

 Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2 April 2019		Agenda Item No. 7
Title	Briefing Report: Vision & strategy for Leamington town centre annual update and progress on Action Plan	
For further information about this report please contact	Philip Clarke Policy & Projects Manager, Development Services	
Wards of the District directly affected	Clarendon, Milverton, Newbold, Leam, Brunswick	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?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, 7 th March 2018 (min. no. 138)	
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	Yes/No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	Yes/No
Key Decision?	Yes/No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes/No
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was produced as part of the Local Plan. Insofar as any individual WDC projects emerge from the vision & strategy, these will be subject to their own EIAs.	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	20/2/19	Bill Hunt
Head of Service	20/2/19	Dave Barber
CMT	20/2/19	Chris Elliott, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	20/2/19	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	20/2/19	Andrew Jones
Finance	20/2/19	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	20/2/19	Cllr. Mobbs
Consultation & Community Engagement		

The vision & strategy for Leamington town centre was prepared by a group of stakeholders and also subject to wider stakeholder and public engagement in 2016 and 2017. Details of this were reported to Executive on 7th March 2018 and were contained in that report.

Final Decision?

Yes/No

Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 In March 2018, Executive supported a "Vision & Strategy for Leamington town centre" that had been produced by the "Leamington Town Centre Forum". This report provides an annual update of the actions contained in that document.

2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 That members note the progress that has been made on the Leamington Town Centre Vision & Strategy since it was approved by the Executive in March 2018.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 Following discussions in 2015 with a number of key partners and stakeholders operating, or with an interest, in Leamington town centre, a "Leamington Town Centre Forum" was set up. This group had the remit to develop a strategy for Leamington town centre, consider delivery and implementation issues arising from the strategy and consider who may take these forward and how this may be done. Members of the Forum were:-

- BID Leamington
- Leamington Society
- Purple Monster (representing small businesses including those within Old Town)
- Royal Leamington Spa Chamber of Trade
- Royal Leamington Spa Town Council
- Royal Priors Shopping Centre & Regent Court
- University of Warwick
- University of Warwick Students Union
- Wareing & Company (representing commercial agents)
- Warwick District Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Warwickshire Police

- 3.2 The Forum completed its work in late 2017 and out of this came the "Vision & Strategy for Leamington town centre". This document identified a number of key priority themes, which were presented as a series of "big ideas". These were on the themes of:-

- A thriving town centre
- A connected town centre
- Places & spaces to meet
- Revealing Leamington's waterways
- A hub for creativity
- Enhancing Old Town

- 3.3 The vision & strategy included an Action Plan. In supporting the Vision & Strategy, members asked to be updated annually on progress in its delivery. This report provides that annual update.

- 3.4 Appendix 1 to this report is a copy of the Action Plan to which a further column (progress – March 2019) has been added. The Action Plan classified all actions as being short, medium or long term with the short term actions to be delivered between 2018-19. This progress report therefore focuses on these short term actions only. As can be seen, positive outcomes have been achieved on a wider number of priority areas including the following:-

- Creative Quarter – progress has been made on the masterplan which was approved for public consultation in November 2018 and completed its public

consultation on 21st January. There is a report going to Executive on 6th March recommending that a final version of the Masterplan is approved. A number of the actions relate to the progress of this project.

- A number of major events were hosted in Leamington town centre during 2018, including both the Men's and Women's Tours of Britain.
- A student housing strategy was agreed by Warwick District Council in May 2018.
- A canal conservation area was designated in January 2019. This includes areas within the Leamington town centre.
- WDC has worked with the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership to support a number of initiatives to support the Silicon Spa brand and our range of creative industries. This includes the recent "Interactive Futures" event for the computer games industry.

3.5 Furthermore, progress is being made in a number of other areas:-

- Good progress is being made on the housing scheme at Station Approach. The first phase of apartments has been completed and the new public car park scheduled to be handed over to the WDC in November 2019.
- A consultation draft of the Canalside DPD is scheduled for July – September 2019.
- WDC is working with other local stakeholders to support a project to enhance the underpass at the railway station. The Council (along with Leamington Town Council) supported a feasibility study into the underpass project in 2018.
- WDC has committed £70,000 from payments made under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to be put towards a waymarking project in Leamington town centre. (Please note that a review and refresh of the CIL Regulation 123 list is being considered by Executive on 6th March.)

3.6 There have been challenges to delivering some of the actions set out in the Action Plan in March 2018.

- Covent Garden development: Although planning permission was granted in 2018 for the planning application for the new car park, the postponement of the final decision on the scheme may have a knock-on impact on the timetable for bringing forward proposals on the Chandos Street car park.
- A bid for grant funding to the LEP was made for enhancements to Leamington station in September 2018, however this was not successful. This would have included the upgrading of the station underpass.