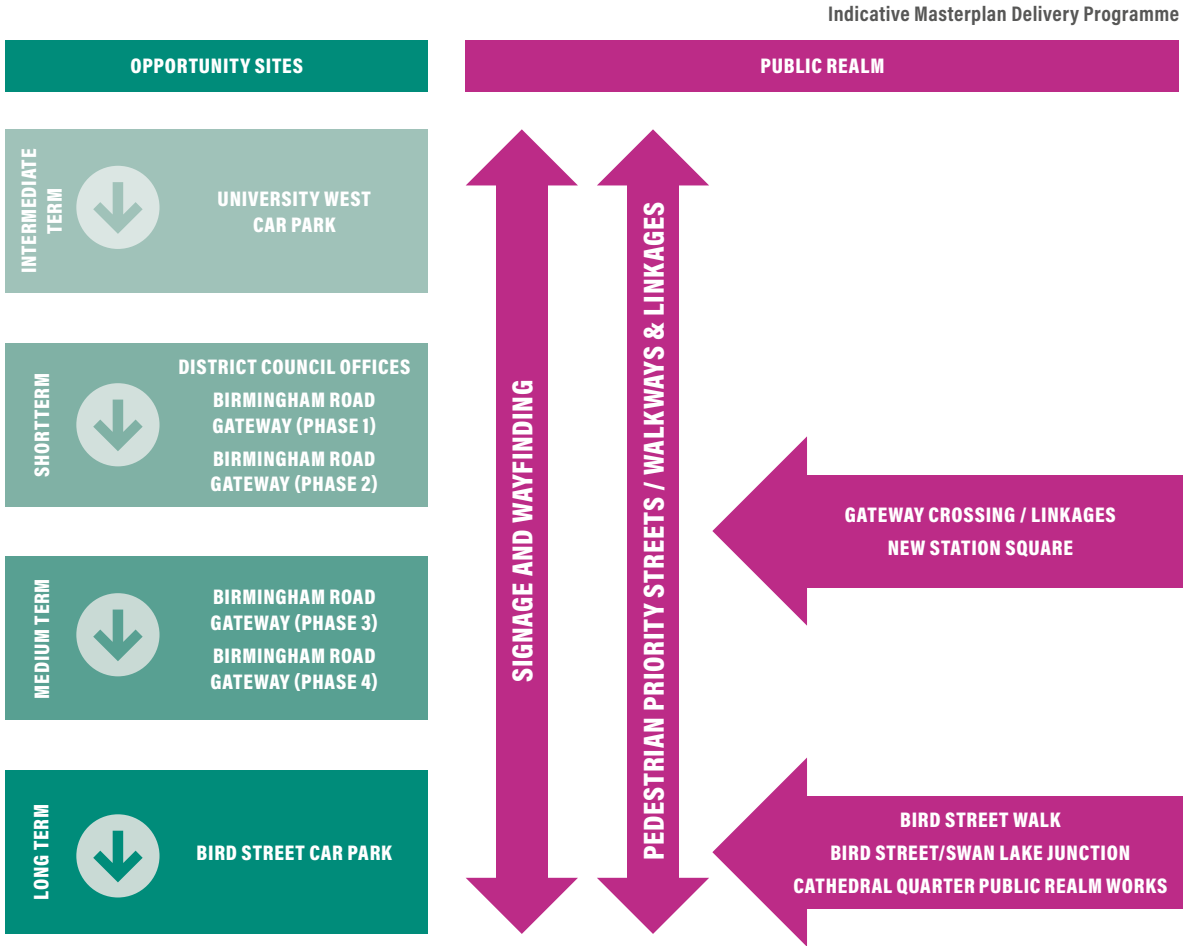
Issues and Obstacles	Indicative Project Duration & any Phasing Implications	Outline process for implementation – actions for Lichfield District Council
<p>Land in private ownership.</p> <p>If coach parking is not able to be delivered on this site, coach parking spaces will need to be provided for within the new bus station, as part of the Birmingham Road Gateway.</p>	Indicative timescale 1-2 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to engage with landowner to establish prospects for its re-development. ▪ Development Brief. ▪ Planning application. ▪ Identify other sources of funding including S106 and CIL. ▪ Bring forward the site as a development opportunity.

Issues and Obstacles	Indicative Project Duration & any Phasing Implications	Outline process for implementation – actions for Lichfield District Council
<p>Ensuring new signage and wayfinding is inclusive.</p> <p>Identification of appropriate locations (i.e. having regard to location of underground services etc).</p>	Over lifetime of Masterplan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheme Design. ▪ Develop Signage and Wayfinding Strategy (including consultation). ▪ Identify sources of funding including s106 and CIL.

Timescales

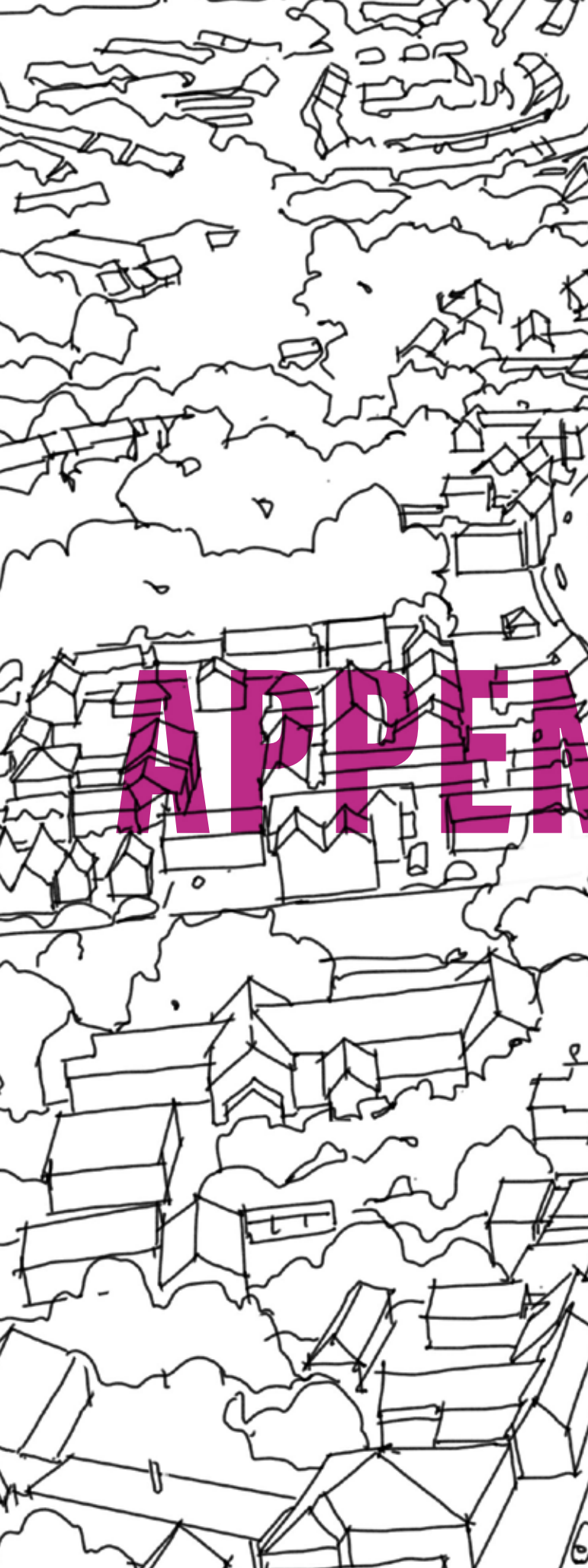
- 5.17 The sequencing of project delivery will depend on a host of decisions and funding and due to the complexity of the development process are uncertain. In many cases they will be reliant on third party involvement and commitment. However, reflecting the priority of the identified schedule of projects, we have categorised the proposals into short, medium- and longer-term anticipated delivery timescales. In any delivery plan it is important to identify quick wins to carry momentum through from the masterplanning stage.
- 5.18 A suggested masterplan delivery programme is set out in the diagram below. This takes into account that some of the projects might be complex and long term and involve a number of phases, whilst others will be delivered more quickly. The timescales will rely on certainty about resources.

- 5.19 The timeframes reflected in the delivery programme are as follows:
- Immediate years 1-2;
 - Short years 2-7;
 - Medium years 8-15 years; and
 - Long 15 + years.
- 5.20 As indicated in the table and diagram below, Birmingham Road Gateway will be the most complex of the opportunity sites to deliver. Early phases will play an important enabling role in the delivery of the later, less commercial phases of development. Given the complexity, there are a number of routes to delivery which can be considered. An explanation of these delivery routes is set out in the Appendix 1 to the Masterplan.



Lichfield District Council's Role & Funding

- 5.21 The plan has been prepared at a time of considerable economic uncertainty and cautious levels of private sector investment. In addition to any funds generated through the development of the Birmingham Road Gateway and Bird Street Courtyard sites, the Council will need to assemble a suite of possible funding sources to drive the pace of development.
- 5.22 As outlined above, the high-level viability assessments have indicated that a level of cross-subsidisation could assist in the delivery of public sector infrastructure. However, this will need to be supported by other internal and external sources of funding.
- 5.23 These could include:
- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing against future investment income;
 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – tariffs for infrastructure to help serve and unlock new developments;
 - Working with the Local Enterprise Partnerships to draw down funding to support infrastructure and developments. Lichfield District is a member of two LEPs (Stoke on Trent Staffordshire LEP and Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP). The LEPs' Strategic Economic Plans provide a strategy for delivering economic growth. LEPs have increasingly become a key source of funding for the delivery of transport improvements through the Single Local Growth Fund;
 - Transport funding from Staffordshire County Council - As Highway Authority, Staffordshire County Council could play a key role via their involvement in the development of the Birmingham Road Corridor and Transport Hub in addition to their support for sustainable travel schemes including pedestrian and cycling initiatives;
 - Contributions from Rail and Bus operating companies; and
 - An application to the Future High Streets Fund.
- 5.24 As indicated above, other public sector bodies will play a role in supporting the masterplan.
- There may be potential to tap into new funding streams and therefore a funding and bidding strategy needs to be considered to allow the Council to be in a position to apply to these new funds when announced.
- 5.25 The above mechanisms can help support development, but the masterplan can also generate self-sustaining investment by creating confidence amongst developers, investors and occupiers regarding the prosperity of the city centre. The masterplan proposals will increase private sector confidence and help create an environment for investment. An open dialogue with developers will help to ensure high quality development can be achieved.
- 5.26 In addition, developer contributions (S106 Agreements) will assist in delivering the masterplan. The Council will need to ensure that development in Lichfield makes its full contribution to mitigating its impact on the environment and on the plans for improved public realm infrastructure. The Council will seek to enter into legal agreements with private developers under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This could include agreements for contributions to projects within the masterplan such as
- The improvement to public spaces and wayfinding/legibility in the city centre.
 - Improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and car parking.
 - Infrastructure requirements.
- 5.27 Achieving such agreements will be predicated on the financial viability of schemes. As development proposals come forward within the life of the plan, it will be important for the District Council to identify any links with the masterplan proposals and seek to agree a financial contribution.
- 5.28 Overall, the Council's role will be to ensure that developments are shaped to create sustainable and perpetuating value through the most suitable delivery route.



