

Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Alice Collinson Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder	Council	8 July 2021

Executive Report: Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Local Plan Partial Review

- 2.1** Work continues on a number of technical documents related to the partial review of the Wyre Local Plan 2031. Counsel views were sought on 28 May 2021 on the broad approach of placing a heavy reliance on the use of the Government's Standard Method, whilst also taking account of recent developments in the Fylde Local Plan Partial Review. Following the advice given, the preparation of Regulation 19 documents has commenced, Planning Policy Working Group have been updated and soon two documents will be updated to make ready for the next stage in the partial review; The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and The Local Development Scheme (LDS). Current evidence suggests that submission of the Partial Review for Examination in early 2022 will be achievable; in full accordance with the requirements of Policy LPR1 of the Wyre Local Plan 2031.

3. Masterplanning

- 3.1** Cockerham Road (SA1/14) Garstang – Work on masterplanning has recently been restarted given a greater appetite for development amongst the landowners. Officers facilitated a landowners group meeting where broad agreement was achieved on mix of land uses. Detailed work will now begin with LCC (as both Local Education Authority and Highways Authority) the progress of which is likely to be dependent upon a commercial agreement between all the landowners to 'equalise' land values across the entire allocation. Although other matters exist, the most pertinent at present is the requirement of the allocation to make land available for a new primary school. The Masterplan must ensure that this is achievable and that any development would not prejudice the provision of land for and deliverability of a new primary school.

- 3.2** Lambs Road/Raikes Road (SA1/2) Thornton – Masterplan is now in its final draft having been considered by the Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG) and is to be recommended for approval/adoption at Cabinet at its 14 July meeting.

4. Project Neptune

- 4.1** Officers from across the council continue to work in collaboration with Associated British Ports (ABP) to deliver an approximate £9m Getting Building Fund project for regeneration works at Fleetwood Docks. Two planning permissions have been granted for the project and work will commence on site in June. The development is led by ABP and includes significant engineering works, demolitions and construction of new commercial units for fish and food processing. Once ABP complete the new commercial units the council will take ownership of the new facility. Work on lease agreements with potential tenants is ongoing with the development anticipated to be fully let (over 40,000 sq ft). The project will be completed in various stages with occupation of the new build commercial units likely to take place before March 2022.

5. Levelling Up Fund application

- 5.1** A Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid was submitted on Friday 18 June. This includes a total ask of just under £9m from Government to support the delivery of three projects. The first project will see the creation of additional floorspace at Fleetwood Market, the second will result in a significant improvement to the buildings of Fleetwood Museum and the third project will support a housing led regeneration of the port of Fleetwood. A decision from Government is expected later in the year with projects to be completed by March 2024 if the bid is successful.

6. Heritage Action Zone

- 6.1** Officers continue to develop projects at a number of properties in the town centre. Detailed survey work has been undertaken at the former 'Store 21' building to determine the building condition and the extent of eligible works. Engagement with the property owners about their ambitions and ability to match fund those ambitions is ongoing.

7. Hillhouse Enterprise Zone (EZ)

- 7.1** Monthly Hillhouse Enterprise Zone meetings have been reconvened. Board members consist of Wyre Council and Blackpool Council, businesses currently located on the site such as Victrex, Addison Plc and AGCE, along with landowners NPL.
- 7.2** Finalisation of the implementation and delivery plan is being progressed and amended to reflect both the closure of the Vinnolit facility and the loss of the proposed large scale waste to energy plant. They will include the progression of proposals by NPL Estates for an initial phase of speculative development totalling 6,100m² which would in part, assist the decanting of existing businesses from the old international business centre releasing that site for redevelopment.

7.3 NPL, have secured funding £630,000 (with additional match from the council and NPL totalling £63,000 each) from the Getting Building Fund towards the costs of essential infrastructure upgrades to enable the new speculative development to progress. They are now preparing detailed planning applications for the development which should be submitted to the council before the end of July, together with a planning application to relocate the existing gatehouse. The project requires some urgent upgrading and repair to ageing enabling infrastructure, including the site access road, upgrade of utilities, and an extension and repair to Hillhouse's water ring main and electricity supply mains.

8. Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund

8.1 The council was awarded £99,180 from this programme. We have worked in partnership with Town Boards and Town Councils to determine how the monies could be best utilised to address areas of concern within the Town Centres located within the Borough during the Covid Pandemic. Interventions have included safety messaging, road closures, the provision of hand sanitising units. Digital Training support to help businesses to continue to operate during closure and sell services and products to consumers, along with a footfall counting solution for each of the 4 Town Centres have also been provided.

9. Welcome Back Fund

9.1 The council has been awarded £199,180 to deliver interventions which encourage the use of Town Centres and public spaces. This programme went live on the 1 June 2021. An internal officer working group has been formed and is led by the Corporate Director Communities. An Action Plan has been produced on how monies will be used within each of the four main Town Centres. The proposed Action Plan has been shared with Town Centre Partnership Boards.

9.2 The Action Plan was submitted to MHCLG on 30 May and we are awaiting feedback from our proposed interventions. Once final sign off is received the Re-opening The High Streets Safely Fund Contract will be amended to reflect the additional award of £199,180 from the Welcome Back Fund.

10. Comments and questions

10.1 In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.