

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL



Cabinet *

Report of: Simon Green Executive Director PLACE

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 15th January 2014

Subject: Spital Hill Shop Front Improvement Scheme

Author of Report: Elaine Feeney 01142039568

Summary: The report seeks approval for a proposed Spital Hill Shop Front Improvement Scheme (The Scheme) to be delivered under the Successful Centres Programme.

The Scheme forms an important part of a wider regeneration strategy for Spital Hill District Centre and will contribute to the overall attraction and confidence of the area by improving the street scene, helping boost the image and reputation of the centre and encouraging private investment in shops and housing.

In 2011 a citywide strategy was approved by the Council, to help, support and promote our Centres. Support has primarily been targeted at the worst performing District Centres and this includes Spital Hill.

Spital Hill is the district centre for the surrounding neighbourhoods within Pitsmoor, Burngreave and Fir Vale. The retail offer within the centre is largely made up of small independent shops and restaurants, cafés and takeaways specialising in products that cater for a very diverse community

The Thriving District and Local Centres Strategy highlighted the importance of improving the appearance of the streetscape and public realm within the Spital Hill district centre as well as improving Ellesmere Green as two of the top priorities for the community.

A number of projects are currently being delivered that will help achieve these priorities including:

- The Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 obligation funding from the Tesco development currently being used to deliver public realm improvements to Spital Hill from Tesco up to Ellesmere Green and introducing some public art

- Local Growth funded project enabling the continuation of improvements on and around Ellesmere Green and the adjacent shopping parade creating an attractive new small park and providing for a revived social focus and a space for a community led street market. This will help to draw in footfall from the new superstore past the existing centre and create new custom and confidence in the area.

The Shop Front Scheme will also help to address the appearance through the funding and implementation of physical improvements to the front elevations of existing independent businesses to create an attractive centre that people are proud of and encourage further investment by the existing businesses themselves

Reasons for Recommendations:

The Thriving District Local Centre strategy approved by the North East Community Assembly in 2012 identified the importance of improving the appearance and public realm within the Spital Hill district centre as well as improving Ellesmere Green as two of the top priorities for the community.

The proposed scheme will support independent traders, boost the confidence and image of the centre and help increase footfall to improve the local economy.

Recommendations:

- That the proposed Spital Hill Shop Front Improvement Scheme detailed in this report and set out in the appendix to this report be approved
 - That the Head of Commercial Services be authorised to finalise the procurement processes, evaluate tenders and select the contractor to deliver the works under the above scheme, in accordance with Council procedures
 - That the Director of Commercial Services in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance, and the Director for Finance be authorised to negotiate and agree the terms of appointment with the Contractor selected to deliver the works for the above scheme.
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Background Papers:

- **TDLC Strategy for North East Community Assembly approved 29 March 2012**
- **TDLC Citywide framework approved March 2011**

Category of Report: OPEN

* Delete as appropriate

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Legal Implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Equality of Opportunity Implications
/NO Cleared by: Ian Oldershaw
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES/NO
Economic impact
YES
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
YES/NO
Area(s) affected
<u>Spital Hill District Centre</u>
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Harry Harpham
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
YES/NO
Press release
YES/NO

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report seeks approval for a proposed Spital Hill Shop Front Improvement Scheme (The Scheme) to be delivered under the Successful Centres Programme.
The Scheme forms an important part of a wider regeneration strategy for Spital Hill District Centre and will contribute to the overall attraction and confidence of the area by improving the street scene, helping boost the image and reputation of the centre and encouraging private investment in shops and housing.
- 1.2 In 2011 a citywide strategy was approved by the Council, to help, support and promote our Centres. Support has primarily been targeted at the worst performing District Centres and this includes Spital Hill.
- 1.3 Spital Hill is the district centre for the surrounding neighbourhoods within Pitsmoor, Burngreave and Fir Vale. The retail offer within the centre is largely made up of small independent shops and restaurants, cafés and takeaways specialising in products that cater for a very diverse community
- 1.4 The Thriving District and Local Centres Strategy highlighted the importance of improving the appearance of the streetscape and public realm within the Spital Hill district centre as well as improving Ellesmere Green as two of the top priorities for the community.
- 1.5 A number of projects are currently being delivered that will help achieve these priorities including:
- The Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 obligation funding from the Tesco development currently being used to deliver public realm improvements to Spital Hill from Tesco up to Ellesmere Green and introducing some public art
 - Local Growth funded project enabling the continuation of improvements on and around Ellesmere Green and the adjacent shopping parade creating an attractive new small park and providing for a revived social focus and a space for a community led street market. This will help to draw in footfall from the new superstore past the existing centre and create new custom and confidence in the area.
- 1.6 The Shop Front Scheme will also help to address the appearance through the funding and implementation of physical improvements to the front elevations of existing independent businesses to create an attractive centre that people are proud of and encourage further investment by the existing businesses themselves
- 1.7 The proposed Scheme is just one element of a number of initiatives to be delivered under the successful centres programme for Spital Hill, and the following work has already been carried out to build relationships and support independent trade in the centre:

- Promoting a clean and safe environment. Creating a sense of pride for the local high street through clean up days and Love Where You Live campaign with local businesses acting as champions.
- Regular focus groups with local businesses and community organisations
- Support, training and mentoring for existing and new independent businesses.

2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE

2.1 District and local centres are vital to the attractiveness and success of housing areas and are a key component in why people choose to live or work in an area. They are important hubs for the neighbourhoods they serve, providing facilities and services for everyday needs as well as opportunities for employment

2.2 The Scheme is an important element of the Successful Centres Programme that will help to achieve the Council's vision that all centres will be a source of pride for local people and contribute to their sense of belonging in an area. Local people and businesses will be able to get involved in improving and looking after their centres.

2.3 The Scheme contributes directly to delivering the outcomes of the following Strategic Core objectives:

- **Great Places to Live:** This outcome relates to the activities and assets that make local neighbourhoods attractive, safe, accessible and vibrant, so that Sheffield people feel happy about where they live. Better Centres will help ensure that new homes are built more quickly to meet local housing needs and aspirations, and that empty properties are brought back into use.
- **Competitive City:** This outcome area is reflected by the work we do to grow the local economy with more jobs and businesses (and make the city more successful). The improvements proposed by this Scheme will help Spital Hill to be seen as a good place to do business with an attractive shopping area where investors choose to invest in land and premises. Increased confidence in the area will also help encourage new housing development on adjacent vacant sites.
- **Business Friendly:** The Council is committed to support for and partnership with local businesses to maximise employment and growth through listening and responding. Through the Scheme we will be able improve the image of Spital Hill and encourage and boost confidence in the area with a view to promoting viable and sustainable business. We will also be working with traders to look at other non-financial types of business support through the Enterprise Team.

3.0 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

3.1 The scheme will deliver improvements to the front elevations of existing independent businesses which will create an attractive centre that people are proud of and encourage further investment by the existing businesses themselves.

3.2 Assisting with improving the appearance and environment within the centre will also help attract new and expanding businesses. More businesses will attract more money to local economy, fill up the empty vacant units, increase local satisfaction with the range and variety of shopping on offer and ultimately attract more investment.

3.3 There is a clear link between the attractiveness of Centres and the value and desirability of new homes- the vitality of the centre is often a reflection of the vitality of the adjacent housing market. Therefore vacant housing sites surrounding the centre could potentially become a more attractive investment

3.4 This scheme forms part of a larger framework of regeneration being carried out in the area by several departments across the Council, which includes:

- Public Realm improvements: funded through Tesco section 106 obligations
- Improvements to Ellesmere Green: funded by Local Growth Fund
- Public Art: funded through Tesco section 106 obligations
- Community Buildings: Community Investment Plan (Corporate asset rationalisation)
- Lyon Works: funded through Local Growth Fund Stuck Sites Programme.
- Walk Boost: funded through Local Sustainable Transport Fund
- Locality Management Work: Local members have a ward pot of £18,000

4.0 PROPOSALS IN DETAIL

4.1 Back ground

4.1.1 The Thriving District Local Centres Strategy was produced in 2011 and identified key themes and priorities to support and develop a network of successful Centres across the city, based on extensive city wide consultation with local residents and business about what needed to change in their area.