APPENDIX 1

BIRMINGHAM ROAD GATEWAY DELIVERY ROUTES

The site is anticipated to be brought forward in four phases:

1. Phase One: Residential apartments and small-scale business units
2. Phase Two: MSCP, restaurant/leisure uses
3. Phase Three: Residential houses/apartments and leisure – hotel/cinema/restaurants
4. Phase Four: Bus Station (re-provision of existing)

We have prepared a short report outlining our main appraisal assumptions and a summary of the appraisal results. This report is for internal purposes only and is not intended to be published for consultation.

The following sets out the potential routes to delivery. The final route chosen will depend on the Council's approach to risk, reward and appetite for investment.

1. Traditional Route

Delivery through this route entails the disposal of the Birmingham Road Gateway site in return for a capital receipt. The site would be delivered in its entirety by the private sector, which keeps public sector involvement relatively minimal.

It is important to recognise that minimal public sector involvement transfers all risk to the private sector. This includes the risk of delivering a mixed-use scheme and relatively higher borrowing costs. The developer compensates itself for accepting these risks by seeking a high profit, which subsequently affects the amount that is available to be paid to the Council as a capital receipt for the sale of its land.

The implementation process requires the preparation of a development and planning brief for the entire scheme to inform the procurement of a development partner and the negotiation of a development agreement. The parties will then need to agree a detailed design to enable the selected development partner to progress the planning process.

The initial high-level viability appraisal indicates the potential for a positive capital receipt to be generated. While this demonstrates viability, the proceeds are not anticipated to be of sufficient magnitude to cover the full cost of delivering public realm works and make a significant contribution towards the re-provision of the bus station.

It is therefore anticipated that this route will require additional alternative funding to be identified to deliver the wider improvements identified in the Masterplan

2. Split Delivery Route

This delivery route requires the District Council to separate the residential and commercial elements of the scheme.

The residential component would be disposed to the private sector in return for a capital receipt. A purely residential scheme exposes the developer to lower risk, which in turn generates a potentially higher capital value for the Council. The implementation process for the residential element requires a development and planning brief and a sale agreement.

Under this approach, it is assumed that the commercial element together with car parking would be funded by the Council through prudential borrowing and delivered by way of a Development Management agreement and procurement of a contractor. The Council would use its own land, and instead of securing a land value on disposal, would invest on the basis that the income would provide a return on investment. It is anticipated that this would provide surplus income over and above that required to service the debt. This would also give the Council direct control of the commercial units, and their management going forward. This is an approach being more commonly adopted by the public sector across the UK, where the return on investment model can deliver greater flexibility, and enable the Council to determine the mix of commercial uses to best benefit the overall city centre offer over time. Clearly this represents a greater degree of financial risk to the Council, but this is to some extent balanced by the higher capital receipt from the disposal of the purely residential element.

The Council benefits from lower borrowing costs through Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) funding, which allows it to deliver the scheme at a lower overall cost than the private sector. There are also no carrying costs on the value of the land.

The initial high-level viability appraisal indicates that the disposal of the residential elements of the scheme could generate capital receipts of more than double that anticipated under option 1 and could also secure a return on investment from the retention of the commercial scheme significantly in surplus of that required to cover loan repayment costs and a prudent sinking fund. This could provide the Council with an income stream that supports further borrowing capacity. This could generate the means to fund significant public realm works and make a meaningful contribution towards the cost and delivery of the bus station.

3. Joint Venture Route

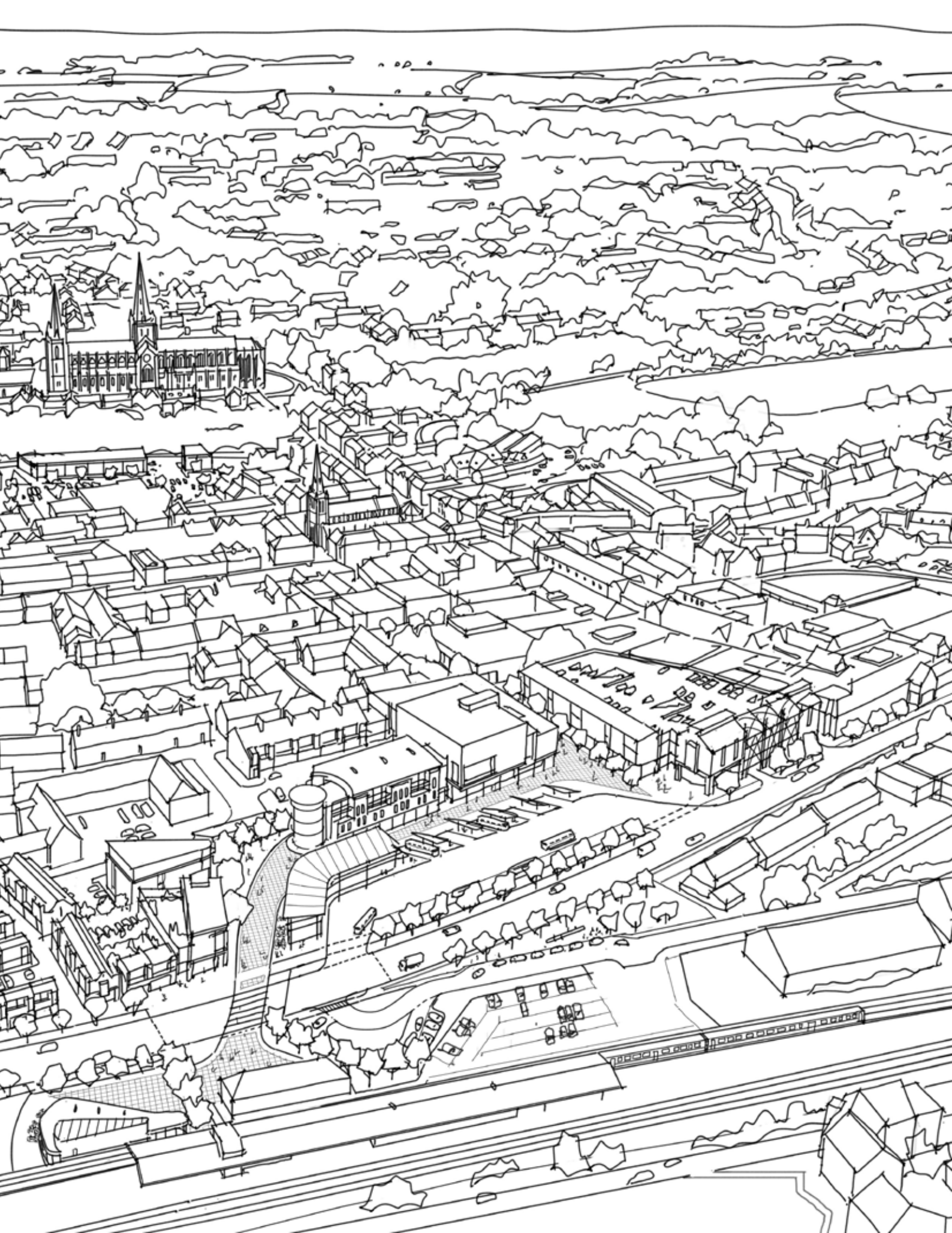
This route requires the Council to deliver the entire scheme through a Joint Venture partnership with a developer (JV). This approach is more similar to the traditional Development partner route set out at 1 above, but involves the Council providing the land at no initial cost and borrowing the funds to meet the cost of developing the scheme. The JV partner is responsible for the construction and bears the construction risk. On completion the residential elements would be sold, generating capital. The commercial investment could also be sold, enabling the short term borrowing to fund the development to be repaid, and the net proceeds shared according to an agreed formula. As the Council is responsible for funding, the scheme benefits from lower borrowing costs, and the JV partner is able to accept a lower level of profit as both carrying costs and risk are reduced, and there is no requirement to privately forward fund the delivery.

The Council's proceeds can be either capital, income if it decides to retain ownership of the development on completion, or a combination of the two; the proportion of which is determined by the JV agreement. The Council's capital receipt is typically determined once the development costs, borrowing costs and the JV partner's profit have been accounted for.

The implementation process requires the procurement of a JV partner and the negotiation of a JV agreement, which carries upfront costs. The scheme will also need to be supported by a development and planning brief and detailed design and planning, as for the more traditional option.

The initial high-level viability appraisal indicates the potential for a flexible outcome involving a combination of capital receipts and revenue. However, whilst this may provide a higher overall value to the Council than option 1, it is important to highlight that, based on the appraisals undertaken, this route is less flexible than option 2 in respect of the available funding and capacity to contribute towards public realm works and the provision of the bus station.





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Lichfield City Centre Masterplan: Potential Impacts of Covid-19

Executive Summary

This Briefing Note sets out how our urban environment might be reshaped in response to the impacts on the wider economy of the Coronavirus pandemic. It first presents an overview of relevant information relating to town and city centres and how centres might adapt as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. It then considers the Lichfield context and provides recommendations as to how the council might want to proceed in taking forward and implementing the City Centre Masterplan in this new context.

