

Report

Cabinet



Part 1

Date: 13 February 2019

Subject City Centre Masterplan 2019-2029

Item No: 12

Purpose To formally adopt the City Centre Masterplan approach and approve the next steps

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Summary The Council launched formal consultation on its draft City Centre Masterplan at the January 2018 City Summit, which included conversations with key economic stakeholders and businesses. A formal public consultation was also undertaken over the course of the Spring.

Since the launch, several projects identified in the Masterplan have moved forward rapidly, which prompted the need to both pause and review as well as to nurture the delivery of major investments for the city centre, several of which relate to large properties within the Council's freehold ownership.

The advancement of these projects, which are intended to act as key economic anchors for the city centre moving forward, is the foundation of delivery of the final plan. A final high-level strategy document concluding this process is intended to be published in February 2019, summarising progress to date. This final Masterplan document will re-state the vision and objectives approved within the draft plan, but will offer a more streamlined set of objectives and an update on the Council's progress in advancing vision documents for the three city centre 'Areas of Focus'. Projects secured to date can now add to the narrative within the Masterplan, evidencing investment potential and need for on-going regeneration of the City Centre.

Proposal To formally adopt the vision, objectives and priority projects of the City Centre Masterplan 2019-29 as the Council's strategic framework for city centre regeneration.

Action by Regeneration Manager

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing
- Strategic Director - Place
- Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing

- Head of Finance
- Head of Law and Regulations
- Head of People and Business Change

Signed

Background

In 2017, having successfully delivered the landmark Friars Walk scheme and fully cognisant that this development in and of itself was a milestone in an ongoing journey, the Council decided to review and refresh its City Centre Masterplan. The completion of the Friars Walk development was considered the appropriate time to consider the effectiveness of the previous approach and how the future of the city centre might be shaped by the current economic drivers affecting the city.

Consultants Ove Arup and Partners were engaged to support this review and refine the Council's approach. The key changes were to remove the previous 'quarters' approach and set forth a renewed and reinvigorated vision and set of objectives relevant for the city centre. The vision and objectives set forth in consultation with the Cabinet, residents and businesses received broad consensus following the official launch at the Newport City Summit 2018 and subsequent consultation with Newport residents via the Involve Newport Panel in the Spring of that year. Officers also worked alongside key partners such as the members of the Newport Economic Network and Newport Now Business Improvement District to fully understand and develop priorities for the regeneration of the city centre.

The vision for the city centre, endorsed in 2018, was for *"a revitalised and vibrant heart for the city with a strong and independent identity that is rooted in Newport's history and is forward-looking, continuing the momentum set by recent successes"*. In delivering this vision, it was intended to present a more flexible framework for regeneration activity where individual projects accorded with the broader objectives and approach. These interlinked features of the Masterplan are summarised below:

Objectives: The draft consultation document identified six key objectives, which have been refined for the final plan following responses and discussion, into three objectives, with one final new objective added around economic performance:

Draft Objectives	Final Objectives	Outcomes
A Welcoming City	A Confident City	Coordinated Marketing and Branding, Wayfinding and Information Improved Events Programme Better Upkeep of Buildings/Public Realm Improved Perception
A Restored City		
A City of Quality Places		
A Riverside City		
A Connected City	A Connected City	Improved Parking and Enforcement Detailed Urban Design for Each 'Area of Focus' LLFN Delivery Encourage Modal Shift and Adaptive Systems
A Diverse City	A Diverse City	Increased Supply of High-Grade Office and Hotel Space Increase Supply of Housing of Suitable Tenure Mix Encourage Flexibility of Use via the Planning System Exploit Opportunities – WG, City Deal, Sovereign Wealth
	A Productive City	Increase Academic Activity/Engagement with City Centre Increase Business Stock, particularly KIBS Ensure Right Mix of Commercial/Residential Space Align Infrastructure Changes with Business/Commercial Requirements

Approach: Previous City Centre Masterplan documents have adopted an approach around formal 'zones or quarters', within which certain types of activity and use classifications were intended to be concentrated. On review, this approach was felt to be counter-intuitive to encouraging development. It is possible that, as a decade-long strategy, new proposals or economic factors may come to light which the Council and its partners could not predict, and too rigid an approach may render the Masterplan no longer fit for purpose over its intended lifespan as it would be unable to respond to new challenges and opportunities.

