Executive Report
Ward(s) affected: Friary and St Nicolas, Holy Trinity
Report of Interim Director of Development
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Town Centre Masterplan

Executive Summary
At its meeting on 25 November 2014, the Executive approved expenditure to prepare a Town Centre Masterplan. Allies and Morison Urban Practitioners in conjunction with ARUP providing flooding and vehicle movement input and Bilfinger GVA providing property advice were appointed to prepare the plan.

The former Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee reviewed the draft Town Centre Masterplan on 8 September 2015, and their comments were reflected in the draft masterplan approved by the Executive on 29 September 2015 for public consultation.

Extensive consultation took place from 2 October to 16 November 2015 with positive results that are summarised in section 4.

The Masterplan is not a planning document however, those sites that meet the evidence base for delivery will be included in the next version of the Local Plan. The Masterplan will be used as a guide for the GBC Major Projects team’s ongoing work. The GBC Major Projects team will act as a catalyst for preparing site specific development briefs, discussing opportunities with land owners and developers and utilising GBC assets in the Town to the benefit of the community. The team will also lead on responding to the key feedback comments on vehicular movements and the location of buses.

Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive approves the Town Centre Masterplan prepared by Allies & Morrison and the extensive consultation as a guide for the ongoing work of the GBC Major Projects team who will, where appropriate, present proposals in a manner that is compatible with the Local Plan and planning requirements.

Reason for Recommendation:
To assist the work of the GBC Major Projects team to enable the Town to develop in a structured way to provide housing, commercial, retail and leisure opportunities with first class public realm and transport.
1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive’s approval of the Town Centre Masterplan prepared by Allies & Morrison as a guide, in conjunction with the comments received from the extensive consultation, for the work of the Major Projects team.

2. Strategic Priorities

2.1 The master planning of the Town Centre to assist the work of the GBC Major Projects team will enable infrastructure to be provided in a coherent planned way, this will drive the economy forward promoting the Town for business, providing jobs, new homes and public realm for the benefit of all.

3. Background

3.1 The 2003 Local Plan sets out the development profile for the Town Centre. The needs of all who use the Town Centre from businesses to local residents have changed and there is the need to prepare a Masterplan to provide the guidance for the development of the Town. Many of our surrounding towns have undergone redevelopment and are providing a greater challenge to the ongoing economic prosperity of Guildford.

3.2 To address these key issues and the requirement to provide strong input to the Local Plan process, Allies & Morrison Urban Practitioners (AM) were appointed to prepare a draft Masterplan for consultation with the Guildford Community. This plan has built on the Guildford Vision, and incorporated discussions with major land owners and key stakeholders. The key development strategies are:

- Open up the River Wey,
- Create more pedestrian only zones and public areas,
- Improve the traffic flow through the Town.
- Provide development sites in the Town for housing, business, retail and leisure

AM were assisted by Arup who provided flood risk and transport advice and Bilfinger GVA who provided specialist commercial property viability and delivery advice.

3.4 AM prepared a draft Town Centre Masterplan which the Executive approved for consultation with businesses and community. The response to the AM Masterplan was positive (details set out in paragraph 4 below).

3.5 The Masterplan will not be used for determining planning applications. Those elements of the draft Town Centre Masterplan that meet criteria will be included in the 2016 Local Plan process.

3.6 The Masterplan will form the basis of the work stream for the Major Projects delivery team that will review in detail the proposed developments set out in the Masterplan taking full account of the issues related to flood management, traffic...
management, public realm and the objectives as set out in paragraph 3.2 above. Site development briefs will be prepared where appropriate.

3.7 The Executive is requested to approve:

(a) the AM Masterplan as a guide for the work of the Major Projects team; and

(b) the publication of the Consultation Report prepared by AM on the Draft TCMP consultation process Chapters 1 through to 4.

4. Consultations

4.1 The AM Draft Town Centre Masterplan was extensively consulted on with members of the Executive, ward councillors, business and the local community. Over 500 people attended the exhibitions held in the Borough, the web site received 13,770 hits, 216 responses were received to the online questionnaire with 65 very detailed written submissions. A video was prepared on the Town Centre Masterplan which received 6,723 viewings through You Tube and the GBC website.

4.2 Appendix 1 provides details of the responses and summarises them under:

- Riverside
- Public Transport
- University Research Park, Cathedral
- Vehicular flows and traffic
- Wider Issues
- Preserving Guildford

The response to the proposals was very favourable with three principal areas for concern:

- Traffic flows and were the proposed scenarios on traffic robust?
- The need for a bus interchange was strongly requested
- Concern as to deliverability as ‘nothing happens in Guildford’

4.3 The key underlying message was review the traffic proposals and then proceed with the masterplan.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no implications

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.
7. **Legal Implications**

7.1 Whilst there are no specific statutory requirements, the Council will work within the relevant property, infrastructure and development legislation relating to Housing, Planning and Transport.

8. **Human Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no Human Resource implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

9. **Summary of Options**

9.1 Not to give any weight to the Masterplan and A&M report and let the Local Plan and planning policy be the only guides for the work of the Major Projects delivery team. The 'do nothing' option (not recommended).

9.2 To approve the AM report and consultation report as a guide for the work of the Major Projects Delivery Team. The recommended option.

10. **Conclusion**

10.1 To meet the requirements of certainty for Local Plan purposes, it is correct to only include those elements of the Town Centre Masterplan that meet the criteria necessary for appearing in the next version of the Local Plan. The remainder of the Masterplan is to act as a guide for the work of the GBC Major Projects Delivery Team. They will play a key role acting as the catalyst to bring sites, landowners and developers together, including the preparation of site specific development briefs, where appropriate.

11. **Background Papers**

Town Centre Masterplan documents available at: [http://www.guildford.gov.uk/tcmp](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/tcmp)


12. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Guildford Town Centre and Hinterland Consultation Report Chapters 1 through to 4.