The pandemic has led to a focus on:

- An increased awareness of the need for green space in our town and city centres,
- The importance of a safe and healthy outdoor environment,
- The need for adaptable multifunctional spaces,
- Changing patterns of work with increased home working for many
- The fragility of our public transport systems when exposed to health risk and
- A more local emphasis on accessing services and facilities
- Expected changes in demand for different parts of the property sector and
- Challenges for development viability going forward

Opportunities for the masterplan

Whilst we are entering a period of uncertainty, there is also opportunity. The masterplan is not a rigid blueprint but a flexible framework and the masterplan's overarching approach is still relevant and appropriate. The District Council is thus able to make changes to the proposals where necessary to reflect changing patterns of use and demand in the city centre.

All local authorities will be reassessing and monitoring the impacts of the pandemic not least the changing patterns of use and performance of their centres. Given the masterplan has not yet entered the delivery phase, Lichfield is well placed to be ahead of the curve. A masterplan framework is already produced and can be used to underpin the recovery action plan.

Lichfield is also well positioned as a smaller city to take advantage of the trend to remain local as more people who may travel to Birmingham and other larger employment continue to work from home, at least part time.

Delivery

In terms of activity, there is a chance to assess and undertake a number of early actions which do not compromise long-term delivery of the masterplan but can be undertaken in the meantime to assist in laying foundations for taking the Masterplan forward. The first focus for delivery is public realm strategy and car parking strategy.

Public realm projects which support the business and visitor economy are outlined in the masterplan and can be directly progressed as part of the recovery plan.

In addition, an early reconsideration of the City's parking needs and a review of provision is recommended, as many of the developments in the masterplan involve parking provision. Information collated will help inform any adaptations to the later phases of the masterplan.

Consideration is given to how the development proposals for each of the sites might alter in response to the pandemic suggesting where uses could flex to reflect changes in demand, for example, an increase in residential live/work accommodation instead of small scale offices at Birmingham Road.

Finally, the note looks at delivery implications for the masterplan and the likelihood that the public sector will be called upon to take a more active role in delivery at least in the early years whilst confidence is rebuilt in the economy. Collating an evidence base to support applications for funding is highlighted as an important activity. Access to funding will help to bring forward phases of the masterplan which may otherwise be pushed back.

Lichfield City Centre Masterplan: Potential Impacts of Covid-19

This Briefing Note has been prepared by David Lock Associates in response to Lichfield District Council's request for advice in relation to the city centre masterplan. Specifically, the District Council is seeking advice regarding the potential impacts of Covid-19 on town centres generally, and in relation to the delivery of the city centre masterplan.

The briefing note provides an overview of relevant information relating to town and city centres, with a particular focus on the Lichfield context, and how centres might adapt as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. It provides recommendations on how the council might want to proceed in taking forward and implementing the City Centre Masterplan.

1.1 Rethinking our town and city centre environments

During the pandemic in-person visits to sports and entertainment venues, retail centres, and other mixed-use environments have been rejected in favour of virtual gatherings and Zoom meetings. However, in the long term the virtual world is not a sustainable substitute for human interaction.

Public places play an important role in bringing people together and promoting health and well-being, so the focus now has to shift to ways of making town centres both safe and vibrant. How might mixed-use and public places change post Covid-19?

- A bigger emphasis on multifunctional indoor and outdoor space. Modular building systems may become the norm where flexibility of purpose is key. During the pandemic there has been increased demand for fast build, temporary, prefabricated, and/or highly adaptable venues. Mixed-use developments are well suited to modular construction with its flexibility to add pop up spaces, increase capacity or change uses.
- A renewed focus on making our spaces and places healthier and safer. Healthy building standards will become more focused on the air we breathe. The introduction of outside air will become a greater part of new builds. The introduction of fresh, clean air not only helps maintain healthier environments; it can help dilute the human-to-human passage of airborne elements.
- Foyers and building entrances can provide a safer and cleaner shared environment. Transitional spaces will be particularly important for the larger communal spaces and assembly areas that often anchor a mixed-use development.
- Connected communities will be best placed to take advantage of the new normal. Integrated districts promote human connections. Mixed-use environments which bring the best of residential and commercial architecture together and create shared environments can form the backbone of diverse self-sustaining districts and connected communities. People want to be connected, and bringing goods and services closer to inhabitants, providing better support mechanisms, and even making it easier to contain and communicate health concerns are made possible in a well-designed mixed-use environment.
- The spaces we gather in will be even more important in the post-pandemic world; they will become places not of exile or distancing, but of community and engagement. The challenge is in making them both healthy and connected.

1.2 Changing patterns of working

The lockdown has forced many people to work from home, some for the very first time, and as businesses adapt one of the legacies of COVID-19 could be that many more people end up working from home (WFH) more often and travelling less.

A report from business division of mobile operator O2, has found that nearly half of those surveyed predict a permanent change in employers' approach to flexible working when the COVID-19 lockdown lifts.

The report is based on an ICM study of 2,019 UK workers and a YouGov survey of 4,509 adults (of whom 2,394 were workers). A third (33%) of those who think flexible working will increase are expecting to increase the amount they work from home by at least 3 days a week after lockdown – rising to 81% for those expecting to work at least 1 day a week from home.

A knock-on effect of this change in working patterns is an expected change in people's attitudes to residential locations. If people are commuting less there will be less desire/need to live close to places of work and a move to smaller towns and more rural locations is predicted.

1.3 Effects of the Pandemic on Property Markets

Town Centre Retail

In April 2020, Springboard's latest monthly footfall monitor showed an unprecedented decline in retail footfall 80.1 per cent. This was almost double the level of the downturn in March, which posted a 41.3 per cent drop as the lockdown came into force. June 15th saw the re-opening of non-essential shops and whilst there was an initial surge due to latent demand, footfall was 55 per cent lower on the High Street the following day, compared to the same day last year, as shoppers opted to stay home.

WEEK ON WEEK % CHANGE IN FOOTFALL - TUESDAY JUNE 16 2020 - UP TO 2pm					
SHOPPING TYPE	UK	ENGLAND	NORTHERN IRELAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
UK High Streets	33.60%	35.40%	-0.10%	3.70%	45.70%
UK Retail Parks	15.20%	19.40%	4.00%	-0.80%	7.10%
UK Shopping Centres	23.40%	27.30%	3.20%	-3.50%	20.60%
UK Retail Destinations	26.70%	29.60%	1.70%	0.80%	39.40%

YEAR ON YEAR % CHANGE IN FOOTFALL - TUESDAY JUNE 16 2020 - UP TO 2pm					
SHOPPING	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
UK High Streets	-55.30%	-53.70%	-69.10%	-77.10%	-55.40%
UK Retail Parks	-23.60%	-19.10%	-46.10%	-38.40%	-2.80%
UK Shopping Centres	-53.20%	-50.90%	-69.00%	-73.90%	-36.80%
UK Retail Destinations	-47.30%	-44.80%	-63.60%	-67.10%	-50.80%

Source: Springboard

We are undoubtedly at the beginning of a long and slow road to recovery for the high street, with retailers now facing the challenge of the new health and safety measures i.e. as deep cleaning, closed changing rooms, limited in-store customer numbers, perspex screens at tills and distancing measures. However, they also need to find ways to encourage customers to shop with them regardless of the changes.

Rakuten Advertising senior vice president, Nick Fletcher, recently commented that “Open doors are by no means a guarantee of returning footfall, and the retail industry will be holding its breath to see how shoppers react to the reopening of stores, and how social distancing is managed.”¹

Building consumer confidence will be key to getting our towns and cities functioning again and retailing will still have a role to play. The trend towards online shopping has been accelerated by the pandemic, but how the online and bricks and mortar offers interface is now more important than ever. We are currently experiencing a ‘temporary normal’ between the high levels of the virus circulating and getting it under control. As yet, scientists are unable to predict how effective a vaccine will be and how long before one is widely available. This makes it difficult to plan for the ‘new normal’ so, building flexibility into any planning is essential.

Leisure

The leisure sector was the first sector to be hit hard by the pandemic, with a loss trade evident prior to lockdown as people chose to stay away. Owners and operators are now focused on the post-pandemic future. Once the expected staged reopening of different business types begins, each sub-sector will have its own specific issues to address, and the speed of recovery will certainly be variable across different geographies. The hope across large parts of the leisure sector is for a reasonably rapid return to previous trading levels as customers enjoy being released from isolation or social distancing rules. However, a number of consumer polls have clearly shown that people are cautious about returning to enclosed spaces.

Office market

Commentators in the property press are agreed that there is likely to be a reduction in the demand for office space post COVID -19. Conventionally, businesses have worked to a rough rule of thumb of circa 100 square feet for every employee. So, a business employing 100 people needed an office building with 10,000 square feet of space. In future, if no more than two thirds of those employees are in the office on any given day, the business could manage with only 6,600 square feet. If this becomes the new norm then demand for office space will change substantially. The design of offices will also need to change with more collaboration space and less workstations.

This change is likely to exacerbate the gulf between secondary and Grade A office space. Where businesses are looking to downsize accommodation, they are likely to seek better quality more adaptable space.⁷

Consultants WSP have observed that changing working practices are not the only determining factor. The economic downturn will undoubtedly result in a fall in occupier demand as some companies retrench or fold.

¹ Nazir, S (2020, June) Reopened stores present a new way of shopping - is it viable? *Retail Gazette*, Retrieved from <https://www.retailgazette.co.uk/blog>

Residential

The housing market has reopened for business and reports have indicated an initial surge in requests for viewings. How this translates to transactions won't be seen for a few months down the line. Recovery in the housing market will be determined by the state of the wider economy and consumer finances. Interest rates are expected to remain lower (at least for the short to medium term) which will support mortgage affordability.

Simon Rubensohn, RICS chief economist, has stated that "There are already signs that those looking to buy a house are responding to the conditions created by the pandemic by seeking out properties with gardens or balconies and nearer green space".

