

MARPLE DISTRICT CENTRE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Report of the Director of Development and Regeneration

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.0 To provide an update on delivering Marple District Centre Action Plan, initial thoughts on how the £5,000 from UK Shared Prosperity Fund is to be allocated and support for Large Local Centres.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Marple Action Plan reflects local priorities and includes quick wins and longer term actions all of which to help towards creating a strong, healthy and sustainable District Centre. The Plan was discussed at the Marple Area Committee meeting in March 2023 and the District Centre Manager provided an update on delivery of the Action Plan in June 2023. This report is to update on delivery since June.

3. MARPLE DISTRICT CENTRE ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 Over the summer and early autumn good progress has been made on a delivering a number of the actions within the Action Plan:
- ✓ A new Voluntary Community Toilet scheme has been introduced. Operating from 6.30am to midnight, the scheme has had a positive uptake from local businesses.
 - ✓ Work progressing on wayfaring signage, street clutter and artwork for planters
 - ✓ Plans underway to explore installing festoon lighting on Market Street following positive feedback from businesses.
 - ✓ Support provided to those organising the successful Marple Food and Drink Festival held on the 16th September District Centre funding allocated for a brass band, live music and a busking competition.
 - ✓ Marple Christmas light switch on event on the 25th November supported with additional activities
- 3.2 In addition to delivering the specific actions the District Centre Manager continues to regularly engage with small businesses and retailers and has been:
- Supporting businesses and organisations in accessing funding including Warm Spaces, GMCA Green Spaces and UKSPF.
 - Introducing businesses & retailers to the wide range of free business support to help them develop and grow their business e.g. Business Growth Hub, Enterprising You

- Promoting Library Team's Build a Business Workshops
- Supporting businesses with their recruitment challenges by promoting support available.
- Signposting to colleagues in the Council who can assist on specialist areas e.g. licensing, Temporary Event Notice, tables & chairs on the highway.
- Dissemination of information on local matters e.g. road closures

3.3 The Manger has also been encouraging organisations and businesses to embrace Town of Culture and promoting and supporting them with community grant funding applications to ensure range of activities delivered throughout the borough. They also continue to work in close partnership with colleagues from across the Council including the Neighbourhoods Team on delivering many of the projects.

4. BUDGET ALLOCATION

4.1 Each District Centre was allocated £5,000 in 2022/23 to assist with delivering projects within their specific Action Plans. Local stakeholders in Marple were involved in identifying priority projects for the £5,000. This collective approach to allocating funding has helped ensure a partnership approach to delivery and has helped deliver some exciting and innovative projects in Marple.

4.2 To assist with continuing the successful Action Plan approach for creating strong and healthy District Centres a further £40,000 has been allocated via the Communities and Place strand of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), to be split equally between the eight District Centres. To comply with the requirements of UKSPF all funding must meet the eligibility criteria and be spent by the end of March 2024.

4.3 As with the initial funding, local stakeholders in Marple will be involved in helping to agree priority projects for allocating the £5,000 from UKSPF to. Discussions have commenced with the Visioning Group to identify priority projects.

5. SUPPORT FOR LARGE LOCAL CENTRES

5.1 In addition to the eight District Centres Stockport has a number of large Local Centres that primarily provide for daily shopping needs but generally they have a more limited role than District Centres. Whilst the District Centre Managers do not have the capacity to deliver the same level of support to these centres they have developed a detailed knowledge of the type of support businesses and stakeholders within those centres require to enable them to work collaboratively and help create strong, healthy centres.

5.2 To assist those businesses and organisations based in the large local Centres an online portal is to be developed which will have a wealth of useful information to help businesses with accessing business support,

running and delivering events including what permissions are required and ideas for running successful activities, how to set up steering groups or traders' associations to help partnership working, and details of funding sources. The portal will also have useful links on how to report concerns to the Council including broken street furniture, overgrown vegetation and problem paving. Whilst the majority of this information already exists its' beneficial to have it all in one place so easily accessible.

- 5.3 The new portal is due to go live in Spring 2024 and drop in sessions with the District Centre Managers will take place in each of the centres to help guide businesses and organisations through the portal.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Richard Daniels, the District Centre Manager for Marple continues to develop strong positive relationships with colleagues in the Council, local businesses and community organisations in Marple. This strong partnership approach is reflected in the positive delivery of a number of the actions within the Marple District Centre Action Plan.

- 6.2 The Committee is requested to:

- a) Note the progress made in in developing the Marple District Centre Action Plan.
- b) Provide feedback on priority projects to allocate the £5,000 UKSPF to.
- c) Note the plans to develop an information portal to support businesses and organisations in large Local Centres.