The new 'Areas of Focus' approach attempts to identify which parts of the city centre are best placed to attract investment by virtue of their ability respond to key economic drivers, but without constraining that

area to a particular sector, ie retail, cafe. It aims to spatially predict patterns of development rather than proscribe them.

Priority Projects: Finally, a list of projects and proposals was also developed in detail summarising what and where would show the best long-term benefit for the city centre. Much of these emerging proposals have been kept confidential as projects are developed, particularly where the scheme is identified as commercially sensitive. The main, most impactful sites have been made public as they are illustrative as to how the Council intends to shape the city centre through the Masterplan, and the approach outlined above. For example, within the Northern Gateway Area of Focus, which aims to increase the quality and provision of space for tech companies and other knowledge-intensive businesses to open or expand, core projects include the Market, Market Arcade and National Software Academy. Each of these projects have successfully been progressed, or in the case of the National Software Academy, delivered since the launch of the revised Master Plan in January 2018. The relationship between these Area of Focus and the Priority Projects within each are summarised below.

Area of Focus	Theme	Priority Projects
Northern Gateway	Innovation and Growth: Development of the Office Core/Digital Ecosystem adjacent to Railway Station	Newport Indoor Market – Tech Hub and Food Court Market Arcade – Provision of Incubation/Start-Up Space National Software Academy – Cardiff University
City Core	Diversity and Opportunity: Mixed Use, encouraging a balance of commercial/residential development,	Key Buildings – Re-use of high-profile vacant buildings City Living – 123-129 Commercial Street
Riverside	Sport and Leisure: Growth of hospitality and leisure opportunities	Clarence Place – support emerging hotel cluster Rodney Parade – support redevelopment of the ‘cabbage patch’ to secure future of rugby and football in the city centre

The complexity and risk in delivering interventions of scale in Newport city centre is generally underestimated, but this has not stopped the Council from embarking on ambitious projects such as the Chartist Tower to deliver landmark schemes with key economic benefits to the city centre. Many more of the projects identified will need some form of financial intervention or the use of the Council’s statutory powers to ensure delivery. However, there are a range of options available to the Council and various funding pots which enable us to work in partnership with investors to deliver high quality regeneration schemes.

The Master Plan review has also been well timed in respect of the development of a Regional Regeneration Plan for the Cardiff Capital Region where the ten authorities have committed to a common regeneration strategy for the benefit of the region. The Council has undertaken significant work to align the proposals within the City Centre Masterplan to emerging funding opportunities such as the Welsh Government’s Targeted Regeneration Investment framework (TRI), which, going forward, will be critical to delivery of the Masterplan.

The City Centre Masterplan has achieved the desired outcome of striking a difficult balance between retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities by remaining high-level and conceptual in content, but also enabling residents, investors and partners alike to be able to see it delivering real regeneration progress. The Master Plan was always intended to provide the strategic framework for the City Centre and will be built upon as we take the next steps towards preparing more detailed vision strategies for the ‘Areas of Focus’, starting with the Northern Gateway and Riverside areas. The delivery of the key strategic projects to date is testament to the efficacy of the Council’s approach and it is now considered that the Council can be confident that the concepts and visions identified in the City Centre Masterplan 2019-2029 are correct and should be formally adopted as the blue print for the next stages in the regeneration and transformation of the city centre.

It is therefore proposed that Cabinet formally approve the vision, objectives, approach and priority projects as Newport City Council's Masterplan for the future of the city centre and the role it will play in the rapidly changing economies of Newport and the wider Cardiff Capital Region. The refined objectives and key projects will be summarised in a final document which will be published following the approval of this report.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Masterplan Delivery	H	M	The Council has identified priority projects for short-term delivery (including those in its freehold ownership) and committed to securing funding and delivery for these projects. Funding has been secured for Market Arcade, the National Software Academy, and Chartist Tower.	Regeneration Manager
Commercial Sensitivity	H	L	Where plans are detailed in full opportunist developers or owners may hold target property to ransom, increasing cost and reducing project viability. The Project Plan behind the Masterplan document must therefore remain confidential.	
Engagement with Public/Partners	M	L	The public do not perceive sufficient progress towards the delivery of the Masterplan. As above the Council has already secured delivery of a number of key projects.	

