

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting5th August 2010

1. Title of Item/Report

Stockton Central Area Update

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the progress to date with regard to the regeneration of Stockton Central Area.

It was explained that since the last Cabinet update on the Stockton Central Area significant changes to public sector capital funding had been experienced. The implications of those changes had had a knock on effect for the projects still to be delivered in Stockton Central Area. Clearly, there needed to be an evaluation and assessment of established priorities given this new financial context; the expenditure already incurred in project preparation; and the likely future delivery framework.

In December 2009, an investment strategy for Stockton Central Area was produced and this had assisted in shaping priorities for investment and new areas for development across the central area. Members were provided with updates relating to the following areas:-

- . Culture
- . Heritage
- . Retail
- . Leisure, Events and Promotions
- . Site Assembly and Infrastructure Enhancements
- . High Street and Urban Design Guide
- . Business
- . Housing
- . Education
- . Health
- . Planning

Specific reference was made to the fact that the North Shore Development Partnership had secured funding from Housing and Communities Agency to enable the North Shore Homes Zone to begin in the Autumn. In addition confirmation of funding for Parkfield Phase A had been received and discussions with house owners would therefore

recommence.

It was considered that over the next three years projects that should be given priority were the refurbishment of the Globe Theatre, acquisition and demolition of Glynn Webb with associated highways enhancements, Townscape Heritage Initiative, the development and delivery of car parking on the High Street and the refurbishment of 62 Dovecot Street.

At this stage, the delivery of a bus station in the short to medium term had been ruled out on the basis of cost and available sites that met bus operators' requirements. Furthermore, site assembly in line with properties previously acquired at Southern Gateway and the pursuit of infrastructure enhancements to link the High Street to the riverside, such as the proposed land bridge over Riverside Road, had been given a lesser priority due to funding constraints.

Supporting the delivery of anchor stores within the town centre along with a bus station in line with a redesigned High Street and enhanced public realm as well as physical development of the Southern Gateway site remained a longer term priority for the central area and would be given further detailed consideration following the completion of the urban design guide and more clarity on future funding opportunities. An indication of the likely delivery timescales was provided to Members.

The redevelopment of the Globe Theatre was considered to be the main priority scheme within the Central Area. The direct impacts of the refurbished Globe would be to create 23 new permanent jobs, safeguard 72 construction jobs and to increase footfall in the town centre. Footfall projections are based on 30 live music performances, 15 comedy performances, 10 other entertainment events and 10 private hire events per year, with the venue operating at 70% capacity. Based on industry standard figures this projects an additional 82,500 visitors per year with an estimated spend of £4.5m inside the venue and a further £7.8m of spend in the wider town centre over a five year period. This was estimated to create and support up to 130 additional jobs in the Central Area.

The redevelopment of the Globe was seen as key to supporting the growth and diversification of the evening economy in central Stockton. It was anticipated that the Globe would act as a catalyst for bringing vacant properties back into use to support the evening economy and would provide an alternative leisure offer that was unavailable in central Stockton. Public sector funding would contribute towards the project and as such a development agreement or other suitable legal documentation would be drawn up to protect the public sector investment and to ensure maximum economic benefits were gained from the redevelopment of the

Globe and that programming complemented and added value to events in the town centre. However the full detail of any such agreement could not be determined until funding of the project was finalised.

It was explained that the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (TVBNI) project has been given full approval by the Treasury after the recent review of Major Scheme Funding. The realignment of Riverside Road was seen as a major priority for the TVBNI project and was designed to improve bus journey times as part of a package of measures that also included the Mandale Gyratory Bus Corridor Improvements scheme which was under construction.

In order to allow the realignment of Riverside Road element of the scheme to progress, the purchase of land at the Glynn Webb site was essential. If the land was not acquired there were wider implications for the TVBNI project. The TVBNI required a 'local contribution' across all Local Authorities in the Tees Valley, which was provided in the form of capital funds to acquire and demolish the Glynn Webb site

If the Glynn Webb site could not be acquired there would be no alternative but to reduce Stockton's element of the TVBNI project accordingly resulting in the loss of several other TVBNI schemes across the network, as well as the enhancements planned at Riverside Road.

The refurbishment of 62 Dovecot Street would provide 600m² of flexible business accommodation to support creative industries, in particular digital media companies, by potentially forming a satellite facility for DigitalCity, the Tees Valley wide initiative to create a vibrant, successful and self-sustaining supercluster in digital technologies, digital media and creative sectors, and their enabling capabilities. This supported the key priority to diversify the offer of the town centre and attract new footfall through this prominent area of the town. The facility at 62 Dovecot Street would be strategically located close to the existing Business Centre and Arc, and would require refurbishment and fit-out to a high specification to support 10 new businesses. This had been estimated as costing £0.5 million, which could be funded by seeking 50% of the capital costs from ERDF, with a 50% match funding contribution from SBC capital.

The reintroduction of car parking on the High Street would be a major asset for the town centre. Proposals centred around the creation of two parking areas within loops at either end of the High Street. It was explained that the delivery of short stay car parking would, for the most part, have to be delivered in line with proposals for improving the public realm and layout of the High Street. However, it was anticipated that parking areas in the northern loop could potentially be delivered in

advance of wider works on the High Street for circa £1 million thereby creating much needed short stay, high churn pay and display parking close to High Street businesses and the Globe. In addition, a further 8 spaces have been identified in front of 16 Church Road to support businesses at the Northern end of the High Street.

Reviewing and developing delivery structure arrangements for the delivery of regeneration actions across the central area was a key recommendation within the Central Area Investment Plan. Clear structures were vital for project delivery in the central area as they would help provide primacy in decision making, secure stakeholder support for proposals and give clarity and confidence to the private sector, increasing the potential for investment in the central area. As such proposals for a structure that would aid investment and reduce bureaucracy were being drafted with a view to establishing the most efficient and effective means of delivering a governance structure that added value to processes and protocols

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. the progress made to date on the regeneration of Stockton Central Area be noted.
2. the schemes to be prioritised from the funding available within the medium term financial plan be agreed.
3. the allocation of resources from the remaining SMI regeneration approved funding to any of the prioritised schemes be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To facilitate the implementation of priority projects contributing towards the regeneration of Stockton Central Area.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not applicable

Proper Officer
09 October 2010