

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Partnerships, Planning & Policy (Introduced by the Executive Member for Planning & Partnerships)	Executive Cabinet	2 nd September 2010

DELIVERING THE TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY – CREATING A THRIVING ‘CONTEMPORARY MARKET TOWN’

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To propose a range of actions for the town centre that can be further explored and delivered, and to ask Members for their suggestions, as well as inform discussions on future budget decisions.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That Members comment on the proposals, provide further suggestions and approve the proposed list of projects subject to any Member amendments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. This report puts forward an initial range of short and medium/longer term actions to create a thriving ‘Contemporary Market Town’ for consideration by Members.

Members comments are sought on the proposals, giving particular regard to future budget decisions.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

4. A thriving town centre is an essential part of the economy and Chorley Town Centre is a top priority for the Council. Developing a clear plan of short and medium/longer term actions for the town centre is essential going forward.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5. None.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

6. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region	✓	Develop local solutions to climate change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances		Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	✓
Involving people in their communities		Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	

BACKGROUND

7. The 2006 Economic Regeneration Strategy for Chorley is currently being refreshed; and creating a thriving 'Contemporary Market Town' is a key priority within the strategy.
8. The Town Centre Strategy was adopted in 2006 and highlighted general principles for the town centre which still hold good today. Both the Economic Regeneration and Town Centre Strategies were informed by the Chorley Town Centre Retail and Leisure Study (October 2005) undertaken by White Young Green.
9. The 2008 Town Centre Audit and Design Strategy provided a detailed guide to future town centre interventions and has informed direction in developing a partners' Action Plan for the next three to five years to deliver the refreshed Economic Regeneration Strategy.
10. Whilst the findings and recommendations of the 2010 Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry on Town Centre Vitality are being progressed, this report takes forward two recommendations specifically in relation to the Flat Iron Market and access to town centre car parks.

CREATING A THRIVING 'CONTEMPORARY MARKET TOWN'

11. In order to fulfil our vision of achieving a thriving 'Contemporary Market Town', there are four key areas we need to tackle:
 - a. Improve the **retail offer** whilst at the same time striking the right balance of individual specialist versus larger multiple retailers.
 - b. **Regenerate** the unattractive and 'secondary' parts of the town centre.
 - c. Create an attractive **environment** that encourages shopping in Chorley, e.g. public realm, gateways and car parking.
 - d. Improve the **leisure offer** and expand and improve the quality of dining in the town centre.
12. An initial range of short and medium/longer term actions are presented in the table below for consideration by Members. Where possible, an indication of funding requirements and potential funding sources to make the schemes viable have been provided. However, further work will be needed over the coming months as part of budget preparation with all stakeholders to secure the necessary funds to take the projects forward. It is also anticipated that those medium and longer term proposed actions favoured by Members will require more detailed work over the year and further papers will be brought to Executive Cabinet accordingly.

DELIVERING THE TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY
- CREATING A THRIVING 'CONTEMPORARY MARKET TOWN'

	<u>PROPOSED SHORT TERM PROJECTS</u>	<u>DELIVERY YEAR</u>	<u>FUNDING REQUIREMENT</u>
1.	<p><u>Regeneration & Attractive Environment – Public Realm on Market Street</u></p> <p>This project is about making the Southern end of Market Street a more attractive and accessible experience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • De-cluttering footways • Introducing improved quality paving and street furniture (bins, benches) • Softening the landscape with tree planting. 	2011	Developer S78/S106
2.	<p><u>Regeneration & Attractive Environment - Shop Front Improvements</u></p> <p>Improving the public realm in terms of the visual appearance at a vertical level by providing a grant assistance package to owners and leaseholders for shop front improvements. For example, 50% grant assistance up to a maximum of £10,000. Grant assistance is conditional to receiving business advice and support to promote the sustainability of the business over 2 years.</p> <p>The scheme would be available to small retailers and piloted within targeted areas of the Town Centre.</p>	2011/12	<p><u>Shop Front Grant</u> Chorley Council = £150,000 Business Contribution = £150,000 Total = £300,000 <u>Business Support</u> Revitalising Town Centres / Chorley Council = £7,500</p>
3.	<p><u>Retail Offer - Supporting High Quality Independents into Vacant Shop Premises</u></p> <p>Chorley Town Centre prides itself on the offer from our quality independents. This project brings together capital and revenue business support measures to promote and ensure the viability of this sector and to bring vacant shop premises back into use by providing a £3,000 fixed grant to refurbish the internal shop and a 100% business rate subsidy in the first 6 months.</p> <p>The grant assistance is conditional to receiving business advice and support to promote the sustainability of the business.</p> <p>The scheme would be available to small independent retailers moving into vacant premises within the Town Centre boundary. Promoting the quality of offer will be</p>	2011/12	<p><u>Refurbishment grant</u> Chorley Council = £27,000 <u>Business rate subsidy</u> Chorley council = £53,325 <u>Business Support</u> Intensive Start Up Support Grant = £16,470</p>

