

 Executive, 14th September 2011		Agenda Item No. <div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">7</div>
Title	Warwick Town Centre Area Action Plan update	
For further information about this report please contact	Lorna Coldicott (Senior Planner - Policy, Projects & Conservation)	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Executive, June 2011, minute number 8	
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	16.08.2011	Chris Elliott/Bill Hunt
Head of Service	16.08.2011	Paul Pinkney
CMT		
Section 151 Officer	16.08.2011	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	16.08.2011	Andy Jones
Finance	16.08.2011	Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holder(s)	18.08.2011	Councillor J Hammon
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Final Decision?		No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report is to inform the Executive of the Warwick Town Centre Partnership decision not to consult on the 'Options' paper approved for public consultation at the meeting of the Executive in June this year. It also outlines the Partnership's proposed approach to the further work now considered necessary.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Executive note the contents of this report and approve Warwick Town Centre Partnership's approach to consultation on the 'Options' paper.
- 2.2 That the Executive receives a draft 'Options and Preferred Option' paper in due course for approval for public consultation.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Following on from the "Report of Public Consultation" on the "Issues" paper, published in June 2010, and in accordance with the requirements of the Local Development Scheme (LDS), a second stage "Options" consultation to address the identified issues was to have been undertaken following Executive approval in June this year. The purpose of this stage of public consultation was to seek views on which option would best address the identified issues in the Area Action Plan.
- 3.2 The approved "Options" paper omitted sites and buildings which could potentially be developed or redeveloped or for which new uses could be found. Subsequently however the Partnership has decided that it wishes to carry out more work on the possible options for these sites and buildings and include them as part of a hybrid document which links the 'options' with a "preferred option" for the use of potential sites. Moreover, the Partnership wishes to ensure that full account is taken of the economic situation, current and future, to ensure that the town centre develops a strong basis on which to build.
- 3.3 Consequently, the Partnership agreed to form a 'core group' consisting of one member of each of the partner groups, with officer support, to consider the evidence base, identify gaps in the required information and fill those gaps by utilising existing in-house expertise. If gaps cannot be filled in this way as the relevant expertise is not immediately available, the partnership may decide that consultants need to be appointed through this Council's procurement process. If this is the case, a report may come back to the Executive for approval to carry out this stage of the work depending on whether this exceeds the current budget.
- 3.4 Once the work is completed, the partnership will produce a paper which gives options that have been considered for re-use/redevelopment of sites and an economic strategy on which new development can build to increase the stability of the town centre economy with a preferred option for addressing each issue.

- 3.5 The resulting paper will form the basis for a twelve week public consultation period which is likely to commence in March 2012.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 **Policy Framework** – The Area Action Plan will need to reflect and conform to the policies within the Local Plan. The AAP provides specific planning policy and guidance for an area where investment needs to be managed. It will address the specific challenges presented in Warwick Town Centre and specify any changes of use and alternative uses of land and buildings identifying key strategic interventions. This plan forms a statutory component of the LDF and will contribute to the delivery of the Local Plan's objectives.
- 4.2 **Fit for the Future** – The final version of the Area Action Plan will need to align with and help deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Fit for the Future programme where appropriate. It will also need to align with the Local Plan and our partners documents, including the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan and respective Asset Management Plans.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 Undertaking additional work, possibly with the assistance of an external consultant, will have resource implications on the Council in terms of staff time, as well as financial. If the recommendations from the Partnership cannot be met from existing budget of £33,100 for this financial year, a further report will come to Executive.

6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 Not pursuing the AAP would leave the town centre without any detailed planning policy guidance and could result in ad hoc decisions being taken regarding various development opportunities that may come forward in the short term to the detriment of the town centre and its environment.