

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: PLACE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TITLE: Principal Towns and Local Villages Centres Investment Programme

REPORT TO:	WHITE CABINET
Date of Meeting	23 MARCH 2022
Cabinet Member Portfolio	REGENERATION AND CULTURE
Key Decision	Yes
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

The Principal Towns programme has already demonstrated its innovative and trailblazing approach to place-making across our urban centres and has set the standard for localised place-based regeneration.

This report sets out the ambitious plans for the next stage of the Principal Towns programme which further develops the localised approach to good growth with a shared vision for the role our urban centres can play in the wider economic recovery of the borough.

The investment plans provide a five-year strategy, unique to each area, covering business growth, employment and skills, transport links and the environment, focused on supporting inclusive growth and improving the lives of residents and their communities.

Council Plan priority

BARNSLEY 2030/PLACED BASED INVESTMENT PLAN

Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

1. Cabinet agrees the formal adoption of the Principal Towns and Local Villages Centres investment plans inclusive of a supporting funding strategy that stimulates private sector investment
2. Cabinet notes that following the adoption of the investment plans a delivery programme will be established, supported by an annual monitoring report

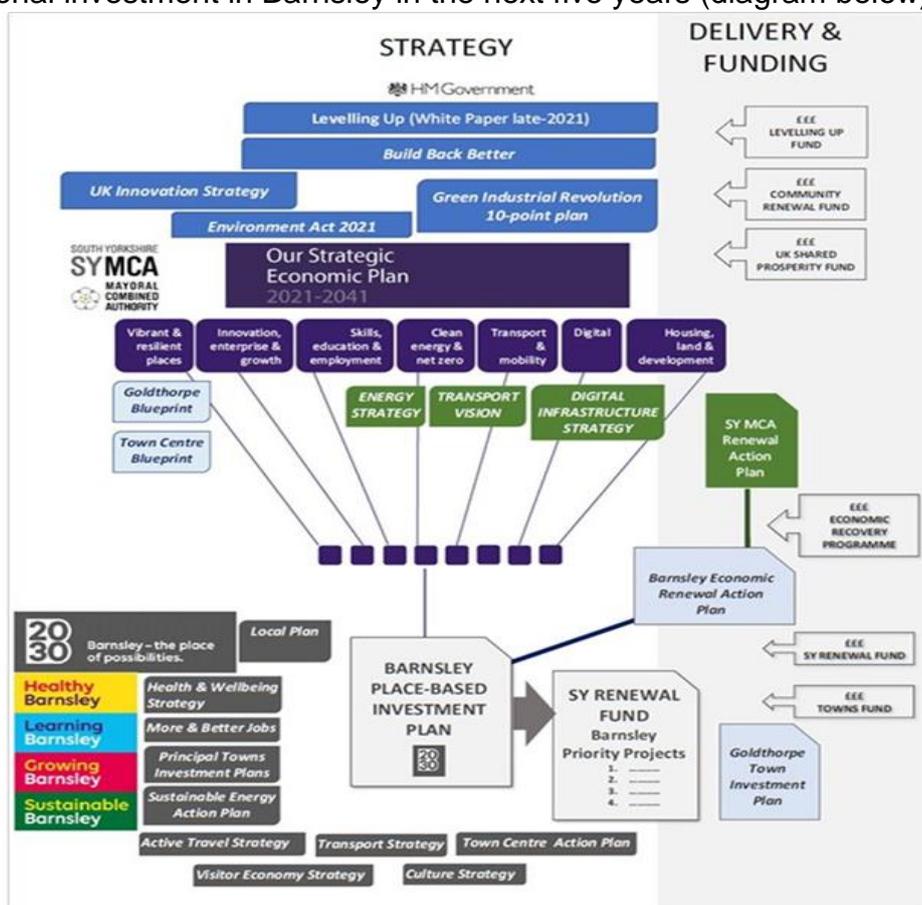
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Principal Towns Investment Programme was established in recognition of the key role of high streets and urban centres across Barnsley. The programme was specifically established to develop initiatives at local level in line with the priority of each area. Principal Towns investment has been focused on ensuring the future vibrancy and economic sustainability of high streets and centres across the borough and the places that they support.