	essential to attract goods and services currently not available such as books, shoes, children's clothes etc.		
4.	<p><u>Leisure Offer - Developing the Night Time Economy</u></p> <p>'Cheers to Chorley' proposal focusing on third Thursday night of each month to redirect mainstream / partner resources to boost night time activity in the Town Centre. Project covers late night shopping, promotions at pubs and eateries, entertainment, free car parking after 4.00 pm on Thursday, youth diversionary activities, town centre evening economy guide.</p> <p>One option to be explored further is the development of St George's St as a food quarter (as advocated in the White Young Green retail and leisure study) over the medium term.</p>	2011/12 2012/13	£11,600 Chorley Council & Partners Mainstream Resources
5.	<p><u>Attractive Environment - Improving Pedestrian Routes from Car Parks into Market Street</u></p> <p>This project is about improving the accessibility, including DDA Compliance, and signage of pedestrian routes from town centre car parks into the Town Centre.</p> <p>Linked to this project is consideration of providing car parking free at quiet times to increase trade, and an associated loss on car parking revenue will be calculated.</p>	2011/12	Raising levy on businesses, e.g. Business Improvement District
6.	<p><u>Retail Offer & Attractive Environment – Short Term Proposals for Flat Iron</u></p> <p>This project proposes to maximise revenue generation by re-laying out the Flat Iron Market. This additional revenue will pay for new attractive gazebos which will improve the visual appearance of the market and in theory improve the market offer.</p>	2011	Additional revenue generation

	<u>MEDIUM TO LONG TERM PROJECTS</u>	<u>DELIVERY YEAR</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
7.	<p><u>Regeneration and Retail Offer - Market Street / Gillibrand Street Comprehensive Redevelopment Opportunity</u></p> <p>The former MacDonald's site can be viewed as part of a wider development opportunity by incorporating Fleet Street Short and Long Stay car parks, and potentially other adjacent parcels of land.</p>	2012 onwards	Special Purpose Vehicle / Developer Partner
8.	<p><u>Retail offer - Strategy to Attract Larger Multiples / Independent Department Stores</u></p>		

	<p>This project is about improving our Town Centre offer by attracting larger multiples. In doing so, independent department stores have been considered in a similar capacity. The strategy will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the ratios of larger multiples vs. independent specialists over short, medium and long term. • Master planning site allocations for larger multiples over short, medium and long term. This may include identifying other redevelopment opportunities. • Developing a short list of 'desirable' larger multiples / independent stores. 	2012 onwards	Special Purpose Vehicle / Developer Partner
9.	<p><u>Developing a Town Centre Improvements Fund</u></p> <p>This project is about establishing a Town Centre Fund which can be used to make improvements in the town centre of both a capital and revenue nature. There are a number of mechanisms which can be explored to create the fund e.g. S106 contributions; Community Infrastructure Levy; surplus income from the markets; car park revenue; broader capital receipts/revenue savings, Business Improvement District</p>	2011 onwards	Variety of sources

CONCLUSION

13. Creating a thriving 'Contemporary Market Town' is about maintaining Chorley's position in the retail hierarchy, growing the quality of its offer and providing a distinctive and attractive Town Centre environment. Developing a clear plan of short and medium / longer term actions is essential going forward.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal		No significant implications in this area	

15. The accessibility of the town centre for disabled people is an issue that has been raised and discussed by the Equality Forum. A task and finish group of the forum has examined access in the town centre and the comments received following the work are taken into consideration in work undertaken in the town centre.
16. Specific consultation will be undertaken with the Equality Forum at the appropriate time on any new major scheme in the town centre that may have an impact upon access, as previously agreed with the Forum.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION

17. The report sets out for Members a series of options requiring financial support from the Council. The bulk of these options require revenue funding which is not recurrent at this stage. Therefore, should Members determine the strategy is appropriate, further work would be needed as the report suggests to finance the costs and to agree an appropriate funding stream. This would need to be completed during the coming months and funds found from current cash budgets for 2010/11 or be part of the budget preparation for future years.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON
DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING & POLICY

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Cath Burns	5305	16/08/2010	Exec Cab Deliv Town Centre Strategy