In terms of new build, developers are continuing to build out sites that were already under construction but there is likely to be some caution around those sites where building has not yet commenced. Housebuilders may also take time to re-evaluate their products to respond to the increase in homeworking by incorporating dedicated working from homes spaces with the required digital connectivity.

Development Risk

Reducing risk. Modular building systems can reduce development risk for mixed-use and multi-phased developments. The use of modular systems makes these developments less reliant on market timing. Projects can advance using modular designs since they can more easily adapt embedded groundwork and infrastructure that make up much of the early investment in mixed-use developments. Since markets can shift during the course of a 2, 3, 4 year or more design and construction period, modular systems make it easier to adjust and adapt.

1.4 Implications for the Property Market Post COVID-19

Values

Property values are established from an evidence of past transactions and sectoral trends. However, given the sudden move into lockdown we now have a situation where:

- Housing transactions suspended for 7 weeks;
- Rent/mortgage holidays were granted in both the residential and commercial sector;
- New business activity has slowed considerably – very few new lettings or investment sales, other than in the warehousing sector;
- Many businesses are retrenching, laying off staff and looking at downsizing or cheaper accommodation alternatives.

Evidence of value established pre-lockdown is therefore out of date or no longer reliable and there will be a delay in securing new evidence with the inevitable time lag for evidence to reach the record books. Regardless of this, sales will take time to recover and investors will not want to crystalize a fall in value temporarily reducing supply. This will lead to:

- Volatility in the market with some sectors, such as hospitality and retail, hit harder than others;
- A higher risk environment for developers and investors which in turn will mean more caution and slower decision making and

- A danger that “fire sales” may establish new tones and may not be truly representative of the overall picture.

Costs

Huge uncertainties exist in the cost side of the equation too. Many unknowns e.g.:

- Will tender prices be renegotiated upwards to reflect revised working conditions, e.g. limited numbers on site to enable social distancing, longer delivery periods, added costs of sanitization stations etc.?
- How many contractors will survive?
- Policy requirements still have to be met... even if deferred i.e. CIL payments,
- Developers still need a profit, and greater risk means higher profit margins.

Evidence will again be out of date, unreliable, inconsistent, and scarce.

How might this affect the main players in the market?

1. Developers and Site Promoters
 - Private sector developers – a period of extreme caution. Evidence of new sustained demand needed before further commitments are made – unless there is some form of Government incentive/guarantee;
 - Private sector site promoters – work likely to continue but pace may be “adjusted” depending on stage of the process;
 - Public sector – may become more prevalent in the development market but this depends on the extent of the impact, grant funding schemes and cash reserves/borrowing capability.
2. Financiers - investors and funds
 - Some property related asset funds “frozen” due to short term value uncertainty;
 - Longer term view – depends on comparison with other forms of investment. If interest rates rise as predicted there may be other more attractive investment opportunities;
 - Investment is likely to be more sector specific – warehousing, research, manufacturing may be favoured over offices and retail;
3. Land Owners
 - If landowners do not need to liquidate assets, they are likely to sit tight as selling now may not maximise value. If no need to sell, why do so now?
 - If the majority are in this position will lead to a supply shortage which could lead to a reboot of the land market as values increase but likely to be limited to premium locations.

Looking Ahead

Assessing development viability will be extremely difficult and individual developers may have different takes on a site depending on how they have weathered the storm. There is likely to be more caution and a lot less competition for sites. Sites in non-prime locations will inevitably be even more difficult to get out of the ground than before. All

analysis will be heavily caveated, and subject to greater sensitivity testing. This is a time for:

- open discussion,
- understanding each other's point of view,
- assessing evidence and trends regularly,
- monitoring the chatter and market commentary,
- noting the changes in an area and
- watching the impact and direction of Government intervention.

As the private sector withdraws, the public sector is set to play a greater role in development either in partnership with the private sector to reduce risk or via direct development. Either way a period of development inactivity is likely to ensue whilst we wait to see how well the Coronavirus is kept under control and what the new normal will look like.

1.5 Public Realm

How will our relationship with public space change after COVID 19? There is much being written about how we use and move through public spaces, with many feeling that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to make lasting changes that will benefit health and well-being and help to combat climate change.

Unarguably street designs that free space for pedestrians and active mobility can help meet several public health objectives, notably through physical activity and the reduction of pollution exposure.

During lockdown more street space has been given over to walking and cycling to facilitate social distancing. In some cities, roads have been temporarily closed to motorised vehicles. Milan has announced permanent changes with the widening of pavements, the introduction of 35km of new cycle lanes and the removal of vehicle lanes. Other emerging needs besides social distancing may also require some redesign of street layouts e.g. online shopping and home food delivery are creating a higher demand for drop off and delivery space.

The use of green spaces in cities has increased greatly during lockdown which indicates a need for access to smaller green spaces and neighbourhood parks. The need to create more spaces for individuals to relax or exercise has been highlighted. From a biodiversity perspective, continuous networks of green spaces are more valuable than isolated patches. Linking a decentralized network of smaller green spaces will enable residents to feel connected to nature. In addition, visual access to nature has been shown to have important physical and mental health benefits in itself.

Increasing the width of pavements and reducing vehicle movements provides an opportunity to introduce more green corridors for people to travel along to access pockets of green space interspersed across a city.

In terms of more commercial activity the ability to use outdoor space not only safely but effectively will play a key role in economic recovery. Eighteen of Lithuania's public spaces including its central Cathedral Square have been reopened to the public allowing the relocation of cafe and restaurant outdoor seating to a more spatial environment.

Providing more spaces which allow for outdoor eating and drinking could improve consumer confidence and encourage people to return to urban centres.

During the lockdown, many Councils have reduced the amount of street clutter, e.g. signs, A Boards, railings etc. to allow for social distancing measures. Post COVID, consideration should be given to whether this should be a permanent change.

Finally, the adaptability or multifunctionality of public space has proved beneficial in dealing with the pandemic; with public spaces used as Coronavirus test centres or as in the case of Central Park New York, a temporary field hospital. The possibilities of multifunctional use should not be overlooked. This use of space does not need to be confined to ground level and could include for example, new green spaces on the roof areas of public buildings especially where land is at a premium in town and city centres.

1.6 Movement

It is evident that safety measures will mean that public transport is likely to operate at significantly reduced capacity. This has led to fears of a flight back to the use of private vehicles. However, with many continuing to work from home; local, shorter journeys will be far more prevalent. For those who do need public transport to travel; walking, cycling and other micro-mobility modes will prove most efficient for making journeys.

In early May Grant Shapps, the Transport Minister, announced the first stage of a £2 billion cycling and walking investment programme, worth £250 million. As discussed above part of the challenge will be how to re-design the public realm to allow for more and safer cycling and walking opportunities. This will require the development of active travel strategies; ensuring individual schemes are designed as part of a cohesive network of routes that support more walking and cycling. Along with the infrastructure changes will be the challenge of developing and delivering behaviour change programmes so that local people can understand and embrace the changes as they are delivered.

Revisiting the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan

2.1 Introduction

In considering the many potential issues arising from a post COVID situation a number of potential opportunities exist in terms of the City Centre Masterplan. In particular there is a chance to assess and undertake a number of early actions which do not compromise long-term delivery of the masterplan but can be undertaken in the meantime to assist in laying foundations for taking the Masterplan forward. It is worth remembering that the Masterplan was written not as a rigid blueprint but as a flexible framework within which different opportunities, where they arise, can be considered within the overall vision and objectives that are an integral part of Masterplan.

The masterplan's overarching approach is, therefore, still relevant and appropriate and the District Council is thus able to make changes where necessary to reflect changing patterns of use and demand in the city centre.

All local authorities will be reassessing and monitoring the impacts of the pandemic not least the changing patterns of use and performance of their centres. Given that the masterplan has not yet entered the delivery phase, Lichfield is well placed to be ahead of the curve as the flexibility of the masterplan framework can be used to underpin the recovery action plan.

Lichfield is also well positioned as a smaller city to take advantage of the trend to remain local as more people who may travel to Birmingham and other larger employment will continue to work from home at least part time.

2.2 Public Realm

Adapting Lichfield City centre to manage social distancing, as many historic centres in the UK are finding, is a particular challenge. Many of the pedestrianised areas are narrow and cluttered with street furniture and on trafficked streets there is little opportunity to remove parking or traffic lanes due to the historic street pattern resulting in disruptive measures should any changes to the road network be introduced.

The City Council has been awarded £92,501 from the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund which provides councils with additional funding to support their business communities through four main strands of activity. One of these strands focuses on the public realm and the temporary changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

However, the Institute of Place Management recognises that there is perhaps greater potential to make transformative change in smaller centres, through the permanent adoption of some temporary measures to create more usable public space. The masterplan has outlined opportunities for improvements to appearance, walkability, recreational space, and place experience and such interventions will support the work that the District Council is progressing to safely reopen the City Centre

Information from the footfall counters in the City Centre will be invaluable to the work that the council is already doing with Three Spires shopping centre, the Lichfield BID and Staffordshire County Council to monitor the use of streets, pavements and footpaths as lockdown regulations are relaxed. This information will be used to determine if the measures introduced to support safe access and movement are satisfactory or whether additional interventions are needed.

As discussed in the introduction, the lockdown has led to less use of the car with people opting to walk and cycle to their local centre. Accelerating the plans to make Lichfield more pedestrian friendly and introducing more cycle lanes and cycle storage will support the vision of Lichfield as a destination, where locals and visitors might wish to dwell and linger, other than simply drive to, park and drive away.

During the recovery stage of the pandemic progressing the following public realm projects in the masterplan will support the business and visitor economy:

- Pedestrian priority streets,
- Pedestrian walkways and linkages,
- Signage and wayfinding.

2.3 Car Parking Strategy

The changes anticipated in the way that the City will be used in future and the real potential of a drop in the numbers of people using their cars to visit Lichfield centre highlights the need for the reconsideration of the City's parking needs and a review of provision.

What could this mean for the masterplan?

- Looking again at the plans for Bird Street Car Park,
- Reviewing the size of the planned multi storey car park adjacent to Birmingham Road and the potential for a multi-use building which includes public green space at ground or roof top levels,
- A consideration of pick up and drop off arrangements for businesses and residences within the City Centre to reflect the acceleration in on-line purchasing activity.

