

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF DISTRICT CENTRES POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC**Classification of Uses in District Centres pre and post Covid
and business closures**

Report of Director of Development and Regeneration

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report presents the use classification data for each of the Borough's eight District Centres. Along with the latest data it compares changes that have occurred over the last 12 months and 36 months and how these changes compare to the national average.

2. Local Data Company

- 2.1 In January 2019 the Council subscribed to Local Data Company (LCD), an independent retail location insight company who track retail and leisure business across the entire country. They employ a team of field researchers who physically visit and survey the occupancy and vacancy of every unit across Great Britain. In addition, LDC tracks all trade and national press for openings and closures, and updates retail chains via their head offices and websites.
- 2.2 For Stockport's eight District Centres the data is collected approximately every 6 months usually April and October, however, during Covid it has been more ad-hoc but is now returning to a more regular collection schedule.

3. Classification Mix in each District Centre

- 3.1 Local Data Company collect vacancy data and for those units that are occupied they record the use under the 4 main classifications of Comparison, Convenience, Service or Leisure. Detailed business type breakdowns are also available such as restaurant, hairdresser, bookmaker and supermarket. In addition to presenting the data for each District Centre it compares it to the national average to help ascertain whether the Centre has an over or under supply of certain business types.
- 3.2 The data for each of the eight District Centres is included in Appendix 1 and more detailed analysis of the data will be shared with Panel Members at the meeting on the 14th March.

4. **Business Closures**

- 4.1 Whilst Local Data Company do record Churn within each District Centre for a range of reasons it is very difficult to obtain reliable information on why businesses close. It is often anecdotal evidence which whilst of some use, should be treated with caution as some business owners might not be honest in why they have ceased trading or are relocating. In particular contact details can be difficult to obtain once a businesses has ceased trading and there is often a reluctance to share information.
- 4.2 However, it is hoped by having 2 District Centre Managers proactively meeting and liaising with businesses and organisations on a regular basis in the Centres strong, collaborative relationships will be created. This will allow the Managers to support business owners and help identify concerns early on so they can be connected to the range of business support that is available to them. Inevitably businesses will come and go but moving forward the Managers should have more robust information on the reasons for closing.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Location Reports for each District Centre – Bramhall, Cheadle, Cheadle Hulme, Edgeley, Hazel Grove, Marple, Reddish, Romiley