Each of our towns has its own micro-economy, sector strengths, centres for business, work and employment opportunities and moments where communities to come together to celebrate their unique identities. If the economies of our principal towns and urban centres are healthy, this will have a positive impact on the economy of the borough. The programme is now recognised as a national exemplar of best practice as reflected by being shortlisted for the LGC awards 2021.

1.2. Six principal towns and ten local centres are located across the borough – with high streets and social assets which serve our historic communities. Ensuring the economic resilience of these places by growing jobs and businesses beyond retail and enhancing the local environment is a strategic priority.

The Council's Place-based Investment Plan is the framework for regional and national investment in Barnsley in the next five years (diagram below).



It highlights principal towns and local centres as one of our four spatial investment categories; and the Principal Towns investment plans programme is identified as one of the main ways the Council can help deliver the South Yorkshire Combined Authority's ambitions for vibrant and resilient places.

Sustained investment in our Principal Towns and Local Centres is a critical component of delivering our Barnsley 2030 aspirations and ensuring that good growth is realised throughout the borough. A hyper localised focus directly compliments the ongoing investment that is currently taking place in our Town Centre and strategic growth clusters. The development of investment plans is fundamental to the overarching long-term levelling up agenda within Barnsley and will create a set of propositions that will be utilised to prioritise future investment within the borough. This could include national opportunities such as UK Shared Prosperity / Levelling Up / Towns Funding, regional capital gainshare programme and use of local resource within Barnsley.

- 1.3 Our investment plans (attached as Appendix B to G) uniquely reflect local priorities; they are ambitious yet realistic and deliverable. The plans will have a 5 year lifecycle and will be supported with an annual Principal Towns Investment Programme which sets out strategic priorities to be delivered in year and outcomes achieved to date. They bring together initiatives supporting vibrant high streets, SME business support, employment and skills initiatives and capital projects to improve the quality of place and develop/retain local cultural, sporting and social amenities for the benefit of each place. Area Teams have made significant contribution in shaping the plans and they will be integrated into future delivery particularly around mobilising the community to take local ownership and support with sustainability such as maintaining improvements to green spaces. NEETS could be engaged for elements such as fly tipping, litter picking and upskilling for instance through cycle repair and maintenance using good practice examples such as Cycle Penistone. Joint working will be undertaken with various internal and external organisations/groups.
- 1.4. Following the successful approval of the Goldthorpe Town Investment Plan through Stronger Towns Fund a similar approach is needed for the remaining 5 Principal Towns to ensure we have robust investable growth plans to secure the economic future of our localities. Additionally, key priorities for local centres have been identified to include in a separate local centre investment plan.
- 1.5 The initial Phase of the Principal Towns Programme is still currently in delivery but has seen a number of successes many of which are aligned/support local priorities. A summary of high-level outcomes achieved to date include:
 - Development of 5 feasibility studies highlighting short- and long-term priorities
 - 26 projects completed at a value of £800,336
 - 35 schemes currently in delivery at a value of £2,764,336

- Creation of 2 active business forums within Principal Towns helping to drive forward high streets in those areas
- 4 new community groups created
- 5 community art projects
- 14 existing community groups supported
- Over 2,000 volunteer hours delivered equating to a monetary value of £27,000
- £606,500 match funding secured which equates to 8.5% of the overall programme value
- 67% of all spend has directly supported local Barnsley businesses
- 5 Investments Plans in development
- 514 shop front grants completed/agreed, Match Funding £772k, Local Barnsley Spend 78%

The investment in Principal Towns to date has provided a robust platform acting as a robust base for the wider development of investment plans.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Principal Towns

Existing evidence base information such as the PRAGMA retail impact report commissioned by Barnsley Council and the recently adopted Barnsley Economic Renewal Plan, clearly show that High Streets are expected to see significant decline and transformation following the Covid-19 pandemic. Intervention is therefore needed to ensure our local areas remain vibrant, attractive and sustainable for the future. A significant scale of investment in excess of £35m is required to unlock the potential of our urban centres which is realistically outside of the resources available to the Council.

