

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan

Report of the Executive Director of PLACE

Principal Towns Investment Programme

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update Cabinet on the Principal Towns Investment Programme (Cab.11.1.2017/13) for the principal town of Wombwell.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **Cabinet approve the proposed Principal Towns allocation for Wombwell (Section 4).**

3. Introduction

- 3.1 Following the approval of the Principal Towns Investment Programme (Cab. 11.1.2017/13 refers), officers across the Communities and Place Directorates have been working on a co-production delivery model, which has included an extensive consultation exercise with elected members, local community groups and businesses. This was carried out to identify and develop projects at a local level. The identification of schemes has been further underpinned with the development of supporting financial and outcome-based businesses cases.
- 3.2 In June 2018, Arcadis were appointed to undertake a master planning exercise covering the principal town of Wombwell. Work has now been completed providing a long term strategic vision for Wombwell as well as helping to identify the work packages that can be delivered within the duration of the Principal Towns programme.
- 3.3 Following the completion of the consultative phase, the programme has now firmly moved into active delivery. The current programme is predicted to run up until 31 March 2021 to make sure there is effective delivery of a diverse and complex programme.

4. Principal Towns - Business Case - Wombwell

- 4.1 The master planning exercise identified a range of opportunities for Wombwell. It considered ways to improve the local economy, improve green and public spaces, while enhancing the viability of the high street. These activities should be undertaken while making sure that initiatives are of high quality and sustainable for the future.
- 4.2 The action plan, sets out predicted costs and timescales for individual opportunities. This presents an assessment of the potential economic and

social benefits. These actions cover both short term (up to two years) and long term (two years +) aspirations.

- 4.3 Not all of the projects identified in the action plans are suitable for delivery through Principal Towns funding. They will form part of the longer-term strategic vision for the area. The Principal Towns programme has provided a clear vision for those areas, providing a platform to explore future funding opportunities to bring forward schemes at a later date.
- 4.4 Principal Towns Commissioning Board approved a Business Case for Wombwell at the meeting on the 17th December 2020 covering the following elements:

Expenditure	£
Public Realm Improvements	116,094
* CCTV	26,396
Market Stalls	50,000
Toilet Block	100,000
Cladding	25,000
Start Up Grants	30,000
Contingency (10%)	38,610
Total Funding for Wombwell	386,100
Total Funding for Approval in this Report	359,704

*CCTV shown for completeness, previously approved by Commissioning Board, delegated decision minute number ODD/43/2020.

Options for the Burton Building will continue to be explored as part of Phase 2 Principal Towns.

Proposals for Wombwell

4.5 Public Realm Improvements

Over the years additional street furniture / bollards have been added and, whilst the street furniture is well used, it does now appear cluttered on the High Street and accessibility is poor for individuals with sight or mobility issues. The proposal is to declutter the High Street and create a more open, flexible space whilst still providing ample seating areas.

4.6 CCTV

CCTV has been approved separately and is now in situ.

4.7 Market Stalls

Although one of the best functioning of our district markets, the market can look disorganised and unsightly due to a lack of stalls for the market traders. Demountable stalls will give a tidier, consistent feel to the market whilst providing additional cover for the stall holders. There are currently anchor point and electrical outlets for use by the stall holders, however these are not in the

appropriate areas so anchor point and electrical outlets will be moved and/or replaced. The stalls will be in line with Barnsley Town Centre's and other District Market stalls and will be included in the work programme, meaning there is no future revenue cost to the area for mounting and demounting the stalls.

4.8 Toilet Block

The toilet block is currently unsightly and attracts unwanted usage. It is currently privately owned so we would look to purchase the unit. The consultation carried out offered the options of converting the unit into a retail unit or demolishing to extend the pedestrian area. The overwhelming result was to demolish the toilet block.

4.9 Cladding

There are six units on the High Street with unsightly concrete façades above the shops which we will cover with a composite cladding to improve the appearance, subject to building owner approval.

4.10 Start up Grants

Although there are limited empty units on Wombwell High Street, the majority are larger units that require increased investment to take on and have therefore been empty for some time, creating a blight on the High street. It is therefore proposed that a start business grant scheme is introduced to encourage businesses to take on these empty units.

5. Implications for Local People/Service Users

- 5.1 Residents of Principal Towns and Local Centres will see significant positive outcomes from the programme. This proposal will develop the Town Square and surroundings that will attract employers and increase footfall to Wombwell. Overall, this scheme is likely to have a sustained positive impact

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Consultations on the financial implications have taken place with representatives of the Service Director - Finance (S151 Officer).
- 6.2 This scheme utilises funding set aside as part of the 2017-2020 Capital Programme, as identified in the Principal Towns Investment Programme report (Cab.11.1.2017/13).
- 6.3 The attached business case for Wombwell put forward for approval totals £359,704 and is the final Principal Towns scheme as part of Phase 1 of the Programme. The table below shows the current breakdown of the Principal Towns Phase 1 funding;

	£
Total Principal Towns Funding	5,000,000
Schemes Previously Approved by Cabinet	(4,534,272)
Funding to be Approved as Part of this Report	(359,704)
Remaining Principal Towns Funding	106,024

6.4 As per the table above, all expenditure identified within the overall scheme for Wombwell will be managed within the resources currently available.

6.5 Procurement regulations will be adhered to for all tendering.

6.6 The detailed financial implications relating to this proposal are shown in Appendix A of this document.

7. Employee Implications

7.1 Additional highways design and project management resource has also been allocated and appointed to the programme. This will deliver the project at a faster pace and provide additional capacity.

8. Communications Implications

8.1 A new communication and marketing plan has been created, which will implement an integrated approach, targeting a range of stakeholders such as residents, ward councillors and local businesses. The plan aims to raise the profile, achievements and progress of Principal Towns and Local Centres across the borough.

Channels such as social media, website content, email mailers and the media will be used to tell the story of our Principal Towns, the journey so far and what is yet to come providing an opportunity to share and celebrate successes.

9. Promoting Equality & Diversity and Social Inclusion

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed in order to inform the development of this programme.

9.2 The EIA has focused on how this scheme can promote better access inclusion to shops. This will improve access for people from diverse communities, including disabled people and older people.

9.3 The access to some facilities and services is currently limited in the Principal Towns particularly for disabled people. Access visits have been arranged through the 'My Barnsley Too' forum. These results will be fed in to business cases where appropriate.

9.4 Plans have been put in place to encourage grant applicants to consider undergoing an assessment of their general accessibility. This will allow businesses to be listed on the Disabled Go website and participate in schemes

such as Dementia Friendly, Breast Feeding Friendly and a Safe Places, helping to promote a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

10. Consultations

10.1 Community consultations have taken place, which have encouraged residents to have their say and voice their thoughts about improvements that could be made in their local area. This included conversations with the Ward Alliance and community engagement at various events.

Internal consultation has worked with Elected Members in Wombwell, which has also developed the understanding of what could be achieved in each area.

A recent consultation survey has been carried out during Covid-19 utilising social media.

11. Risk Management Issues

11.1 The risks and the mitigation are listed below:

Risk	Mitigation
Expectation that all projects in the action plans will be delivered, rather than ones highlighted for delivery in the first two years.	Expectations will be managed through delivery of an all member briefing and continued communications with elected members and wider community.
Effective delivery of proposed projects.	Mitigated by extension of project timescales and additional resource, including the Project Support Officer and Highways Technician. Established relations now in place with other Council services i.e. Highways and planning.

12. List of Appendices

Appendix A - Financial Implications

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Date: 19th January 2021