

**DELIVERY OF WHITEHAVEN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION INITIATIVE -
PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WEST LAKES RENAISSANCE AND COPELAND
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Portfolio Holder, Councillor Tim Knowles
LEAD OFFICER: Mike Tichford, Head of Regeneration
REPORT AUTHOR: Sherrie Lewthwaite, Project Officer

Summary and Recommendation:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Members approval to the principle of establishing a framework for the delivery of the Town Centre regeneration initiative by securing and maintaining effective and meaningful partnership working between Copeland Borough Council and West Lakes Renaissance. Approval is sought for a number of actions, mechanisms and potential agreements. The phased introduction of these various elements will be allied to the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme Implementation Plan.

It is recommended that the options set out in section 3, in so far as they relate to the Council, of this report are agreed and that the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Tim Knowles, and the Corporate Director of Economic Prosperity and Sustainability in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Cllr Tim Knowles and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be delegated to pursue the implementation of the options subject to clarification of the relevant points set out in this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Whitehaven Town Centre Regeneration Programme is one of the four key elements that make up the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme. The strategic framework for Whitehaven Town Centre is based on creating clusters of development focused on new public spaces of high quality to reinforce and strengthen the existing or emerging character of these areas. The overall vision is composed of three separate strategies: development, transport and public realm which are seen as integrated parts of the whole.
- 1.2 The emphasis is now changing from studies and consultations to a start on the delivery of the first stages of the initiative.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 The delivery of the Whitehaven Town Centre initiative will only be successfully achieved if there is an effective and sustained partnership

between West Lakes Renaissance (WLR) and Copeland Borough Council (CBC). There already exists a Whitehaven Town Centre Task Group, chaired until recently by the Council's Economic Development Manager (to be taken up by Cllr Tim Knowles on an interim basis). The Task Group is accountable to the Whitehaven Regeneration Steering Group chaired by Cllr Tim Knowles.

- 2.2 Discussions have been held with WLR with a view to agreeing the mechanisms and actions that now need to be put in place to drive the initiative forward. It is considered that there is a requirement for a partnership arrangement between CBC and WLR and a joint public commitment to the various development proposals. This will give a strong message to all the stakeholders involved, and most importantly to potential developers, that collectively we are committed to securing the successful delivery of the programme.

3 OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 In order to achieve this partnership and move forward the proposal the following options are put forward for consideration and it is recommended that;
- (a) The Council and WLR actively support the development and delivery of the various elements that make up the Whitehaven Town Centre Development Framework.
 - (b) The Council will act as joint signatories with WLR to conditional development agreements with a developer(s) for specific project(s). This will be subject to a clear understanding of the requirements within the particular agreement, the risks and the relevant site development issues i.e. the cost of mitigation and the financial implications of entering into the conditional development agreements. A framework agreement will be drawn up for each conditional agreement setting out the arrangements including responsibilities and funding between WLR and the Council.
 - (c) The Council and WLR will in appropriate circumstances be joint signatories to planning applications.
 - (e) Should it prove necessary, the Council will pursue compulsory purchase of a particular site(s), subject to being satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to justify the making of such Orders and to WLR giving sufficient financial indemnities to allow the Orders to be pursued.

- (f) The Council will act as client for relevant studies, surveys and developments within the Town Centre programme, subject to internal capacity, clarification on the funding, project and risk management arrangements, clarification on the VAT position and a framework agreement with WLR.
- (g) To expedite the processes involved in the delivery of regeneration objectives the WLR Framework Agreement will be used to procure consultancy services where the Council is acting as client subject to the Council being assured that the Agreement is legally compliant with EC and UK procurement legislation.
- (h) The Council will co-ordinate work by the Deliver Team to promote and publicise the Regeneration Programme and any presentations to potential developers, subject to clarification on funding to support this activity.
- (i) WLR will manage the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme Delivery Team, agreeing the work programme with the Head of Regeneration and the Steering Group. The Council and WLR will make available secondments to the team and will recruit to vacant posts as agreed.
- (k) All parties will take into account the Council's Local Development Framework and the spatial requirements that this will place on future development of the Town Centre

3.2 The above recommended options, if agreed will provide a clear statement of the willingness of the Council and WLR to give their support to the Town Centre element of the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The proposals for the regeneration of the Whitehaven town centre are a vital element of the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme, on which the future prosperity of the town and wider borough will significantly depend. Successful delivery is very much dependent upon effective and meaningful partnership working, based on a clear statement of intent. The options and recommendations set out in this report provide a framework for future working between West Lakes Renaissance and Copeland Borough Council, however, each element in this working arrangement will have to be considered in resource requirements and risk management.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 5.1 Whitehaven Town Centre is a major regeneration programme; the various elements of which will have significant financial and staff resource implications. The proposed partnership working arrangements with West Lakes Renaissance are designed to maximise the availability and utilisation of the resources which are available whilst ensuring the various options are not pursued without a clear understanding of the resource implications for each element.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Each of the town centre initiatives will require a comprehensive approach to project and risk management. The proposed partnership working arrangements set out in this report together with the wider governance and delivery arrangements for the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme will collectively facilitate effective project and risk management. A risk assessment of a number of the proposed elements of the partnership working arrangements will be required before they proceed.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 Should the various elements which make up the Whitehaven Town Centre Regeneration Initiative proceed in the future they will have a positive impact in terms of achieving the related objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan as well as creating and sustaining the local economy and improving the health and well being of our communities.

List of Appendices

None

List of Background Documents:

Minutes of the Whitehaven Town Centre Task Group
Correspondence with West Lakes Renaissance

List of Consultees:

Corporate Team, Cllrs: Deputy Leader Cath Geil, Portfolio Holder Tim Knowles

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	A better function, healthy town centre will have positive impacts on community safety
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Impact on Sustainability	Core to the programme is the delivery of a more sustainable town
Impact on Rural Proofing	N/A
Health and Safety Implications	N/A
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	This will be addressed through the programme as it is developed
Children and Young Persons Implications	This will be addressed through the programme as it is developed
Human Rights Act Implications	This will be addressed through the programme as it is developed

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision ~~YES~~/NO