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## **SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL - STOCKPORT'S DISTRICT CENTRES POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Meeting: 14 March 2022  
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Colin MacAlister (Chair) in the chair; Councillors Grace Baynham and Roy Driver.

### **1 MINUTES**

The minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 14 February were approved as a correct record.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors and Officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the agenda items for this meeting.

No declarations of interest were made.

### **3 CLASSIFICATION OF USES IN DISTRICT CENTRES PRE AND POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

A representative of the Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing the use classification data for each of the Borough's eight district centres.

Town Centre Manager (Helen Walters) and the Director of Development and Regeneration (Paul Richards) attended the meeting to respond to member questions.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- Along with the latest data, the data compared changes that had occurred over the last 12 months and 36 months, as well as how these changes compared to the national average.
- It was stressed how important the District Centre Manager roles were in supporting local businesses. The District Centre Managers were the key point of contact for businesses and could support them with any matters or concerns they might have. The managers were regularly speaking to and working with local businesses, and would also be able to provide useful intelligence to the council as to why certain businesses were closing.
- An update was given on the classification mix for each area within the Borough, including vacancy rates.
- Members were advised that bank closures were taking place up and down the country, and Stockport reflected the national picture. Further information on banking services and their locations within the Borough would be sought and circulated to members for their information. Members were also interested in gaining an

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understanding of the wider impact that bank closures may have had on district centres.

- Members noted that Stockport had a significantly higher number of independent shops than that national average. The many benefits of independent shops were described, which included the fact that independent shops gave residents different reasons to visit different district centres.
- The number of empty units available for let within the Borough would be sought and circulated to members for their information. It was noted that the District Centre Managers were in contact with letting agents to provide support.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

#### **4 INSTITUTE OF PLACE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT CENTRE WORKSHOPS**

The Director of Development and Regeneration (Paul Richards) attended the meeting to provide an update on the first two district centre workshops that were held in Bramhall (8 March 2022) and Romiley (10 March 2022).

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- Eight workshops were scheduled to take place in each of the district centres.
- The first two workshops had taken place (Bramhall and Romiley), and were well attended by local businesses.
- Following the workshops, action plans for each of the district centres would be worked up over the next couple of months by the Institute of Place Management (IPM).

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

#### **5 DISTRICT CENTRE SITE VISITS**

RESOLVED – That Scrutiny Review Panel members undertake site visits to Edgeley, Cheadle and Romiley district centres on 1 April 2022.

The meeting closed at 6.48 pm