4.1.2 Through this strategy the Council is showing strong city leadership, using modest funds as a catalyst to stimulate private sector investment in Centres, and bringing together untapped resources in local partners such as traders and voluntary organisations to improve the areas in which they live and work.

4.1.3 In 2012, a business case was approved using funding from the Local Growth Fund to fund a Successful Centres Programme and Spital Hill was one of 5 centres identified for intervention. The business case for Spital Hill

included the delivery of a shop front improvement scheme in Spital Hill as part of a range on initiatives to help revitalise the centre.

- 4.1.4 Consultation on the proposed scheme has taken place with local stakeholders, local ward members, and independent traders initially in Spring 2012. This was carried out in the form of information letters, member briefings and public meetings. The scheme proved to be very popular with the majority of shop owners expressing an interest.

4.2 Spital Hill Shop Front Improvement Scheme

- 4.2.1 The aim of the Scheme is to improve the image of the area, creating conditions that will attract future investment and boost trader confidence.

The proposed Scheme will :-

- Improve the front elevations of the shops,
- Improve the street scene,
- Consolidate the other public sector investment in the area:
- Increase confidence in the area and encourage other private investment increasing potential job opportunities

- 4.2.2 To be eligible for inclusion in the Scheme, and in line with the policy previously approved for the Darnall Shop Front Improvement Scheme, the properties must be either occupied by an independent Trader operating from that property, or be vacant , the appearance of which is detrimental to the Street Scene and located within the Scheme designated area. The details of the Scheme criteria and eligibility, including the designated area, are detailed in the policy set out in the appendix to the report.

- 4.2.3 In order for the scheme to be successful, the majority of Independent owners (90%) need to participate so that a sufficient impact can be made on the street scene. In the current economic climate and the decline of Spital Hill Centre, owners will find it difficult to make substantial payments to fund the whole costs of shop front improvements. It is proposed that 100% assistance be granted to meet the costs up to the basic level of improvements.

- 4.2.4 To encourage participation, we are involving traders in the development of the scheme through regular focus group meetings which have been developed over the last 12 months. This work has created a lasting legacy in the area, where the traders alongside local community organisations can work together to help themselves through carrying out small scale social initiatives to help increase footfall and trade.

- 4.2.5 In addition to the capital works being delivered, an engagement package with independent traders has been developed based on successful models from other District Centre projects across the city. This package of support has been delivered over the last 12 months which includes:

- Promoting a clean and safe environment. Creating a sense of pride for the local high street through clean up days and Love Where You Live campaign with local businesses acting as champions.
- Regular focus groups with local businesses and community organisations
- Support, training and mentoring for existing and new independent businesses.

4.2.6

The improvement works are to be limited to the front elevations and gables only. Whilst they will be tailored to the needs of each particular property and agreed with the shop owner, the scope of work will be limited to external improvements, which will include:

- Repointing
- Repair of architectural features
- Brick cleaning
- Other Elevation Treatment
- New signage
- Painting existing timber
- Painting of wastepipes.

- 4.2.7 The Council's Capital Delivery Service have been commissioned to manage the contract and the properties in the scheme will be grouped into phases which will ensure that works are carried out as efficiently as possible and enable the greatest impact

4.3 Financial Implications

- 4.3.1 Funding for the Scheme from the Local Growth Fund has been secured as part of the Successful Centres Programme The total funding available is £300,000.

This is to cover delivery of the project and also any professional and project management fees. The estimated fees are around 10% of the project at £30,000, with the remaining £270,000 on actual project delivery.

- 4.3.2 It is proposed that 100% assistance be granted to meet the costs up to a maximum of £4,500 per property for the basic level of improvements and to encourage full participation into the scheme to achieve maximum impact. Initial feasibility work has indicated that works are achievable within this limit
- 4.3.3 The scheme will be developed, procured and managed by Sheffield Council as one contract in order to ensure quality, consistency and take advantage of any economies of scale. Where possible, and in consultation with the Principle Quantity Surveyor, Director of Commercial Services, Director of Legal and Governance and the Director for Finance, a local contractor will be procured to carry out the works.

