

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 27 January 2014
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Economic Growth and Prosperity

Report Title

ALTRINCHAM STRATEGY

Summary

The report seeks the approval of the draft Altrincham Strategy for consultation.

The Strategy sets out the Council's vision and ambitions for the regeneration of Altrincham. The Council is working in partnership with the private and community sectors through Altrincham Forward to maximise the potential of the town centre.

The ambition is to create one of the best market towns in the country and make Altrincham the 'Modern Market Town'.

Recommendation(s)

That the Executive approve the draft Altrincham Strategy for the purposes of consultation.

Delegate responsibility for approving any minor amendments to the Altrincham Strategy to the Corporate Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity prior to the commencement of the public consultation.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Mike Reed (Growth and Masterplan Manager)
Extension: x4924

Background Papers:

None

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The Strategy supports the corporate priority for economic growth and development. The successful implementation of the Strategy will support the delivery of the adopted Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy which identifies Altrincham as the principal town centre in the Borough and a key driver of economic prosperity over the plan period. It will also inform the emerging Altrincham Neighbourhood Plan.
Financial	The consultation exercise will be undertaken in-house and the cost of this will be met from within the Economic Growth/Strategic Planning revenue budget. There is also provision in the existing capital budget for a number of the key schemes to support the development opportunities. A future report will be provided detailing any further financial implications following the consultation exercise.
Legal Implications:	All actions relating to the Strategy, when undertaken, will be done in accordance with legal requirements.
Equality/Diversity Implications	The Strategy will be subject to an EIA assessment to ensure that equality issues have been considered as part of the preparation.
Sustainability Implications	Development within the Strategy area will need to meet current planning policy in relation to energy and sustainable design. The Strategy will also support accessibility improvements to the town centre by public transport and improve provision for both pedestrians and cyclists.
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	The delivery of the Strategy will be undertaken by existing staff resources in Economic Growth and Prosperity, Environment, Transport and Operations and Transformation and Resources in conjunction with Altrincham Forward and other external partners and agencies where appropriate. Information on the Strategy and its delivery will be made available on line and all the documents will be available to access through the Council's web pages. The Strategy will also provide a framework for the Council to realise the potential of its assets within Altrincham.
Risk Management Implications	The Strategy is clear that this document provides a framework for the next 10 years. Risk to delivery will be monitored and updated as required.
Public Health Implications	None.
Health and Safety Implications	None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Altrincham is the principal town centre in Trafford and has been a market town for more than 700 years with a rich and varied history. A combination of competition from out-of-centre retail destinations, the recent economic downturn and the growth of internet shopping have had a negative impact on Altrincham which has seen a decline in the performance of its centre. The Council and Altrincham Forward have recognised that Altrincham Town Centre can do more to maximise its potential and intervention is required to create a unique, attractive and vibrant centre.
- 1.2 The Altrincham Strategy will provide a coherent framework to assist in realising the transformation of Altrincham Town Centre over the next 10 years and support future formal planning guidance for the town.

2.0 Vision and Objectives

- 2.1 The vision for Altrincham Town Centre is as follows:

‘Altrincham will be a unique, attractive and vibrant Modern Market Town and an integral part of people’s everyday lives. It will have its own distinctive identity and be a place people can be proud of. The town centre will be an aspirational place with a wide variety of shops, cafes, bars restaurants, theatres, leisure, cultural and sports facilities alongside a quality residential offer.’

- 2.2 The aim of the Strategy is to create one of the best market towns in the country and make Altrincham the ‘Modern Market Town’. In summary the objectives of the Altrincham Strategy are to:

- § bring forward development that realises the full potential of Altrincham Town Centre as a key economic driver and the Principal Town Centre in Trafford;
- § support development opportunities for physical change;
- § improve Altrincham’s retail offer and increase footfall in the town centre;
- § promote and enhance Altrincham’s visitor and leisure offer;
- § consolidate high street retailers within a defined retail core
- § place Altrincham Market and the surrounding areas at the heart of plans for the future of the town centre;
- § provide opportunities for smaller independent town centre businesses and entrepreneurs;
- § promote an increased town centre residential offer;
- § deliver additional employment activity within the town centre and provide effective linkages between employment areas and other town centre uses;
- § link key town centre destinations through high quality public realm, green infrastructure and improve pedestrian and cycle routes through the town centre;
- § improve access by public transport, and maximise the benefits of Altrincham Interchange; and
- § protect and enhance the historic character of the town centre, especially the Conservation Areas and listed buildings.

3.0 Development Opportunities

- 3.1 The key development opportunity sites have been identified where there is potential for intervention or new development to help address identified challenges and meet the vision and objectives for Altrincham Town Centre.