2.4 Masterplan Development Proposals

The future is uncertain in relation to how the property market will respond to the crisis. It is evident that investment decisions will be delayed and more cautious attitude to risk will be adopted by both investors and developers. Notwithstanding this, the recovery period represents a golden opportunity to revisit the masterplan and deliver buildings which respond to the demands of the 'new normal'. The earlier part of this briefing note has outlined what some of the changes might be. In summary these are:

- A reduction in the demand for retail floorspace;
- A potential for non-speculative prime office space i.e. bespoke commissions for occupiers; wanting offices designed for new ways of working with fresh air circulation;
- More green space/open areas around buildings allowing for safe circulation route and places to sit;
- Bespoke live/work dwellings with internal courtyards and large balconies to allow private access to the outside;
- More outdoor activity space with a corresponding possible reduction in indoor leisure activity demand;
- More outdoor space for bars, cafes and restaurants with the potential built in weather proofing;
- Revised layouts for public transport interchanges to manage circulation and queueing to allow safer operation and
- A reduction in the number of parking spaces.

How do these potential changes affect the development proposals in the masterplan?

Initially there will need to be a period of monitoring how things progress with the economy and the virus i.e. whether a vaccine becomes available or will the world remain in a management phase for the foreseeable future? As discussed above, the answer to this question will affect confidence levels and the long-term viability of projects.

However, in terms of the Masterplan projects this is a good opportunity to consider the options for potential reconfiguration of the developments

1. Birmingham Road Gateway

- New Bus station – transport interchanges may require larger footprints in future to allow for some degree of social distancing for queues, greater circulation space, segregated WC provision and more cycle parking and storage.
- Cinema/Hotel – it is difficult to predict how cinemas and city centre hotels will perform financially in future and therefore these sectors need to be kept under scrutiny.
- Restaurant/café uses – the introduction of ample outside space is likely to be a requirement for these operators in future
- Convenience retail – there has been a strong resurgence in the use local food stores serving their adjacent communities during the pandemic and this trend may be here to stay.
- Residential apartments and houses – Lichfield is well placed to provide an attractive walkable city centre living environment. However, any new development will need to include private outdoor space and access to safe communal, green areas. This will necessarily take up larger footprints but will be essential to the marketability of a development and thus its viability. Recent examples of award winning, sustainable urban residential development of relevance to the Lichfield context include Goldsmith Street in Norwich, winner of the 2019 RIBA Stirling Prize, and Trent Basin in Nottingham. Both schemes include a mix of town houses and apartments each with private open space in the form of small gardens, generous balconies or roof terraces. Both also incorporate areas of shared open space. These new post COVID developments will also no doubt respond to the needs of those working frequently from home.
- Small scale commercial development – it remains to be seen whether there will still be a demand for this type of accommodation, but any development is likely to be bespoke and therefore non speculative. Should this demand not be apparent the space will most likely become residential.
- Multi Storey Car Park – this has already been referenced in the section on Car Parking Strategy but there is potential to reduce the number of spaces.

Note: the opportunity to increase the amount of residential accommodation in this area may allow for the delivery of high quality affordable homes for key workers who prefer to be within walking distance of their employment e.g. health and care workers and public sector workers.

2. District Council Offices

At the time of writing the masterplan, plans were being developed for the reconfiguration of the Council House. New ways of working that are likely to be introduced post COVID will require these plans to be revisited.

No conclusions regarding the future of the District Offices and any vacant space therein can be drawn at this time, however as with other parts of the Birmingham Road site once a review of the revised space requirements has been undertaken there is potential to consider the future redevelopment.

3. Bird Street Courtyard

It has been recognised by members and officers that combining the car park with other LDC and public sector owned property in the vicinity and the opening up of the site to Market Street provides greater scope for a more comprehensive scheme. There is an opportunity to provide a high-quality continental style adaptable public space with green areas and open-air places to eat and drink benefitting from views of the cathedral, whilst still retaining parking spaces to serve this part of the City centre. In the long term this would add value to the City centre and provide an active area close to the cathedral for both visitors and residents.

4. University West Car park

A mix of Use was proposed for this site

- Small-scale offices, suitable for SMEs and start-up businesses at the northern end – as with Birmingham Road the level of demand for this type of use remains to be seen. Residential development with green space may prove an attractive alternative.
- Coach parking spaces and car parking on the central part of the site – the need for this will be addressed in the Car Park Strategy.

2.5 Delivery Implications

Changes in the operation of the property market and the likelihood of a deep recession indicates that development viability will remain challenging for some years ahead. This could lead to the masterplan delivery period moving out or to a reordering of the delivery of the development proposals.

However, small towns and cities with green spaces and attractive centres are predicted to bounce back quicker from the effects of pandemic than city centres in the larger conurbations. Investors and developers will still be looking for opportunities and on the face of it, Lichfield will be well placed to take advantage of this interest. As discussed above, there will be a requirement for the public sector to take more of a lead role in development and access to funding and borrowing will drive public sector activity.

Monitoring footfall, gathering evidence on economic performance and any gaps in the market will be a crucial part of the District Council's push to deliver the masterplan. This information will provide the bedrock for developing businesses cases to access any new funding initiatives announced as part of the Government COVID-19 Recovery Plan. Accessing funding will help to bring forward phases of the masterplan which may otherwise be pushed back.

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Engagement Strategy

Leader of the Council

Date: 7 July 2020

Agenda Item: 6

Contact Officer: Billy Webster, Assistant Chief Executive

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Key Decision? **NO**

Local Ward ALL

Members



CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 An Engagement Strategy has been developed (Appendix 1) using the results from a review of our communications service and general approach to communications and engagement, as well as research relating to similar strategies from a range of good practice local authorities and high-performing private sector organisations.
- 1.2 The strategy focuses on communities rather than customers, learning from the shifting perceptions of the relationships required to succeed, moving them from transactional in nature to being more co-creative, and so by inference, fully engaged.
- 1.3 The strategy is aspirational and sets out a clear road map to improve how we engage with our diverse community groups and utilise new and emerging tools and approaches to ensure we successfully engage while making our communities central to all we do.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet approve the adoption of the Engagement Strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2017/18 an audit of the service suggested consideration should be given to developing a Communications Strategy that aligned to the Council's Delivery Plan actions for 2018-20. This was not accepted by the department and instead reliance was placed on the Communications Service Plan.
- 3.2 However, following a review of the communications service, along with changes to the political leadership of the council and its officer structure, it was felt an Engagement Strategy would be helpful to ensure the council had a clear direction and high-level objectives to meet future needs.
- 3.3 The Engagement Strategy (Appendix 1) was created in response to a review of our communications service and general approach to communications and engagement.
- 3.4 Research was undertaken to consider similar strategies from a range of good practice local authorities and high-performing private sector organisations. Interviews with a number of senior officers and Councillors were undertaken to ascertain their views and experiences. Together these have helped us create a strategy that is fully bespoke to the needs and ambitions of Lichfield District Council.
- 3.5 The strategy clearly sets out an ambitious aim to; *understand our communities and their communication needs in order to tailor our communications methods and content to keep them informed and engaged.*

- 3.6 It is written in an open, honest and reflective style, offering ‘personality’ where appropriate, to embrace the proposals within it. The introduction sets out the current position and seeks to outline the need for change. While this may feel critical in parts, this is not the intention, but rather it offers a balanced reflection that accepts the council is good but that it must evolve to meet our new aspirations, and the expectations of our communities.
- 3.7 There are nine objectives, designed to drive positive new behaviours in our own team, support culture change across the organisation, and support our corporate objectives.
- 3.8 The objectives will be delivered through three key work streams, which are; *laying the foundations, building success, and reaching new heights*. Each work stream incorporates a large variety of different activity that will be delivered in an agile way, to quickly test, learn and refine our approach throughout the course of the strategy.
- 3.9 The approach centres on a clear ambition take an innovative approach to how we communicate with our diverse communities and engage with them to obtain meaningful insight that helps make decisions and direct activity.
- 3.10 The strategy clarifies that our communities are the reason why we are here and they are at the heart of all we do. However, this is not easy as we have very diverse communities with differing needs.
- 3.11 We recognise that engagement is a two-way process, and this is the main element of our strategy with our communities and our approach being the most significant element within our strategy. However, we also appreciated that while we must create a dialogue it is also important to provide access to information, services and support as well as utilising effective brand management to add value to everything we do.
- 3.12 To engage our communities, we need to better understand them and plan to make better use of the information we have on them to refine and adapt our approach. This will see us utilise segmentation and the strategy provides a basic example. However, we have a clear desire to enhance this in the future, making our segmentation as comprehensive as it can be in order to address the specific needs of every community and ensure no one is disadvantaged or underrepresented.
- 3.13 The strategy will be delivered over a four year period, however, some of the activity has already started. For example; a review of the structure has been undertaken and some new approaches in communicating are being tested. All of this offers helpful learning to inform any next steps.
- 3.14 An outline delivery plan is provided and will be turned in to a detailed service plan for the communications service. It prioritises activity that needs to be available for the whole duration, such as our approach and use of customer insight, while deprioritising some activity to future years which will be reliant on this work, i.e. targeted communications and marketing.
- 3.15 We will monitor our performance and the strategy provides potential measures that can help us obtaining a baseline of the current position while also allowing us to demonstrate the impact of our actions. However, we understand that as we go forward, more opportunities to measure success will become available and so additional measures may be added in order to obtain a holistic view on performance that can inform future decisions and direction.
- 3.16 While the strategy is owned by the communications service, it is reliant on the whole council to recognise their role in communicating and engaging with our customers and working together to achieve success.

