

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 29.03.2018

Subject: Llanelli Town Centre - Regeneration

Purpose: For information

To consider and comment on the following issues:

The report is presented to members for information only.

Reasons:

Members have requested an update on the regeneration activity in Llanelli Town Centre.

The report is accompanied by a presentation from officers which will provide an overview of the regeneration activity carried out through the Opportunity Street programme and further information on support available to businesses within Llanelli.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Directorate

Name of Head of Service:

Wendy Walters

Report Author:

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Designations:

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1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

Background

This report provides an update for members on the Regeneration activity in Llanelli Town centre, and aligns itself to the work of the Llanelli Town Centre Task Force. The Taskforce has been operating for the past two years and aims to stimulate growth and investment by supporting traders, reducing the number of vacant commercial properties, boosting business, promoting the town centre as a great place to live, work, shop and visit, ensuring that the town is clean and accessible to all and increasing footfall.

Opportunity Street

At its meeting on 9th March 2015, Executive Board endorsed the delivery of the Opportunity Street programme in accord with Welsh Government approval. The endorsement supported the acquisition of premises in the town centre for its regeneration for commercial and residential purposes.

The Opportunity Street project focused on the principles of preventing poverty and helping people out of poverty. A focus was made on acquiring commercial space to allow for a diverse tenure mix on the high street including flexible retail space, business start-ups, training, social enterprises and service provision.

Over the duration of the project properties were acquired and works to refurbish rundown vacant properties started. In total 15 properties and 1 development site have been acquired. In total the programme cost £4,522,894. Of which Welsh Government provided £2,422,669 grant funding which was supported by contributions from Carmarthenshire County Council of £1,610,926 capital funding, £440,000 Housing Revenue Account, and £49,299 revenue funding.

On completion of the project 20 jobs had been accommodated, 3 enterprises accommodated, 382 m2 of business premises had been created, 4 housing units created, 2 jobs created, 20 individuals had completed employment related courses, 8 individuals had gained employment related qualifications and 52 economically inactive individuals engaged with the project.

Town Centre Loan Scheme

Carmarthenshire County Council has been successful in securing circa £1.168m from Welsh Government in the form of a repayable loan. The loan is available to help fund the private sector to bring back into economic use redundant buildings within the town. To date applications have been invited from the private sector to apply for the loan and we are currently progressing a number of leads within the town.

A further £895,000 has recently been secured and further applications will be invited to apply for the funding in the Spring 2018. The Town Centre Loan scheme run by Carmarthenshire County Council is based on 75% of eligible costs and it is expected that this offer will lever significant private sector investment in the town and bring a number of derelict properties back into an economic and viable use.

Carmarthenshire Business Start Up Grant & Carmarthenshire Business Growth Fund

The aim of the Start Up Fund is to support the creation of new businesses in the county, resulting directly in the creation of jobs, thus improving the local economy.

The fund will support new entrepreneurs with their business start-up aspirations by providing financial contribution towards capital expenditure projects and/or specialist revenue expenditure, which will either enable further capital investment projects or a specific business start-up proposal which may involve high revenue costs.

- Grants available between £1,000 and £10,000.
- Each grant award will be based on 50% of eligible costs OR a maximum of £5000 per job created whichever is the lesser.
- The minimum grant award is £1000 (based on at least one new job created) and the maximum grant award per business is £10,000 (based on at least 2 jobs being created)

The aim of the Carmarthenshire Business Growth Fund is to support local businesses and Inward investors to grow and prosper, resulting directly in the creation of jobs throughout the County. This fund is based on the same intervention and criteria as the Start-up Fund.

Carmarthenshire Transformational Commercial Property Development Fund(CTCPDF)

The CTCPDF is a County wide grant, which consists of a total grant allocation of £1.5 million. Applications are invited from April 2018 and the grant is to aid the development of empty space into commercial or office uses. It is based on gap funding and the grant rate is 45% of total eligible project costs, with a maximum grant amount of £750,000 whichever is lesser.

Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRIP)

The Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRIP) 2018-2021 is an emerging Welsh Government initiative to continue on the success made by the previous Vibrant And Viable Programme. Within Carmarthenshire the programme will focus on the more deprived areas of Llanelli and Ammanford, which is in line with the programmes objectives. The focus of the fund will primarily be upon economic regeneration, job creation, enhancing skills and employability and creating the right environment for businesses to grow and thrive.

All the above initiatives have a part to play in the future prosperity of the Llanelli town centre. We will be looking to build upon the momentum made through the Opportunity Street programme as the emerging Welsh Government TRIP initiative is launched. Our aim will be to encourage economic regeneration, reducing the number of vacant units, job creation, and enhancing skills.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	NO
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Wendy Walters

Director of Regeneration and Policy

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES

2. Legal

All statutory requirements will be followed and consents secured as projects are developed.

7. Physical Assets

The Capital programme includes an allocation from Council funds to match fund the Welsh Government under the Carmarthenshire town initiative.

7. Physical Assets

Properties acquired through the Opportunity Street programme are included within the Council's property portfolio.

Ongoing management of these properties is undertaken by the Regeneration Property team. Any disposal would consider future maintenance of the asset(s) is under taken by a third party.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Wendy Walters

Director of Regeneration and Policy

1. Scrutiny Committee

N/a

2. Local Member(s)

Delivery teams continue to liaise closely with Local Members on a project-by-project basis

3. Community / Town Council

Delivery teams continue to liaise closely with Local Members on a project-by-project basis

4. Relevant Partners

N/a

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/a

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection