



## **North Devon Council**

Report Date: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Topic: High Street Task Force Support

Report by: Head of Place Property and Regeneration

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In February 2022, The High Street Task Force announced that 68 Local authorities would receive a package of expert advice and support, helping to deliver long term transformation to towns and cities in England.
- 1.2 North Devon was announced as one of those Local Authorities
- 1.3 North Devon Council had to confirm acceptance of the support in March this year
- 1.4 In a webinar held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, we have now been advised that we need to nominate a location for this support.
- 1.5 When considering which place to support, the Task Force suggest that we consider the Story so far (in an area), a focused area, need, capacity and the ongoing story. Building on existing work i.e. Future High Street Fund applicants etc.
- 1.6 Members therefore may choose to build on the existing project already approved within Barnstaple following the Future High Street funding and further enhance the successful outcomes from this project or Members may wish to choose an alternative town location within North Devon to receive the support.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members to confirm the town centre/high street that they would wish to nominate

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. The High Street Task Force require us to nominate our location by the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

### **4. REPORT**

- 4.1 The High Street Task Force is 'an alliance of placemaking experts supporting communities and local government to transform their high streets.'
- 4.2 The offer is one of support rather than direct funding to boost local authority capacity, build sustainable place-making skills, provide an opportunity for information and data sharing and to co-ordinate a national approach.
- 4.3 The support suggest a focus on one of the following:



Repositioning: knowing your town, using relevant data and information to develop a collaborative, inspiring vision that achieves change.

Reinventing: activate and animate the town, diversify its attractions. Multifunctional places offer different things (at different times) to draw in footfall and spend

Rebranding: establishing an identity and sense of place that can engender pride, commitment and attachment and communicating this across the whole community

Restructuring: putting in place the capacity, leadership and partnerships to deliver change. And/or large-scale spatial change to transform your centre

#### 4.4 The support includes;

A visit from High Streets Task Force Experts to meet local stakeholders and place leaders, learn about your plans, and help understand challenges and opportunities.

An expert report, including a 'prescription' for HSFT support

A road map

Mentoring

A Place programme over 3 workshops supported by Design Council experts.

#### 4.5 The support is until June 2024.

4.6 When considering which place to support, the Task Force suggest that we consider the Story so far (in an area), a focused area, need, capacity and the ongoing story. Building on existing work i.e. Future High Street Fund applicants etc.

4.7 Areas should be meaningful and manageable i.e. a high street or town centre core area.

4.8 The Task Force confirm that work should not be paused in advance of support but that the experts will wrap around our plans.

4.9 The presentation slides provided by the Task Force can be found here:

[Redefining the High Street \(highstreettaskforce.org.uk\)](https://highstreettaskforce.org.uk)

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. This work would support our existing resources and seek to build capacity.



## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1 No specific implications. Any emerging projects would need to be supported by such an assessment.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1 No specific implications. Any emerging projects would need to be supported by such an assessment.

## 8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda – would hope to support this work

8.1.2. Improving customer focus – would support this work

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development – would support this agenda

## 9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Article of Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph a

9.2. Delegated

## 10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The High Street Task Force website.

## 12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: SJ Mackenzie-Shapland Head of Place, Property and Regeneration.