

Report of the Director of Economy and Place

**Enhancing Economic Growth for Secondary Shopping Areas**

**Summary**

1. The draft Local Plan for York defines two secondary shopping areas in York on Acomb Front Street and The Village, Haxby. A programme to enhance economic growth in these areas was agreed by Executive decision in 2017 and a capital budget of £100,000 was set aside for this purpose.
2. Executive has agreed at its meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 to translate this capital budget into a combined £75k revenue £25k capital budget, to better meet the objectives of the funding.
3. This paper proposes that the £100k is divided equally between immediate measures to improve footfall and the street scene and a study to consider physical improvements to the public realm, designed to make a longer term impact.
4. The allocation of £50,000 to be targeted at projects which promote footfall and improve the street scene in the two secondary shopping areas is matched to a programme of specific projects resulting from local consultation.
5. A proposed brief for external consultants sets out the objectives to be achieved with the remaining budget.

**Recommendations**

6. That the proposed list of projects aimed at enhancing secondary shopping areas is agreed.

7. That the remaining budget be used to fund a study which will guide future investment into our secondary shopping areas with the objectives of enhancing economic growth and strengthening the local retail environment.

**Reason:** To deliver the Executive decision taken in May 2017 to enhance economic growth in secondary shopping areas.

## **Background**

8. On the 18 May 2017 the Executive agreed a Highways Funding Overview Report which included a proposed project 'Enhancing Economic Growth for Secondary Shopping Areas'. The project was outlined as "A review of the layout of the Acomb and Haxby shopping areas and ways to achieve additional economic growth in these shopping areas will be undertaken and costed interventions proposed, following local consultation. A further report will be taken to the Deputy Leader (Executive Member for Economic Development) to consider proposed interventions." The total budget was set at £100,000 of capital.
9. Consultation with local residents in Acomb through the Westfield Ward Committee, local traders through the Acomb Alive group, Ward Councillors and the Executive Member has identified a list of potential projects in Acomb Front Street.
10. In Haxby, the current lack of a traders group presents a challenge in how the Council can work with local businesses to improve the business environment. It is proposed to allocate some of the funding to pay for community/place making consultants to work with traders and businesses in the village with the aim of establishing such a traders group.
11. The original project outline – a review of the physical layout of both secondary shopping areas and the development of proposals to enhance growth – will be achieved using half of the original budget. It is proposed that this work will be delivered by specialist consultants who will be procured through open competition.
12. It is proposed that the remaining £50,000 be spent in both Haxby and Acomb on small-scale projects designed to have an immediate impact on these areas, trialling ideas or solutions which

might then form part of the longer-term work. This £50,000 comprises £25,000 of revenue and £25,000 of capital. These projects are set out below.

### **Consultation**

13. A public consultation was carried out at the Westfield Ward committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017. Acomb Alive and the Acomb and Westfield Neighbourhood Forum carried out public consultations seeking ideas for improving the secondary shopping areas and are committed to the further development of the project.

### **Proposed projects – short term measures**

14. It is proposed that three strands of work are taken forward.
- i. A feasibility study for the creation of a local traders' association in Haxby
  - ii. Funding of projects to drive footfall to Acomb Front Street through targeted grants made to community organisations
  - iii. Funding of projects to improve the streetscene in Acomb Front Street through targeted grants made to community organisations, with £23,000 capital as yet unallocated but open to both Acomb and Haxby traders' groups within the current financial year
15. The table below summarises each project, the organisation receiving a grant for delivery and the grant to be made for each project.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Delivery organisation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Feasibility study on the creation of a trader association in Haxby	Procurement process to be held to identify provider	£5000
Increasing footfall to Acomb Front Street at Christmas (2018) - lights	Acomb Alive	£7000
Improving the streetscene on	Acomb Alive	£3000