2.2 The robust Investment plans for the 5 remaining Principal Towns (modelled on the Goldthorpe Town Investment Plan), outline local priorities, projects and set out a strategic context to deliver a truly inclusive economy across the Borough. Outline draft plans were completed for each of the remaining 5 Principal Towns. These plans have been further developed based on a robust evidence base and shaped through consultation with elected members and the wider community. Feasibility Studies undertaken as part of the initial phase of Principal Towns and local area-based plans also directly inform the plans.

2.3 The plans are clear, ambitious and directly aligned to the Barnsley 2030 vision including the Healthy Barnsley, Learning Barnsley, Growing Barnsley, Sustainable Barnsley priorities. Our investment plans have been developed through a coproduction model with local residents, businesses and

stakeholders. These plans will enable areas to pursue and secure funding opportunities to deliver the aspirations and reflect the unique local needs of the individual communities and form the backbone of the recently adopted Barnsley Place Based Investment Plan.

2.4 Identified indicative projects within the investment plans are expected to deliver the interventions that best achieve the overarching aspiration of thriving and sustainable high streets. These are different in each of the principal towns and include a mix of the following:

- Development of mini Business Centres inclusive of business support activity
- Repurposing of key buildings/ land where appropriate to deliver good growth and a sense of place
- Diversification of skills, and types of business in the towns
- Transport improvements, connecting people with employment opportunities and with their social networks, including active travel routes
- Cultural celebrations, as well as participation in cultural events and projects
- Employability
- Development of open and welcoming public and green spaces
- Development of amenities and facilities for community use where these are genuinely sustainable and community-owned and managed
- Capacity-building programmes, including developing the skills of community organisers and facilitators, and the community and voluntary sector
- Digital connectivity projects – to tackle digital exclusion and build resident's digital skills.
- Contribution to Zero 40/45 low carbon/sustainability

2.5 This list is not exhaustive but is intended to give a focus to the type of bids the Principal towns Investment Plans are looking to support. We understand that local priorities and opportunities can be subject to change.

2.6 The plans will be 'living' documents that can be adapted as situations dictate and to align with potential funders. As a minimum, the plans themselves will be refreshed on a 3 yearly cycle but the overall programme will be responsive to new and changing priorities at a local level.

2.7 Wider Local Centres

2.7.1 The programme to date has demonstrated how even small levels of investment can have a significant local impact. Principal Towns invested £160k in to Darton Park, this attracted a further £230k external investment and has had an extremely positive impact on residents in relation to open space enhancement, health and wellbeing. The investment in Darton has also acted as a catalyst to secure additional active travel funding.

2.7.2 Likewise the shop front scheme in Local Centres has had a significant impact based on the level of investment particularly in areas such as Mapplewell, this

has also supported businesses both during the pandemic and has been a key component of Covid Recovery.

2.7.3 A separate local investment plan has been developed to cover all other areas outside of the Principal Towns which looks at key priority projects at a ward level to further enhance the local economy and sustainability. This plan will also be a 'living' document that can be adapted as situations dictate.

2.8 Annual Plan/Monitoring Report

Following adoption of the investment plans a detailed delivery programme will be developed. This programme will include an annual monitoring report shared with Cabinet to ensure full visibility of the performance of the programme. This report will detail progress towards targets, outputs, risks and further opportunities. The outcomes achieved will be assessed to ensure alignment with wider ambitions. This will provide transparency and assurance over programme delivery in terms of progress across our Principal Town's and local centres.

2.9 Governance

The governance of the investment plans will mirror the governance arrangements of the initial Principal Towns Programme with a commissioning board overseeing development and approval of business cases.

The Principal Towns Commissioning Board consists of officers from Place, Communities, Highways, Health, Employment and Skills, Finance and externally from Barnsley Chamber. Elected Member portfolio holders for Place and Communities also form part of the Commissioning Board.

The board has provided an effective governance structure in respect of the programme to date.

Additional collaboration will be undertaken with Area Teams to establish a cohesive approach to the development of our local high streets with aligned priorities & plans.

2.10 Summary

Our Principal Towns and Local Centres provide the overarching vehicle to deliver long term growth across Barnsley. Establishing place-based investment plans will directly underpin the 2030 aspirations for Barnsley.

