

<b>Briefing Note of:</b>	<b>Head of Economic Prosperity</b>
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**PROMOTING PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****18 MARCH, 2020****BRIEFING NOTE OF WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW CANNOCK TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND OCCUPANCY RATES REVIEW****1 Purpose of Briefing note**

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to provide Members with details of the work carried out by the Working Group and outline recommendations of the Working Group.

**2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Committee on 3<sup>RD</sup> July 2019 Members agreed to review Cannock town centre and specifically to understand more about why occupancy rates were low.
- 2.2 A separate smaller group of Members was established forming a Working Group to carry out the review.

**3 Detail**

- 3.1 A Working Group of seven Members chaired by Cllr Phil Hewitt was established to carry out the review and to then bring its findings back to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 The Working Group met on three formal occasions. Agendas, papers and minutes are included as appendices to this Briefing Note.
- 3.4 Representatives from Environmental Services were invited to attend the meeting of the Working Group on 9 January 2020. The representatives discussed with the Working Group car parking issues in Cannock Town Centre that covered:
- Payment Options for Car Parking
  - Car Parking Charges and Rationale
- 3.5 Representatives from local agents and property owners were invited to attend the meeting of the Working Group on 25 February 2020 to give an overview as to why vacancy rates were so high in Cannock Town Centre.

- 3.6 The Working Group also invited a representative from the Cannock Town Centre Partnership (CTCP) to attend the meeting of the Working Group on 25 February 2020 and to discuss the actions being taken by the Partnership to increase footfall in Cannock Town Centre.
- 3.7 A Decision was taken by the Working Group to not focus on Anti- Social Behaviour and Drug activity as Officers advised that this was within the remit of the Community Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.8 The Working Group agreed that that the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee should be asked to consider the following in regard to **car parking issues**:
- (A) To endorse and support the Cabinet report outlining the proposal to improve car parks, specifically to install new ticket machines that provide alternative payment methods, and that this should be applied to all Pay and Display Car parks across the District.
- (B) The facility to 'pay by phone' also be supported and rolled out as soon as practicable.
- 3.9 The Working Group also agreed that the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee should be asked to consider the following in regard to improving the vibrancy of the town centre, specifically with a view to increasing occupancy rates and footfall:
- (A) The Working Group supported the Cabinet report outlining the proposals for spending approximately £100,000 on environmental improvements in Cannock Town Centre.
- (B) The need to address the quality of "mothballing" in terms of the multi storey car park. It was noted that it was necessary to ensure the site be made safe and secure but also old signs should be removed and replaced with signs that gave a positive idea of any future proposals and a decent barrier should be provided.
- (C) In view of the perceived negative impact of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet (MGDO) on Cannock Town Centre; the Working Group considered it was important to ensure that there was enough information available in the public arena outlining the reality with the MGDO. Better marketing of the Designer Outlet should be provided and this should show the positives of what it will bring to the town centre; including the plans for providing a bus link to and from the Outlet to encourage visits into the town centre.
- (D) That consideration be given to the location of the Friday street market and the positioning of the stalls as part of the re-tendering process to appoint a street market operator. In particular consideration be given to more stalls being positioned in Market Square and to the better placement of stalls in Market Hall Street as it was considered they were too close to the shop fronts.
- (E) That consideration be given to the feasibility and costing of providing free parking on the days the Town Centre Partnership had events arranged in

Cannock Town Centre.

(F) The need to be flexible regarding the types of units within any redevelopment scheme so that retail, leisure and residential units were all provided if possible.

**4 Implications (if applicable)**

4.1 Not applicable

**5 Appendices**

Appendix 1	Agenda – Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Occupancy Rates) 15.10.19
Appendix 2	Minutes - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Occupancy Rates) 15.10.19
Appendix 4	Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Occupancy Rates) 9.1.2020
Appendix 5	Minutes - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Occupancy Rates) 9.1.2020
Appendix 6	Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Occupancy Rates) 25.2.2020
Appendix 7	Minutes- Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Occupancy Rates) 25.2.2020

**Background Papers**

None