3.2 The development opportunity sites are:

- § The Market Quarter
- § Altair
- § Stamford Quarter
- § Grafton Centre
- § Altrincham Hospital
- § Altrincham Interchange

4.0 Public Realm and Movement

4.1 Altrincham Forward and Trafford Council commissioned a Public Realm and Movement Strategy for the town centre in 2012. This strategy proposes a series of public realm improvements to create places for people to dwell and to bring activity to areas that are currently lifeless along with enhanced town centre gateways, a de-cluttering of the street scene and creation of active frontages at key destinations.

4.2 Two priority projects are identified within the Public Realm and Movement Strategy, namely the Stamford New Road-Railway Street and Moss Lane-Cross Street-Shaw's Road routes. The Lower Market Place is also identified for early improvement, linked to the delivery of the wider Market Quarter scheme. The delivery of these projects will be fundamental to the future success of Altrincham Town Centre and they interface with the committed development projects of the Altrincham Interchange, Altrincham Hospital and the Market Quarter.

5.0 Other Options

5.1 The Altrincham Strategy will bridge the gap between the strategic policy framework provided by the adopted Trafford Core Strategy and more detailed site specific planning policy.

5.2 The preparation of the Strategy has been informed by a range of documents that have been produced in recent years. These include the Altrincham Forward Town Centre Action Plans, the Altrincham Town Centre Public Realm and Movement Strategy, Conservation Area Appraisals and the Core Strategy. Drawing the outputs from these workstreams together as part of the Strategy will help provide a coherent framework to assist in realising the opportunities which exist within Altrincham Town Centre over the next 10 years.

5.3 The Strategy is intended to bring together various pieces of work that have been undertaken in Altrincham over the past few years into a single coherent document, setting out the Council's vision for the town. A failure to produce an overarching plan for Altrincham Town Centre could result in a lack of clarity in the approach to be taken. The Strategy is not intended to be a planning document but it will provide the framework for future formal planning guidance for the town, whether that is the emerging Altrincham Neighbourhood Plan or the Land Allocations Plan.

6.0 Consultation

6.1 The draft Altrincham Strategy has taken full account of the extensive public consultation and engagement that has taken place in Altrincham over recent years; this includes the 513 responses received as part of the Altrincham Town Centre and Market Survey in summer 2012.

- 6.2 There will be a period of informal consultation with key groups within Altrincham prior to full public consultation. It is then the intention of the Council to undertake a public consultation on the draft Altrincham Strategy from 3 February 2014 for a period of eight weeks concluding on 31 March 2014. The aim of this consultation process will be to involve local people and businesses in the development of the draft Strategy and enable them to shape its priorities, establish the views of the community and other key stakeholders, reconcile conflicting objectives where possible, and identify sensitive issues.
- 6.3 The consultation will open to all to submit their comments. All submissions will be available for public inspection following the closure of the consultation period.
- 6.4 The draft Altrincham Strategy will be made available online and at key venues, such as the Altrincham Library and the Altrincham Town Team office. Key stakeholders will be notified ahead of the commencement of the consultation and information will be provided on the Council website.
- 6.5 The Council will consider all written comments and representations made on the draft Altrincham Strategy and use them to improve the document. Public reports on the consultation and public participation undertaken, representations received and the response to those representations on the draft Strategy will be prepared and presented to relevant meetings of Trafford's elected members. These reports will also be made available via the Council's website.

7.0 Next Steps

- 7.1 The successful implementation of the Altrincham Strategy will help secure the transformation of the town centre.
- 7.2 It is hoped that the next five years will see the delivery of significant regeneration with a number of physical projects delivered in Altrincham Town Centre including:
- § Completion of the new Altrincham Interchange
 - § Completion of the new Altrincham Hospital
 - § Refurbishment of Market House and the covered market
 - § Delivery of the two priority public realm projects and the lower market place improvements
 - § Development of the Altair scheme
 - § Completion of the new Altrincham Library
 - § Redevelopment of the Old Hospital site as part of the Market Quarter
- 7.3 The successful delivery of these key projects will contribute to the achievement of the vision and primary objective to make Altrincham a thriving and successful destination and create the 'Modern Market Town'.

Reasons for Recommendations

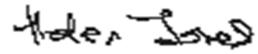
The Executive is asked to approve the draft Altrincham Strategy to enable public consultation to commence.

Key Decision: No.

If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given? N/A.

Finance Officer ClearanceGB.....

Legal Officer ClearanceEO.....



CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE *(electronic)*.....

To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.