Acomb Front Street - planters		
Improving the streetscene on Acomb Front Street – recycling area improvements	Friends of Acomb Green	£5000
Increasing footfall to Acomb Front Street in the summer (2018 and 2019)	ADAM Festival	£2500 for 2018 £2500 for 2019, subject to successful delivery in 2018
Improving wayfinding on Acomb Front Street	Acomb Alive	£2000
Capital investment fund to support the objectives set out in this paper	Open to traders groups in Acomb Front Street and Haxby village	£23,000 (capital)
Total		£50,000

16. Consultation carried out with residents in areas served by the Acomb Front Street secondary shopping area identified that street scene improvements would lead to better shopping experience. Consultation also highlighted the need to bring shoppers in to the area to use the high street, rather than relying on local trade.
17. Two measures are proposed which will seek to attract shoppers from outside the area to Acomb Front Street. The first is a grant made to Acomb Alive to attract Christmas shoppers to the area. The grant will be used to install Christmas lighting on Front Street and also lighting on Boroughbridge Road which will advertise Front Street to those entering the city on the A59.
18. Additionally a grant of £2,500 is made to the Acomb Dance, Arts and Music (ADAM) Festival to support attracting visitors to the Acomb in 2018, with a further allocation available for 2019 subject to the successful delivery of work this year.
19. Projects which improve the street scene include grants made to Acomb Alive to install a wayfinding board and a grant to improve the appearance of the street through the installation and maintenance of planters.

20. Additionally a grant will be made to the Friends of Acomb Green to improve the appearance of the recycling centre in Morrisons car park. This is the main car park used by visitors to the area and the recycling area was identified in consultation as giving a poor first impression to out of area shoppers.
21. A further £23,000 of capital funding is available for projects which support the objectives of the scheme and are promoted by traders' groups. Allocations of this funding will be brought back to the Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement for formal decisions later in the current financial year.
22. Organisations will be required to fully deliver projects by August 2019 and to report back by the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019 on project delivery.

**Study to review the public realm in Haxby and Acomb secondary shopping areas**

23. In parallel with the measures outlined above, it is proposed that £50k be used to procure consultants to undertake a study exploring the long term trends in retail and how they might impact on growth in our secondary areas. This study would look at both Acomb Front Street and Haxby and consider:
  - a. Current understanding of the catchment area and the demography of shoppers
  - b. The public realm and street layout, identifying scope for improvements with outline costings
  - c. The retail/leisure/community use mix in each area with recommendations
  - d. Transport links, car parking, and measures to sustain and build footfall
  - e. Longer term trends in retailing and their likely impact on secondary shopping areas
24. The study would be undertaken in the current financial year, with a report to be submitted before December 2018.
25. This would then inform potential future investments in both secondary shopping areas.

## **Council Plan**

26. Thriving secondary shopping areas are part of a prosperous city for all. Supporting secondary shopping areas allows local businesses to thrive and provides employment opportunities to local people.

## **Implications**

27. **Financial** - there are no financial implications beyond the previously agreed budget. Grants are made to the organisations on the understanding that ongoing maintenance costs associated with the projects will be funded from alternative sources.
28. **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no human resource implications
29. **Equalities** – There are no equalities implications
30. **Legal** - There are no legal implications
31. **Crime and Disorder** - There are no crime and disorder implications
32. **Information Technology (IT)** - There are no information technology implications
33. **Property** - There are no property implications
34. **Other** -There are no other implications
35. **Risk Management**

In delivering projects through grants to community organisations, there is a risk that an organisation may not have the capacity to deliver. Organisations have submitted their constitutions and three months of bank statements to provide assurance of their capacity to deliver projects. Additionally all groups have previously delivered similar community projects.

## Contact Details

### Author:

Simon Brereton  
Head of Economic Growth  
Economic Growth Team  
01904 552814

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Neil Ferris  
Corporate Director of Economy and Place

**Report**  **Date** 22 June 2018  
**Approved**

**Wards Affected:** List wards or tick box to indicate all

**All**