

**Cabinet
2021**

15 September

Bromsgrove Centres Management Action Plan (April 2021 – Mar 2022)

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services
Report Author	Job Title: Ostap Paparega Contact email: Ostap.Paparega@nwedr.org.uk Contact Tel: 01562 732192 / 07580725167
Wards Affected	Bromsgrove Central, Sanders Park, Hagley West, Hagley East, Rubery North, Rubery South, Barnt Green, Alvechurch Village, Drakes Cross, Catshill North, Catshill South, Aston Fields
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Interim Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan for 2021 focussing on Covid-19 recovery and revitalisation
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet RESOLVE that:-

The Bromsgrove Centres Management Action Plan (April 2021 – March 2022) attached at Appendix 1 be approved

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 More than ever town and village centres face challenging times due to the ongoing unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2..2 With an already established track record of supporting businesses across North Worcestershire and encouraging the ongoing economic viability and growth of Bromsgrove's town and village centres the Bromsgrove Centres Manager's primary purpose is to develop and implement centre strategies and town centre management initiatives that aim to improve the vitality and viability of the various towns and centres within Bromsgrove district. An integral aspect of this will be to actively liaise and engage the town centre business community and to provide a voice for the traders in the various centres. The role also requires

the Manager to lead on promotional activities relating to the centres including the co-ordination of some events in the local centres.

2.3 The Centres that the Bromsgrove Centres Manager looks after are as follows:

- Bromsgrove Town Centre
- Alvechurch Village
- Rubery Village
- Barnt Green Village
- Hagley Village
- Wythall
- Catshill
- New Addition – Aston Fields

2.4 The Action Plan, which identifies the work streams for each of the centres listed above, is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. The plan covers the period from April 2021 to April 2022 and has been used as a basis for the work that had been undertaken by the previous Bromsgrove Centres Manager over the past 5 months. This has focussed on supporting businesses during the pandemic and assisting them with re-opening safely following the easing of restrictions. The plan will also provide the work programme for the new Bromsgrove Centres Manager, once appointed, up until March 2022. Whilst there is a vacancy, we are working to continue to deliver the action plan using other resources.

2.5 The Action Plan was developed to respond to the impacts of the pandemic and has been developed as an interim measure based on recovery. The proposal is then to develop a longer-term strategy (c.3-4 years) which would be similar in nature to the previous strategy that was adopted in 2017 and will focus on further interventions and support within the Centres. The new Bromsgrove Centres Manager will be tasked with producing this longer-term strategy which will be developed through consultation with businesses and key stakeholders across all the Centres.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Implementation of the action plan is supported by the Bromsgrove Centres Manager budget, which forms part of the NwedR shared service arrangement. Larger and more significant projects are incorporated into existing revenue and capital budgets, such as the Rubery Public Realm Programme.

3.2 The Bromsgrove Centres Manager is also responsible for attracting external funding to support the aims and objectives of the action plan. Examples of where external funding has already been secured or sought to support priority projects are as follows:

- £50,000 awarded by GBS LEP for the 'recovery through creativity' project

- £88,000 from the Returning to High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF)
- £88,000 from the Welcome Back Fund (WBF)

3.3 Some of this funding has already been spent and the remaining funding will be utilised by the new Centres Manager to support the delivery of the Action Plan. In addition, further funding will be explored from external sources to deliver future objectives.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no legal implications arising out of the report.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

5.1 The Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan 2021-2022 is aligned with the Strategic Purpose 'Run and grow a successful business: strengthen the vibrancy & viability of our towns & district centres'.

5.2 More than ever town and village centres face challenging times due to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated the challenges faced by high streets and town centres pre-Covid.

5.3 2020 was an extremely difficult and challenging year for many individuals and businesses. The focus of this interim action plan is on the road to recovery for businesses across the district alongside encouraging the community to support and engage with the town and village centres. Small business can only survive with local community support and this must be facilitated safely and greatly encouraged. The action plan will also complement and support the work of the Parish Councils, Business and Trader Associations and other key stakeholders in each of the centres with a focus on recovery and developing shared ambitions.

Climate Change Implications

5.4 The Action Plan identifies a number of initiatives that will help to assist with addressing climate change such as reviewing car parking arrangements, connectivity to Bromsgrove town centre and working with the Place Team to review waste management arrangements and to promote recycling

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.1 NWedR and the Bromsgrove Centres Manager will consider the impact of changes that might arise as a result of implementing the action plan on those

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with protected equality characteristics, in particular, where there is likely to be an impact on residents or service users from any changes of existing services.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 The Bromsgrove Centres Action Plan 2021 sets out Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and success of the plan. Monitoring and evaluation of the plan will be undertaken in partnership with Council colleagues, businesses, and key stakeholders.
- 6.3 The management of the Bromsgrove Centres Manager is encompassed within NWedR shared service collaboration agreement. Priorities and activities are added to the NWedR Work Programme as and when they are identified and are regularly reviewed. The post is also integrated within the NWedR structure, with direct reporting line to the Head of Service and additional support around delivery of complex regeneration projects across Bromsgrove would be provided by Bromsgrove District Council and NWedR.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Risks associated with the delivery of individual projects and activities will be overseen by the Bromsgrove Centres Manager and will also be monitored and managed by the Head of Service.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Bromsgrove Centres Management Action Plan (April 2021 – March 2022)
- Appendix 2 – Infographic for 2021 Action Plan

KEY AUTHOR OF REPORT

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, the Town Centre and Strategic Partnerships	August 2021
Lead Director / Head of Service	Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	August 2021
Financial Services	Executive Director of Finance and Resources	August 2021
Legal Services	Head Legal, Democratic & Property Services (Monitoring Officer)	August 2021