Alternative Options	1. The council choose not to have an engagement strategy and continue as it has, making tactical decisions as they arise. However, a previous audit and subsequent review of communications, has suggested this is not good practice and could have led to a divergence from intent, leading to wasted resources, mixed messages and lack of clarity to our customers.
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Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To create the strategy, a period of consultation was undertaken with members and officers involved in communications and engagement activity, as well as middle managers. 2. Consultation has been undertaken with Leadership Team. 3. Strategic Overview and Scrutiny considered the report on 23 June 2020. Feedback included; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The examples provided, and some of the language in the strategy, may not be the most appropriate, or may not mirror the intent. The strategy was reviewed and modified to better reflect the narrative and objectives. b. The segmentation of our communities had to ensure it reflected our diverse communities and the different needs they would have. This element of the report has been reviewed to ensure this is more visible, and it has also been referenced in the report to provide assurance. c. Communication will enable all elements of the strategic plan and not just enabling people. The strategy was reviewed and the cross-cutting nature is referenced, therefore no further additions were felt necessary. d. The strategy is all-encompassing and it may be necessary to split it in to a number of separate strategies. This is not common practice and although the strategy covers all elements of communications and engagement it does break these down in the objectives, work streams and delivery plan. e. The timescales were too long and we should deliver look to reduce this from 4 years. Strategies are normally over the longer term, this being between 3 and 5 years. There is a significant amount of activity within the strategy with delivery happening quickly. Therefore, it was felt the timescales were appropriate. f. Engagement was the most important element of the strategy and so more content on this was needed. In addition, brand management was not as important. The prioritisation on communities, and engagement with them, was the main priority and the strategy was reviewed and amended to ensure this was adequately reflected. In addition, this has been added to the report to offer further assurance. g. The success measures were not those that would adequately reflect success and seemed to assume a direction of travel. These were reviewed and felt appropriate as measures that could be used at present, but there was also the ability, as outlined in the strategy, to amend these over time to choose measures that would adequately provide a view on performance. This was incorporated in to the report to provide greater clarity and assurance.
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no perceived financial implications of the strategy at this stage.
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The strategy will support the delivery of the strategic plan, through ensuring our communications and engagement activity is aligned to our strategic narrative and provides the necessary insight to make decisions.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no perceived equality, diversity and human rights implications. 2. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.
Crime & Safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no perceived crime and safety implications of the strategy at this stage.

Issues	
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Environmental Impact	1. There are no perceived environmental impact of the strategy at this stage.
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GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	1. There are no perceived GDPR or privacy implications but future changes in how we gather and use insight and information will consider these issues and may require an impact assessment.
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	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Public Perception could be negatively impacted through the use of new approaches that grow the audience and raise more awareness of what we are doing.	We will monitor the impact of our approaches and refine quickly where needed. However, some of this risk is accepted as if we wish to increase our audience then we have to accept that this opens us to more criticism as well as praise.	Yellow
B	Greater complaints and criticism could be received through greater use of communications that are aimed at increasing audience raising awareness and improved involvement.	We will continually monitor the impact of what is being done and respond in an agile way to address issues that arise.	Green
C	Additional resources may be required to continue to meet the needs of our customers or address the changing behaviours of our audience.	We will seek to mitigate this using best practice and low cost tools, and raise specific business cases in a proactive way to ensure funding is planned and manageable.	Green
D	Internal tensions could be felt should there be a disagreement on the use of resources or approaches to communications and marketing where the information or guidance is not aligned to service preferences.	We will seek to use insight to inform decision making and utilise good practice examples. In addition we will work with services to proactively co-create and keep shared purpose, testing and trialling to demonstrate results and so limiting any negatively impact on our services.	Yellow

Background documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.

Relevant web links
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.

Engagement Strategy 2020-2024

Councils suffer from outdated perceptions. Our communities see us as old-fashioned, inefficient and incapable of spending public money effectively. We sit in 'jobs for life' with no incentive to evolve or improve. Nonsense of course, but this view has unfortunately been perpetuated, opening us up to criticism.

Negative media coverage and resident complaints bruise our egos, making us defensive and habitually reacting to issues. Stuck in a vicious cycle, we put disproportionate focus on placating a negative minority rather than learning from this and improving. We risk holding on to knowledge as power, becoming more opaque to protect our reputation.

This insular mentality reduces communication between our teams as well as our communities. It reduces co-operation and restrains our collective improvement. We can make new starters feel unwelcome, their natural curiosity seen as yet another attack. Our old building doesn't help. With closed doors and warren-like corridors, it hides us from the public and from each other. Teams became siloed, creating their own culture, feeling that they worked for different organisations. All this impacted on our confidence and our brand equity.

Our people are still proud of what they do, but many prefer to hide their relationship with LDC, not wearing the logo as a badge of pride. We work industriously behind closed doors to make life better for our residents, but too often it goes uncelebrated.

Our communications reflects all of this outwardly. It's regular and efficient but also safe and formulaic. We keep our heads down, only releasing news once it's fact-checked and sanitised. We feed stories to the media, promoting factual updates but our personality doesn't shine. We look like a brand that doesn't want to draw too much attention to itself. So communities don't engage with us much and we quietly get on with our work. This approach used to serve us well enough, but it needs to change now.

When people feel they are not heard, they stop talking to us, leaving us to make decisions on their behalf. In the worst cases the public has lost trust in us, feeling we never listen nor act on their feedback.

Knowing this, we have improved and have already put plans in place to address many of these issues, for example through our People Strategy, but we also need to change the way we engage all of our communities

A changing world

We operate in a world changed beyond recognition. We are no longer the soft touch organisation people think we were. Funding challenges forced us to radically change structures, cut teams and make moves to become more commercial. We're a smaller leaner team but still expected to deliver what we always have.

Like our communities we all expect simple, user-friendly digital experiences from the brands we interact with. We have short attention spans, low patience and high expectations. We buy

online with minimal clicks, get tailored news bulletins and we are fickle about which brands we connect with. We crave content and news that entertains, educates or inspires.

This is received elsewhere and so it is demanded from us, but currently we can't compete on that level. We must aspire to in order to survive and remain relevant. We urgently need to catch up, keep up and talk to our communities in new ways that work for them.

Despite these challenges, we're adapting fast. Our service levels are excellent. We are efficient and more innovative than people realise. We have a growing following on our social media channels, with some content exciting the public and gaining significant interest. We are a passionate organisation of people working hard to serve our residents. We care and we need to show it more.

Covid-19 brought unimaginable challenges, but we are facing them and excelling. We're becoming more open with each other and our residents. People have seen change and most of them like it. We're improving our communications but we know we need build on this success and do more.

Nationally, trust in institutions continues to fall, so it's vital we engage more closely with our residents. We need to do more to understand their needs. We must become more transparent, open and approachable, to rebuild trust. Covid-19 has helped, as people began to appreciate the reliance on our services and the importance of our essential workers, and subsequently both thanks and a new respect has been received at our response and the assurance it has given to our communities.

We want to continue to show our human side and lift the lid on the great work we do. We must tap into the positivity shown by communities to our street cleaners, waste collectors and everyone behind the scenes that kept things working, despite the risks.

We work in a place our communities are proud of, with history and heritage, an aspirational place to live. We are an independent entity dedicated to serving the public, regardless of political changes. So we must put communities at the centre of everything we do. Making them integral to our plans will boost their confidence in us and make us commercially fit for the future.

An engaging future

Our new narrative will galvanise us all around one message that pulls everything together and our new engagement strategy is deliberately innovative. It considers other councils, but takes inspiration from the private sector too. We want to show the art of the possible and the practical steps we can take to make it happen.

The strategy recognises that engagement is a two-way process, and that it covers not only creating a dialogue with our communities but also access to information, services and support. This is key to future success and so is placed at the heart of this strategy.

Work needs to be done to rebuild our brand, so that it clearly portrays our organisational values and ambitions. This is not about a logo but instead it is the perception of our communities towards us.

Working from the inside out, we must work more closely, collaborate on shared ideas and communicate more openly. We can't rely on messages filtering from the top-down, but must generate them from the bottom-up and across the organisation.

Addressing our management and building structure will help this change come to life, stimulating more effective informal communication. Opening up our offices and breaking down physical walls will remove real and imaginary barriers, bringing us closer together as one team.

To reflect our evolution we will engage with our audiences to tell them our story and get them excited about the future. We will move from a reactive stance to a more dynamic, proactive one. We will engage with our communities in new ways that work for them. New technology will help, such as our recent embrace of virtual meetings, making us more transparent and accessible than ever before.

By tapping into our local community we can help amplify our own efforts and help share our story. Our focus groups show that when people understand our challenges, they're willing to help.

We all care about the positive impact our work has for residents. Whether it's planning officers granting permissions, park teams sharing photos on social media, or bin operatives getting smiles during Covid-19, we will lift the lid on our work and talk about it with pride.

Doing this will improve public perception, vital to help our move towards selling more commercial services. We will challenge outdated preconceptions about us, finding creative ways to prove we're changing. We will become more proactive, drip-feeding stories that support our strategic narrative.

Our new approach will generate fewer stories, told more creatively, inspiring people to read them. We won't hide from the negative stuff either. If we make unpopular decisions our communities will understand why we did it. We will acknowledge we have room to improve, but we are proud to trying things, aspiring to be better and be continually moving in the right direction.

We'll demonstrate the value we add, the dedication of our teams and the quality of our services, despite the financial cuts we have had to endure. We'll work hard to create content and campaigns that give people more reasons to like us, follow us, and subscribe to our emails, to talk *to* us and *about* us.

Aim

The aim of the strategy is to; ***understand our communities and their communication needs in order to tailor our communications methods and content to keep them informed and engaged.***

Objectives

To ensure our new strategy makes a difference, we have defined new objectives, mapped across a four year delivery programme. Some are measurable now, others will be measured as we engineer ways to collect the insight we need. Above all, they will help us understand if our strategy is working.

These objectives are designed to drive positive new behaviours in our own team, support culture change across the organisation, and support our corporate objectives.

Laying New Foundations (Understanding Our Audience)

- To become a proactive story teller so that our communities want to listen to us.
- To utilise insight in order to understand our communities and their needs so that we can more successfully meet them.
- To evolve our brand and reputation to maintain a positive corporate image so that our residents trust us, companies want to do business with us and people are proud to work for us.

