

 Executive 11th July 2012		Agenda Item No. 7
Title	Warwick Town Centre Plan – Preferred Options	
For further information about this report please contact	Lorna Coldicott – Senior Planner Lorna.coldicott@warwickdc.gov.uk Andrew Jones – Deputy Chief Executive Andrew.jones@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	Warwick West	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?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 – September 2011, minute number 54	
Background Papers	Executive September 2011	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes (394A)
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer	11 th June 2012	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	11 th June 2012	Tracy Darke
CMT	19 th June 2012	Chris Elliott, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	19 th June 2012	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	15 th June 2012	Cllr John Hammon, Cllr Les Caborn
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Consultation on issues was undertaken in Spring 2010.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below):		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks the Executive's approval to undertake public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' for the Council's 'Warwick Town Centre Plan'.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Executive approves that Warwick District Council should undertake public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' for the Warwick Town Centre Plan (WTCP).
- 2.2 That the 'Preferred Options' paper attached as **Appendix A** forms the basis for the public consultation.
- 2.3 That Executive receives a draft plan in due course, which takes into account the responses from the public consultation where appropriate.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 In September 2011 a report was brought informing the Executive that the Town Centre Partnership (Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council, Warwick Town Council, Warwick Chamber of Trade and the Warwick Society) did not wish to commence public consultation on an 'Options' paper approved for that purpose at a meeting of the Executive in June 2011.
- 3.2 The Partnership proposed an approach to the further work it considered necessary to bring forward a paper which considered the re-use/redevelopment of sites and an economic strategy on which new development could be built to increase the potential for the town centre economy, with a preferred option for addressing each issue. Executive approved this approach.
- 3.3 The Partnership had agreed that a 'core group' be formed, consisting of one member of each of the partner groups, with officer support, to examine the evidence base and identify and fill any gaps using in-house expertise or obtain the relevant advice from external agents, commissioning the services of consultants if necessary.
- 3.4 In excess of 20 core group meetings have taken place since this time with two meetings of the full Partnership to approve a completed phase of the work and authorise the group to proceed onto the next stage. There was unanimous endorsement of the proposals at both Partnership meetings. This work has now been completed without the need to commission consultants, other than to employ the services and expertise of a 'visualiser' to illustrate the suggestions for site development or re-use, leading to a clearer understanding of site potential.
- 3.5 This work has now given the Partnership the opportunity to produce a complete and cohesive paper which considers the options and gives a preferred option or approach for each of the sites and proposes an

economic strategy which will increase the stability of the town centre economy.

- 3.6 This paper will form the basis for an eight week public consultation period which will commence in September 2012.

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

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to proceed with the consultation on the 'Preferred Options', however, this would be contrary to the Council's approved Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 4.2 Not pursuing the Plan would also leave the town centre without any detailed planning policy guidance, particularly with the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which offers less guidance than the previous Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs). This 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.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 Undertaking public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' will have resource implications on the Council in terms of staff time, as well as financial implications in terms of the costs of publicity and the preparation and printing of consultation material, etc. These costs, as well as those associated with the presentation work by the 'visualiser', will be accommodated within the existing budgetary framework and some additional funding may be made available by the other partners.

6. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1 **Policy Framework** - The WTCP will need to reflect and conform to the policies within the Local Plan when adopted. The WTCP will provide specific planning policy and guidance for an area where investment needs to be managed. It will address the specific challenges and opportunities presented in Warwick town centre and will specify any changes of use and alternative uses of land and buildings identifying key strategic interventions. This plan will contribute to the delivery of some of the Local Plan's objectives.
- 6.2 **Fit for the Future** – The final version of the WTCP will need to align with and help deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy(SCS) 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.