- 4.3.4 On completion of works to each property, the Successful Centres Team, Capital Delivery Service and the Clerk of Works will sign off the works. Further information will be detailed within the Procurement strategy which is currently being developed.

4.4 Legal Implications

- 4.4.1 The Localism Act 2011 provides local authorities with a “general power of competence” which enables them to do anything that an individual can do as long as the proposed action is not specifically prohibited.
- 4.4.2 A purpose of the Act is to enable local authorities to work in innovative ways to develop services that meet local need.
- 4.4.3 The proposed Scheme falls within the general power of competence. In addition, there is no specific statutory prohibition, preventing the Council from implementing the proposed Scheme. The Council therefore is empowered to produce, implement and administer the Scheme as detailed in this report and set out in the appendix .

4.5 Equality Implications

- 4.5.1 Fundamentally this proposal is equality neutral affecting all local people equally regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. However, it should prove particularly positive for the VCF sector, for financial inclusion and community cohesion. Successful centres across the city are key to developing Great Places to Live, helping to sustain communities, enhancing the competitiveness of the city’s economy and supporting local jobs/businesses. No negative equality impacts have been identified

5.0 Risks

- 5.1 When carrying out works to private commercial properties there may be a possibility of claims being submitted arising from damage caused by contractors. The contractor will be expected to keep detailed photographic records of the condition of the properties before works commence, reducing the risk of successful claims. Damage due to contractor negligence will be met by the Contractor
- 5.2 Consideration will also need to be given to the length of the defect period, given the superficial (facelift) nature of the works. The Council’s Capital Delivery Service who will manage the contract will implement a 6 month defect period which is relevant to the works being carried out.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Do nothing – This would mean leaving any improvement to the Market. However, the current economic climate is not conducive to this, as there

is already widespread market failure and there is strong risk of Spital Hill District Centre falling into further decline.

- 6.2 As proposed –the Scheme aims to deliver a project that will deliver the agreed objectives for Spital Hill District Centre outlined in the Successful Centres Strategy to improve the viability, use and appearance of the centre.
- 6.3 Another option is a scheme providing loans to owners to carry out the shop front improvements. - In order for the scheme to be successful, the majority of independent traders need to participate so that a sufficient impact can be made on the street scene. In the current economic climate, owners will find it difficult to make substantial payments to fund the whole costs of shop front improvements.

7.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Successful Centres strategy approved by the North East Community Assembly in 2012 identified the importance of improving the appearance of the streetscape and public realm within the Spital Hill district centre as well as improving Ellesmere Green as two of the top priorities for the community.
- 7.2 The proposed scheme will support independent traders, and help to boost the confidence and image of the centre, increase footfall to improve the local economy.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the proposed Shop Front Improvement Scheme detailed in this report and set out in the appendix to this report be approved
- That the Head of Commercial Services be authorised to finalise the procurement processes, evaluate tenders and select the contractor to deliver the works under the above scheme, in accordance with Council procedures
- That the Director of Commercial Services, in consultation with the Director of Legal And Governance and the Director for Finance be authorised to negotiate and agree the terms of appointment with the Contractor selected to deliver the works for the above scheme.

Author: Elaine Feeney
Job Title: Project Officer
Date

Shop Front Improvement Scheme Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Shop Front Improvement Scheme (the Scheme) forms a part of a programme of activities that will deliver the already approved Successful Centres Strategy (previously known as Thriving District and Local Centres) improving the viability, use and appearance of our neighbourhood centres to establish a successful and thriving network of centres across the city .
- 1.2 The primary objectives for the wider programme include:
- Attracting more private sector investment in neighbourhood Centres, particularly those with sites available for housing development or significant numbers of empties
 - Improving the economic health of Centres
 - Improving the quality of life and place within the Centres
- 1.3 A network of successful centres across the city is a key part of developing Great Places to Live, helping to sustain communities, enhancing the competitiveness of the city's economy and supporting local jobs/businesses.
- 1.4 The aim of the Scheme is to improve the image of the Designated Area, creating conditions that will attract future investment and boost trader confidence. This scheme will :-
- Improve the front elevations of the shops,
 - Improve the street scene,
 - Consolidate the other public sector investment in the area:
 - Increase confidence and encourage other private investment increasing potential job opportunities