Building Success (Starting a Dialogue)

- To fully engage our communities so that they are placed at the centre of all that we do and their feedback informs our decisions.
- To create a more commercial approach to marketing and sales so that we can optimise our income and safeguard essential services.
- To be a braver and more empathetic communicator so that our honesty and emotion is recognised and respected by our communities.

Reaching new heights (Succeeding as a Brand)

- To create a strong brand that is underpinned by our organisational values so that it can add value to the work and perception in everything we do.
- To be aspirational and innovative council that is willing to try and fail so that we can continue to adapt and learn.
- To celebrate our achievements so that we can share our successes and demonstrate our value.

Our Communities

Our communities are why we are here and they are at the heart of all we do, but this is not easy when you have one of the broadest ranges of communities with very different needs.

Our **residents** need our services to make their lives better, our **businesses** need our support to succeed and grow, our **visitors** need our marketing to be aware of the unique experiences our district can offer, our **stakeholders and partners** need our openness to work together and align activity, and our **staff and members** need us to keep them informed about what we are doing and why.

We need to understand all of these needs and to respond to them in appropriate ways, ensuring we know who we are communicating with, why we are doing it, and how we tailor our messaging to truly engage them.

Understanding our communities

Unfortunately, we don't understand our communities as well as we could, which is due to a historical perceived apathy and lack of appetite. As a result, services naturally stopped focusing on it. Without fuller insight, we risk making unpopular decisions and so shouldn't be surprised when they don't approve.

Despite this, there is a great opportunity, as across the council we have one of the largest collections of information available on our communities. This information is held by services in separate systems with varying approaches, but if we were able to harvest this information, we could begin to get a clearer picture of our communities.

Therefore, we will;

- Harvest information from our systems in order to collate information about communities that help to build a true reflection of them
- Utilise our information to segment our communities in order to understand their needs and respond to them
- Consider the use of external insight tools, in order to enhance our own information
- Use relevant communications approaches to engage our different community groups in order to obtain their views and inform decision making

Segmenting our communities

As we gain more insight, we can build more accurate personas that reflect each audience segmenting our communities and markets in ways that allow us to create marketing and communications plans that focus on responding to their different needs to maximum effect.

We cannot possibly understand everyone who engages with us, and this not about putting people in to boxes, but using generally understood and practiced approaches to understand our communities, their needs and desires, in order to be able to generally meet them.

At a basic level, our communities comprise of four fundamental segments. These are listed below along with some general assumptions that can allow us to determine the best medium and message to meet their needs;

Local Champions	
Mind-set	Supporters who understand the distinction between local and central government. Pragmatic and positive, they get our challenges and may be keen to help us.
Approach	They are local and potential advocates. We need to build long term relationships. It is not about money but about incentives and support offered in exchange for theirs. They can help us tap into the community spirit and help us by being our micro-influencers.
Opportunity	We can build a team of brand advocates, generating a new communication route through word of mouth while promoting additional social media coverage. We can capture these ambassadors who are ready to engage and use them to support and amplify our messages in the community and online.
Activity	Enable them to help us help themselves. For example, we have examples of where we have offered free litter pickers to help them maintain their local community or got them to post pictures on social.

Local Experts	
Mind-set	They are currently vocal but sometimes critical. They have both money and time available.
Approach	They offer both consideration and conversation, with an approach that could help improve relationships and bring people into decision making.
Opportunity	We could utilise these communities to create an army of volunteer experts, tapping in to the local population and using their available time and expertise. It is important not to see them as opponents but rather to play to their strengths in order to engage them.
Activity	Using modern mechanisms to provide an explanation of what happens to their money, how it is being invested and the outcomes this will bring. Invite them to sessions that focus on co-creation and developing ideas. Share visual outputs through relevant media platforms.

Passive Positives	
Mind-set	They have a positive outlook but are generally disinterested in the council, seeing the council as tax takers and not value creators. Not currently seeing reasons to engage or understanding why they should become advocates.
Approach	Raising awareness while contributing through consideration.

Opportunity	They are open to persuasion and so can be converted from a silent majority into vocal supporters. A strategic narrative can raise awareness. Efforts need to be focused on reaching them with fun, interesting content and so giving them reasons to engage easily through relevant channels.
Activity	The use of incentives would generate engagement, for example offering novel prizes that don't need to have a financial value but interesting opportunity. The use of multi-channel marketing campaigns that do unexpected things to gain their attention and challenge their perceptions. Reach out proactively and provide easy access to sign-up for information. Long-term brand building is required.

Negative Minority	
Mind-set	They are largely negative and comfortable to stay that way. Generally need more reasons to convert to become supporters. Often long-time residents who have personal agendas.
Approach	They need to be made aware of the activity with fact used to counter their perceptions. Monitoring their input so as not to be drawn in to long-challenging exchanges that only seek to support their views, and so there is only a need to addressing serious issues with proportionate responses.
Opportunity	There is limited benefit from investment in this area and so other segments will be the priority. Empowering other supporters to help counter negative voices can be persuasive.
Activity	Standardised responses that signpost from negative messages to relevant counter arguments. Using the community voice not the council. Providing positive language in communications and offering more balance to any discussion.

Communicating with our communities

We currently tend to tell people our news, using fact and figures to explain the position, and using general supporting commentary from officers, members or stakeholders to add support. This is often provided with a general 'stock' photo. This approach is not dissimilar from other local authorities, but is safe. The lack of emotion or intrigue means the stories normally attract only those with a specific interest in the topic, the council or who have something to say.

At the moment our stories work well but have a short shelf life, and a limited audience. To keep our stories front of mind, we will expand on our current approach to draw stories out over a longer time frame by;

- Bringing stories to life, focusing on human interest, as well as only necessary facts and figures
- Creating content that we can repurpose and adapt across all our channels
- Crafting attention and grabbing headlines with fascinating, funny or surprising stories

To drive engagement in our news, we also need to be more proactive and assertive, leading the narrative rather than responding defensively to the stories of others. We need to do things differently, and plan to;

- Focus on reaching a larger proportion of our target audience by using a differentiated approach
- Consider what the communities needs and wants from each story and creating relevant content that inspires interest in our messages
- Give irresistible reasons to connect with us, share or talk about our stories and engage in the debate
- Focus more on emotional reasons to pay attention to us, less on rational facts
- Making perceived 'boring' subject matter resonate with our communities through crafting creative content that excites the reader

Engaging our communities

Communities mainly tell us what they think through complaints or compliments, and we are genuinely good at handling these formal processes. However, the softer forms of feedback are generally lost, despite having a suite of communication routes regularly accessed and available.

We do try, and have good examples to show it. However, most of these are where engagement is expected or statutorily required, for example our consultation on the budget. This approach has led to response rates that are so low they don't give a true reflection of what the district really thinks.

Like other organisations, have three core challenges;

- 1) Reaching audiences in volume
- 2) Increasing quantity of feedback
- 3) Measuring and acting on insights

To plan marketing and communications activity that motivates communities to provide their views, we must; understand what motivates them, know how they naturally choose to engage, how we can contact them in the right way, and provide easier mechanisms for them to provide their views. We can then create successful campaigns that increase the return for our invested time.

Therefore, we will;

- Plan our approach further in advance to gaining feedback on larger consultations
- Make it clearer in our communications the reasons why people should engage and what difference they can make
- Invest in mechanisms that allow faster direct response to core questions, such as social media polls to regularly gauge public mood
- Increase the quantity of comments on specific projects by offering a differentiated approach to our communities

- Monitor qualitative metrics to assess results and refine our approaches in an agile way, and determine overall success.

Consulting our communities

We are guilty of over-complicating the way we manage consultations, often making them dense and unapproachable. We choose to provide a great deal of detailed information and so making it difficult to want to get involved and leading them to 'tune out'. We invest a significant amount of time in providing information, setting up events and creating long online forms, only for our response rates to largely be statistically irrelevant.

When we try different things, we often learn and see success. Our recent work on the master plan demonstrated that tailoring language and the approach can increase involvement from sections of our communities that would otherwise not have been represented. Our refreshed online survey was completed by the largest number of those aged under 18 when compared to previous approaches.

How our current approach is viewed;

- Tick boxes to meet legislation
- Dull, formal language
- Opaque and unapproachable
- Long documents and reference material
- Unclear process and difficult to find relevant information
- Consultation events that are difficult to attend, hard to get heard and off-putting due to their formality

Therefore, in future we will do it differently, understanding the role that consultation can play in engaging our communities in different ways, and monitor the result of trying new and fresh approaches to then embrace what works. This will include;

- Short, summary information that is readable and presents the key details in an easy to consume way
- Simple language and plain English that is relevant and understandable to the reader
- Transparent and approachable processes that are simple and signpost communities to how they can feedback
- Using new technology to provide means of people engaging without having to invest too much of their previous time (e.g. making consultation events available online with discussion forums).

Selling our services

Communicating with our communities is not only to inform and engage but also to sell. The council has a large range of products and services that are available for sale with the income used to support the council in safeguarding key services that people rely on.

However, the income from many of these services is mainly obtained through organic growth, where communities happen across these services randomly or feel they have to purchase them due to low cost, nature of the service on offer, or lack of obvious competitors. This is not always the case, and where we have actively sought to create commercial campaigns, such as for our garden waste collection service, we have been able to drive significant interest and turn this in to sales.

The nature of these transactions, and so expectation of the communities, is very different. Sales transactions are made based on value, and so there is a need to feel that the purchaser is 'getting what they pay for'. Therefore, it is important that these transactions reflect this different relationship. Yet, the approach we take and language we use remains largely consistent whether the services are provided universally or paid for through specific transactions, which generally leads to less sales.

Therefore, we need to learn to appreciate the different relationships in the same way as we are seeking to differentiate between our communities. We need to add value through our communications, reflecting that the transaction is optional and using our insight on our communities and perhaps also on our competitors, to more effectively market our products and services, add value through the process, and drive up income.

Our marketing can develop to better promote products and services. We know our competitors outperform us online by grabbing people's attention and treating them in a way they would expect as purchaser. Our approach will adapt to attract awareness in a busy environment, increasing our reach by testing, monitoring, learning and adapting. Trying new marketing tools and techniques, we can discover iteratively what works best and what doesn't.