The plans will be a catalyst in creating a supporting annual Principal Towns Investment Programme. They will create a set of propositions that will be utilised to prioritise and secure future investment within Barnsley from a range of sources potentially including;

- National opportunities such as
- UK Shared Prosperity
- Levelling Up
- Towns Fund

- Regional capital gainshare programme
- Use of local resource within Barnsley.

The plans will provide a strategic framework which facilitates the alignment of other strategic place based programmes including activity such as:

- Section 106
- Discover Dearne
- Housing Growth
- CCG
- Sheffield City Region
- Active Travel
- Public Health
- Area Councils

The Principal Town and Local Centres programme provides a unique opportunity to be a key component of the wider growth priorities for Barnsley delivering community focussed interventions to ensure inclusive economy throughout the borough.

2.11 CRF

It is envisaged that investment plans will be live documents providing the ability to respond to innovation in place growth activity. One clear example of this relates to the Community Renewal Fund which sees a new holistic good growth model being piloted in the Central Area of Barnsley. The learning obtained from this pilot can be directly applied to the delivery activity developed through the Principal Towns Investment plans.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director – Finance (S151 Officer).

- 3.1.1 Members are asked to note that £10m in funding has been set aside for the further investment in the Principal Towns programme as part of the 2022/23 Capital Investment Programme.

It is important to note that there is no direct financial ask of the Council to support the recommendations in this report. In addition, for the purposes of clarity, this report is not seeking to draw down any of the £10m in approved funding at this stage.

- 3.1.2 Whilst the future cost of the works associated with the programme is currently estimated to be in the region £35M it is important to note that this a high-level estimate and detailed investment plans will need to be completed and then subject detailed review via the Council's Governance processes.

3.1.3 The potential to lever in funding from external sources to support project delivery remains ongoing. This includes ongoing dialogue with SYMCA to explore the range of funding opportunities to support the programme from the South Yorkshire Renewal fund.

3.1.4 Any future funding asks arising from the programme would need to be considered against the availability of funding at the time and the wider demands on Council finances.

3.2 Legal

There are no immediate legal implications arising directly from this report.

3.3 Equality

A Full Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the initial phase of the scheme this will be updated when projects within the plans are progressed further. Disability access visits have also been conducted on all Principal Towns High Streets.

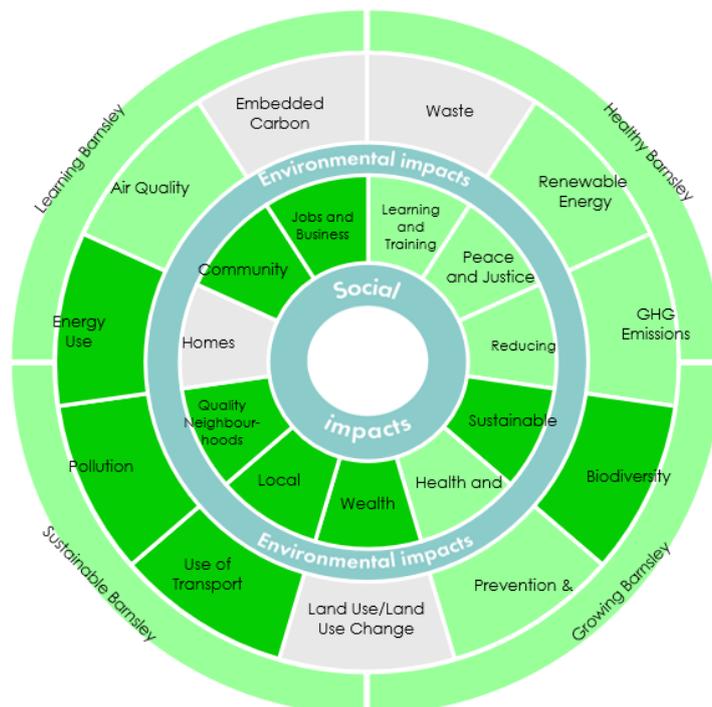
Summary of the key findings:

Consultation will be open and inclusive gaining feedback from all sectors of the community.

high streets in the Principal Towns and Local centres may have increased security and improved lighting therefore making the local community feel safer in the areas

Penistone Town Hall will have disability access issues addressed. There will also be the potential for added promotion of the Dementia Friendly Scheme and Safe Places.