2. Circumstances and Eligibility

- 2.1 The Council will only consider an Application for a Shop Front Improvement Assistance (Assistance) in respect of a Property where it is satisfied:-
- The Property is a Shop
 - The Shop is located in the in the Designated Area
 - The external condition of the Shop is detrimental to the street scene image.
 - That Assistance has not previously been provided in respect of the Shop”.
 - The applicant is a Trader operating from the Shop and has completed a Scheme Consent Form
 - The Applicant has an Owners Interest in the Shop

- Everyone with an Owners Interest in the Shop has completed a Scheme Consent Form
 - The Shop is not part of a national or international chain of shops. Where the Shop is a franchise of a national or international chain of shops, it will be treated as being part of a national or international chain of shops.
 - Once the Works are completed the occupation of the property will be sustainable.
 - The Applicant does not have an Outstanding Debt to the Council
- 2.2 The purpose for which Assistance may be approved is:
- To fund works to improve the appearance of the entire elevation of which the shop front forms a part.
- 2.3 The Council may only approve Assistance where:-
- It has specified the works to be undertaken (the Works)
 - It is satisfied the Shop will be occupied or capable of occupation and use.
- 2.5 The Council may approve an Application from an Applicant who is not a Trader operating from the Shop where the Shop is vacant and the Council is satisfied that the condition of the Shop is such that improvements would contribute to the aims and objectives of the Scheme.
- 2.6 Within the above criteria for eligibility, priority for awarding Assistance will be determined having regard to:
- the Council's available resources
 - the cost of carrying out the Works
 - the location and proportion of shops wishing to participate in the scheme and the impact to be made.
- 2.7 The Council will adopt a phased approach to the Scheme. In respect of individual phases, Assistance will only be approved within that phase where there is at least an 80% take up of the Scheme within the phase

3. The Assistance

- 3.1 The Assistance will be a maximum of 100% of the cost of the Works. The amount of Assistance will vary according to the extent of the work agreed for each property.
- Any work in addition to or exceeding the Works will be funded directly by the Applicant.
- 3.2 The maximum amount of Assistance that can be paid is £5000 per Shop
- 3.3 Where the Applicant is eligible for Assistance the Council shall decide the amount to be approved. When making this decision regard will be had to the following: -
- the estimated cost of the Works
 - any other relevant circumstances

4. Payment of Assistance

- 4.1 Payment of the Assistance will be made on completion of the Works to the satisfaction of the Council. Payment will be made direct to the contractor procured by the Council carrying out the Works.

5. Conditions

- 5.1 Assistance may only be provided in respect of a Shop once. Where Assistance has been provided in respect of a Shop any further Applications will not be approved
- 5.2 Following completion of the works, The Applicant shall maintain the improvements to the Shop arising the Works”.

6. Definitions

- 6.1 This section details specific definitions of certain terms used in the Scheme
- 6.2 “Applicant” means a person who has made an Application
- 6.3 “Application” means an application for Assistance
- 6.4 “Assistance” means assistance provided by the Council under the Scheme.
- 6.5 “Designated Area” means the area shown on the plan and outlined in red, set out in the appendix to this document.
- 6.6 “Owner’s Interest” shall mean in relation to any property:-
- an estate in fee simple absolute in possession, or
 - a term of years absolute.
- 6.7 “Property” means the property which is the subject of the application for Assistance.
- 6.8 “Shop” shall mean a Property within the Designated Area which use is for a business purpose falling within one or more of the descriptions of use under classes A1, A3, A4 and A5 of Part 1 of the Schedule to The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987
- 6.9 “Outstanding Debt to the Council” means any liability of the Applicant which is owed to the Council and is outstanding when the Applicants Application is being considered. However, where the debt relates to arrangements where the liability is being discharged by instalment, for example council tax and business rates, and the Applicant is making payment of those instalments on time and in accordance with those arrangements, the debt will not be treated as an Outstanding Debt to the Council. Where the Applicant is in breach of those arrangements, resulting in the full debt being payable immediately, the Applicant will be treated as having a Debt Outstanding to the Council.

7. Spital Hill Shop Frontage Improvement Scheme – Boundary Line