As a result we will;

- Create marketing plans for our products and services in order to increase awareness and generate additional interest and sales.
- Review and refresh existing marketing materials and language in order to bring consistency and introduce best practice to reflect the relationship between buyer and seller.
- Proactively work with services to create ongoing campaigns for products and services, challenging approaches and innovating to keep us relevant.

Our Brand

We have a good brand which is identifiable to most of our communities, but like other government brands, it is liked with; stability, security and bureaucracy. Our ambition is to shift this perception, retaining the positive nature of assurance and security but adding additional positive traits that build confidence and respect.

Our brand is affected by everything we do, everyone who represents us, and everything we support. In recent years, this has taken a hit due to challenging times, lack of delivery and perceived lack of transparency.

We want to change this, to make our brand resonate with our communities, being seen as empathetic, supportive, innovative and aspirational, and so essentially reflecting our values as an organisation. We also want the Lichfield District Council logo to be a badge of pride.

We need to ensure consistency, aligning all of our communications and marketing materials to have the same look and feel and remove inconsistencies we have allowed to come in to our different communications channels, which could mean the reduction in the number of logos and alternative brands and logos that have diluted the council brand.

To do this, we will;

- Refresh our corporate identity to be more modern and reflective of a modern, innovative organisation while ensuring consistency to make us readily recognisable.
- Ensure all communication is consistent, planned and aligned to our values and sustains our strategic narrative while introducing personality.
- Control our use of our brand, review sub-brands and affiliated partnerships to ensure they support our brand ambitions and add value to everything we do.
- Leverage our brand to add value to marketing and sales, aligning our brand to the value offer we want to provide.

Our Resources

To deliver our strategy, we will need people, skills, systems and money. This is not about new but on repurposing what we already have in order to enable the new trajectory and approach. We have a great deal of experience and skills across the organisation, with many of the relevant skills and expertise that will be required in order to deliver our plans.

Our core corporate team will lead the delivery of the strategy, overseeing planned activity and monitoring success. However, they will not be able to do it alone. We need the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time to implement our vision for the future.

We already have a range of skilled communications and marketing professionals in our services, as well as those working daily in customer service activity, engaging and communicating with our different communities. In addition, we must define the role of members as community leaders and ambassadors, and determine their role in engaging communities further.

Therefore, we can seek to access these resources, learning to work in new agile ways and developing skills where necessary. Despite this array of resources, it is recognised that we will also need to seek support from other organisations, and even buy-in external expertise, to bring in specific skills and experience where necessary.

No matter who is involved, we will seek to allow the flexibility and freedom to try, learn, inspire and innovate.

In future, we will engage with services and internal stakeholders to support our creative processes, encouraging a spirit of co-creation to get better outcomes and avoiding last minute urgency. The work of the communications team will complement and support the needs of our services, and as marketing experts, we will help others achieve their aims.

Our existing budgets should be sufficient to meet future demands, albeit we may need to refocus our money from existing approaches to be able to introduce new systems and tools. This may also be true of service-based budgets, which might need to be accessed in order to offer council-wide improvements that support all services thereby being funded through existing communications and marketing funding.

Inevitably, there will be a need to invest, but this will be done through the development of formal business cases with a clear understanding of return on investment.

Therefore, we will;

- Reorganise our people and gain internal agreement for new approaches in order to have the right people, with the right skills, to deliver our strategy
- Focus on core skills for all relevant groups in order to ensure those who are involved in communicate are comfortable in doing so and maintain consistently

- Review and refocus budgets in order to deliver new ways of working along with the tools needed to meet our objectives.
- Support bids for additional funding where required in order to drive marketing and communications activity as and when needed to meet the needs of services.

Our Plan

We aim to undertake activity over the course of the four year strategy, delivering our objectives in a planned way through specific activity.

Years 1 and 2 (2020-2022)

Laying New Foundations (Understanding Our Audience)

Objective	Activity
To utilise insight in order to understand our communities and their needs so that we can more successfully meet them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Implement annual brand perception survey.● Introduce regular social media polls to build insight into campaign plans.● Gather community data to develop detailed personas, sense checking strategic assumptions around community segments.● Map user and customer journeys, identify pain points and co-create solutions with services.● Increase our reach with more compelling promotion of engagement opportunities.● Review and update web FAQs on common complaints, signposting to correct information.● Agree key performance indicators and provide regular reports through internal channels, introducing measurement mechanisms as required.● Invest in team development to determine and develop key skills, such as digital marketing training.● Introduce the benchmarking against public and non-public sector industries.● To build a more comprehensive understanding of our internal stakeholder in order to build more effective communication pathways.
To become a proactive story teller so that our communities want to listen to us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review the newsletters and consider the replacement with new opportunities, such as an e-news offering that provides personalised updates and targeted communications.● Introduce a communications plan and share this with leaders and managers to support the proactively consider and coordinate communication while reflecting on past achievements.● Build insight led campaign plans to support council initiatives.● Develop persona-led outreach programme, initiating relationships with positive supporters.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiate regular meetings with services and teams, proactively seeking out stories to build into the communications plan. ● Review and refresh the approach and policies in regards to social media. ● Test new marketing techniques and practices and share the learning to inform future activity. ● Promote positive stories that reveal hidden qualities and human side of most criticised areas, including waste collection, street cleaning, and development management. ● Collect success stories from across the organisation to share in a way that reinforces our direction of travel.
To evolve our brand and reputation to maintain a positive corporate image so that our communities trust us, companies want to do business with us and people are proud to work for us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and refresh the corporate identity and use of sub-brands. ● Produce a toolkit of new branded assets to create 'off the shelf' campaigns. ● Evolve our creative approach to determine the future approach to design and print activities. ● Launch our new strategy explaining how people can support it and how it benefits them. ● Workshops open to all stakeholders, showcasing strategy and introduction to our new team. ● Introduce new content to clarify new ways of working including briefing process, service levels etc. ● Visually showcase current and upcoming plans, sharing ideas in formative stages for input from broader audiences. ● Invite feedback on existing internal communications methods and develop improved versions. ● Determine the development needs for staff and leaders and implement appropriate solutions e.g. media training, social media training, etc. ● Engage with internal stakeholders to build a strong brand narrative among or staff and members ● Encourage our people to act as brand ambassadors.

Years 3 (2022-2023)

Building Success (Starting a Dialogue)

Objective	Activity
To fully engage our communities so that they are placed at the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to review and evaluate surveys to monitor the impact of the changes being implemented and refine as required.

centre of all that we do and their feedback informs our decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce additional social media and other polls and surveys to build insight into campaigns and communication approaches. ● Introduce an email programme, building segmented campaigns based on data and insight. ● Consider existing consultation and engagement activities and consider additional approaches such as community forums, user groups, and community ambassadors. ● Develop relationships with local champions and experts to identify ways in which their involvement can be used more effectively.
To create a more commercial approach to marketing and sales so that we can optimise our income and safeguard essential services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Run strategic review of all revenue generating services and create bespoke marketing plans. ● Revise language in marketing material to reflect the unique nature of the sale of products and services. ● Support services in considering new products and services, using insight and engagement activity to support decision making. ● Benchmark our activity against public and private sector organisations, focusing on competitors. ● Consider the organisation activity and review the roles involved in communications across the council to ensure it is effective and offers the optimum outcomes.
To be a braver and more empathetic communicator so that our honesty and emotion is recognised and respected by our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create campaigns showcasing our organisational evolution, with focus on stories that demonstrate how we live these values. ● Promote behind the scenes work being done by our teams, lifting the lid on our human side. ● Review and refine ongoing marketing and communications activity to ensure this supports the strategic narrative. ● Try additional news ways of engaging communities to promote personality aligned to our organisational values.

Years 4 (2023-2024)

Reaching new heights (Succeeding as a Brand)

Objective	Activity
To create a strong brand that is underpinned by our	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the implementation of the corporate identify and challenge where deviation is taking place, thereby ensuring consistency.

organisational values so that it can add value to the work and perception in everything we do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further refine our approach to engagement to ensure feedback is representative of our communities and district as a whole ● Monitor the impact of our communications and refine this further, introducing best practice examples from others to continuously improve.
To be aspirational and innovative council that is willing to try and fail so that we can continue to adapt and learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review approaches and the success of the strategy, and share the lessons learned to engage in a discussion on future communications activity. ● Monitor changing habits and the consumption of news and information and identify opportunities to innovate and change. ● Consult and draft a new aspirational communications and engagement strategy that continues the journey.
To celebrate our achievements so that we can share our successes and demonstrate our value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote brand perception survey results and external feedback sources (e.g. LinkedIn, Glassdoor etc.). ● Work with internal services, such as human resources, to create a new narrative about working for the council that promotes us as an employer of choice and deliver through a promotional campaign. ● Proactively celebrate successes, through appropriate marketing and communications campaigns in a way that is humble but proud. ● Support the organisation in achieving awards.

Measuring Success

Regular analysis of key metrics can inform our decisions, determine activity, and assess our direction of travel. To support our strategy, we will need to make the collection and use of information a positive habit, forming a positive loop, allowing us to learn and adapt, while recognising and celebrating our successes.

To monitor the success of our work and demonstrate the success of the strategy we will look to implement ways to collect data that will measure;

- Media channels (i.e. followers, clicks, shares etc.)
- Brand awareness (e.g. polls and surveys)
- News consumption (e.g. email or e-newsletter subscription numbers, press release numbers)
- Organisational effectiveness (e.g. employee survey or Glassdoor scores)
- Reputation management (e.g. positive press releases, positive news stories, polls and surveys, awards received)
- Campaign success (e.g. shares, likes web statistics, polls and surveys)
- Community engagement (e.g. consultation responses, customer contact numbers)
- Marketing and sales (e.g. event attendance numbers, sales metrics and income)

We already have access to some of this information and focus will be placed on obtaining a baseline to provide an accurate picture of the current position, in order to demonstrate the impact of our strategy through the metrics, In addition, as more opportunities to measure success become available they will be added to this list to provide a holistic view on performance that can inform future activity.

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