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The City Centre Masterplan constitutes a major opportunity to drive and add value to the Council's strategic regeneration objectives, improving the economic resilience and commercial environment of the city centre, whilst delivering an array of sustainable economic growth opportunities.

The Thriving City arc of Newport's Corporate Plan 2017-22 includes the objective of ensuring a new phase of physical regeneration is delivered in Newport following the completion of Friars Walk. The City Centre Masterplan formalises this new wave of investment and development beginning with significant empty or underperforming properties within the Council's property portfolio such as the Indoor Market and Chartist Tower.

Delivery of the City Centre Masterplan will also support the aspirations of Newport's Economic Growth Strategy, which sets out a ten year programme for delivering growth across the city through capital redevelopment, upskilling, training and business support. The Strategy particularly identifies that maintaining focus on regenerating the City Centre, to become one of the UK's top cities, as a means of fostering an excellent economic environment within the city as a whole.

The City Centre Masterplan is consistent with the emerging themes and objectives of the Newport City Council Well-being Plan 2018 – 2023, and thus the national principles and goals espoused by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act:

- people feel good about living, working, visiting and investing in Newport
- people have skills and opportunities to find suitable work and generate sustainable economic growth
- people and communities are friendly, confident and empowered to improve their well-being
- Newport has healthy, safe and resilient environments

The City Centre Masterplan is already working to deliver positive outcomes for the city centre, and support a number of national, regional and local strategies with particular emphasis on those aimed at skills development, economic performance, improved business opportunities and support, environmental regeneration, tourism development and improved health and well-being through employment, learning, enjoyment and an enhanced sense of identity and community.

Options Available and Considered

1. To endorse the vision, approach, and objectives within the City Centre Masterplan as the Council's framework for delivery of city centre regeneration
2. To not endorse the vision, approach and objectives within the City Centre Masterplan, and adopt an alternative strategic approach

Preferred Option and Why

To endorse the vision, approach and objectives within the City Centre Masterplan as the Council's framework for delivery of city centre regeneration. The Council continues to show an excellent track record in delivering regeneration projects and has secured significant investment towards key projects identified within the Masterplan over the past twelve months.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The Masterplan sets out an ambitious set of objectives and projects. As the paper sets out, the risk and challenge in delivery is sometimes underestimated but the Council has a good record of managing these and assisting in delivering these.

Individual projects will need an appropriate funding package agreed before commencement and that will need careful assessment/review where Council /other public funds are used to assist delivery. The Council has a good track record of assisting projects itself, where needed, using more innovative methods such as short term development funding etc.

In the current financial climate, leveraging in third party funding and WG/other public funds needs to be a key component in this.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. The proposed City Centre Masterplan is consistent with the strategic regeneration objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, the Well-Being plan and the Economic Growth Strategy. The Masterplan will provide a strategic framework for the delivery of key projects to meet these economic regeneration and well-being objectives. The draft Strategy has been the subject of extensive consultation with the public and key stakeholders and the responses are summarised in the report. Any specific legal issues relating to the delivery of identified projects within the Masterplan will be addressed as part of the project management arrangements.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no HR implications for this report.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been fully considered when developing this report. How the proposal meets the five ways of working of the sustainable development principle and the Well-being Goals is fully explored in the appropriate section of the report.

Comments of Cabinet Member

I welcome the contributions that have been made by citizens, partners and key stakeholders to developing the vision, objectives and priority projects of the City Centre Masterplan 2019-29. I am pleased to support this document and move forward with the plan as the Council's strategic framework for city centre regeneration.