3.4 Sustainability



Overview of the main sustainability impacts:

RENEWABLE ENERGY - the project will seek to facilitate the use of renewable energy particularly in refurbishment of buildings.

USE OF TRANSPORT/AIR QUALITY – The project will develop and promote Active Travel

LOCAL SPEND – As with phase 1 we will seek to utilise local business at every opportunity to maximise local spend

JOBS & BUSINESSES – Training, upskilling, business start ups will all be encouraged and supported throughout the project

3.5 Employee

A subsequent review of the team structure will be carried out to ensure that this ambitious programme is adequately resourced and able to deliver on the ambitions set out in our investment plans.

3.6 Communications

The Principal Towns Programme will be promoted effectively to the interest groups associated with the Principal Towns and Local Centres to engage them with in the programme. The scheme will be supported by a strong communications campaign promoting this exciting growth opportunity to residents and communities.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The investment plans have been developed following stakeholder and public consultation. Initial consultation for priority themes for each of the Investment Plans has been carried out during meetings with Elected Members and Ward Alliances.
- 4.2 Following these discussions, a survey has been created for each Principal Town using the high-level themes from the Investment Plans. These surveys have been used in a wider consultation exercise involving both residents and local businesses from the Principal Towns. The consultation survey (running through to 13th February) has been published on local community group Facebook pages, shared by the relevant area teams on Facebook and Twitter, and also shared on Barnsley Council Facebook and Twitter pages.
- 4.3 Appendix H details the responses received and an extract from the survey showing feedback to 'The Vision' for each area, and preferred options on the themes.
- 4.4 There will be ongoing engagement and collaboration with local elected members, community groups, local businesses, residents in shaping the priorities and interventions in the investment plans. Consultation will continue throughout the programme and will include utilising existing events, Ward Alliances and Social Media platforms.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Option 1: Do Nothing

If the Principal Towns and Local Centres investment programme is not further developed, this would mean that there is no dedicated way of supporting economic regeneration away from the town centre and we would miss the opportunity to build on the foundations laid by the programme to date and losing forward momentum.

5.2 Option 2: Barnsley Council investment

Whilst initial investment has had significant impact on our Principal Towns and Local Centres it has now become clear from indicative costs that a further £35m (approx.) investment is needed to achieve the ambitions of the areas which would require securing national and regional external funding sources. Council investment on its own is not sufficient to realise the growth potential and aspirations of our Principal Towns and Local Centres.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Our Principal Towns and Local Centres provide the overarching vehicle to deliver long term growth across Barnsley. Establishing place-based investment plans will directly underpin the 2030 aspirations for Barnsley.

6.2 The plans will be a catalyst in creating a supporting annual Principal Towns Investment Programme. They will create a set of propositions that will be utilised to prioritise and secure future investment within Barnsley from a range of sources potentially including;

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The Principal Town and Local Centres programme provides a unique opportunity to be a key component of the wider growth priorities for Barnsley

delivering community focussed interventions to ensure inclusive economy throughout the borough.

7. GLOSSARY

N/A

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix A: N/A
- Appendix 1: Cudworth Investment Plan
- Appendix 2 - Hoyland Investment Plan
- Appendix 3 - Penistone Investment Plan
- Appendix 4 - Royston Investment Plan
- Appendix 5 - Wombwell Investment Plan
- Appendix 6 - Borough Wide Priority Projects Investment Plan
- Appendix 7 - Consultation Summary Report

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Details of background papers **MUST** be included]

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	<p>Financial Implications/Consultation</p>  <p>..... (To be signed by senior Financial Services officer where no financial implications)</p> <p><i>9th February 2022</i></p>
Legal consultation & sign off	<p>Jason Field 11/3/22</p>

Report Author: Fiona O'Brien/Teresa Williams
Post: Principal Towns Project Managers
Date: 11 March 2022