Scrutiny Committees

N/A.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. Adoption of the City Centre Masterplan and delivery of the proposed developments within will improve the physical environment of the city centre for all users, and it is therefore considered that the Masterplan will have a positive impact.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Although no targeted consultation takes place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation on planning applications and appeals is open to all of our citizens regardless of their age. Depending on the scale of the proposed development, applications are publicised via letters to neighbouring occupiers, site notices, press notices and/or social media. People replying to consultations are not required to provide their age or any other personal data, and therefore this data is not held or recorded in any way, and responses are not separated out by age.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The City Centre Masterplan is premised on the long-term resilience of the city centre and fully aligned with the aspirations for Wales set forth in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The following demonstrates how development of the City Centre Masterplan has applied the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working) and how its objectives support the goals of the Act:

Long term:

The City Centre Masterplan encompasses a ten-year time frame etc. In addition to identifying long-term industrial and infrastructure changes ahead that will shape the future performance of the city centre, the impact of those changes and the city's economic resilience has been carefully considered.

Prevention:

A key outcome of the City Centre Masterplan is the better management of the City's unique architectural heritage within the City Centre Conservation Area, particularly where buildings are at risk due to their vacancy and dereliction.

Integration:

The City Centre Masterplan is presented as fully integrated with the Council's wider policy framework and complements its adopted strategic priorities, as summarised below:

- NCC's Improvement Plan 2016/18, in particular the improvement objective 'City Regeneration and Development'
- The council's 10 year Economic Growth Strategy which sets out the council's aims for the long term economic growth of Newport.
- Newport's Well-being Plan 2018-23: Objective 'People feel good about living, working, visiting and investing in Newport', and its 3 Economic Priorities

Collaboration:

The Masterplan has been shaped by local partnerships, including the Newport Economic Network and Newport Now, the city centre Business Improvement District. Various stakeholders, including academic institutions and housing providers as well as local businesses have fed into the development of the Masterplan.

Involvement:

The Council consulted with residents of Newport via the draft Masterplan launch as well as the Involve Newport Panel. Over 200 residents responded to confirm agreement with the vision and objectives expressed within.

Goal 1: A Prosperous Wales: Regeneration of key town centres supports the goal of a prosperous Wales. Creating vibrant and attractive town centres helps increase footfall and spend, supporting local business growth and an increase of local job opportunities. Increasing visitor numbers to urban centres, which are well-served by sustainable transport connectivity, further support the goal of a prosperous Wales.

Goal 2: A Resilient Wales: Regeneration projects improve quality of life for residents and contribute to feeling part of the community. By adopting the Masterplan, the Council is committing to supporting projects that help create a sense of belonging and ownership amongst Newport's communities, in addition to challenging negative perceptions, helping people feel connected to the city, and growing city pride.

Goal 3: A Healthier Wales: Improving economic activity and opportunity correlates with improved health incomes for individuals. The central wards of the city, including Stow Hill, are disproportionately affected by poor health outcomes due to their relative deprivation. Empty properties in the city centre serve no purpose in this respect and indeed are counter-productive to it, as they are often trespassed for the purpose of substance misuse, with several city centre properties subject to serious fires within the last three years generating significant risk to public health. Finally, active commuting is encouraged within the plan under the Connected City objective.

Goal 4: A More Equal Wales: By prioritising the most deprived communities, the Plan seeks to engage the most excluded people across the region. By supporting people to enter employment or progress to better jobs, the Regeneration Plan seeks to increase household income and in turn will provide access to further opportunities. This supports the goal of a more equal Wales.

Goal 5: A Wales of Cohesive Communities: Engaging businesses and local people in the development of the city will contribute to the development of a cohesive community invested in its future. The Plan proposals will assist in securing investment into community facilities in Newport as well as engaging community members in co-production of the services provided in those facilities. This commitment supports the goal of a cohesive communities.

Goal 6: A Wales of Vibrant Culture and a Thriving Welsh Language: Many visitor attractions and local businesses celebrate the heritage and culture of the country supporting the development of a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. The projects supported via the endorsement of the Plan will help preserve and secure heritage property in Newport currently at risk of decay.

Goal 7: A Globally Responsible Wales: Securing investment for south east Wales is generally positive for the local supply chain, and local businesses. Applying sustainable regeneration principles based around

this engagement of local suppliers will ensure that the objectives contribute fully to a globally responsible Wales.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Consultation

Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

Background Papers

None.

Dated: 25 January 2019