

## BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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<b>Report Originator</b>	Rochelle Mathieson – Head of Commercial & Economic Development	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i> ***	
<b>Wards Affected</b>	ALL		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Addendum to Maintaining a Durable Budget Report - KETTERING HERITAGE ACTION ZONE</b>		

**Portfolio Holder: Cllr Lloyd Bunday**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update members on the successful external funding bid of £1,985,000 which was submitted to Historic England for the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Fund, in respect of Kettering Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 1.2 To update members on the second stage – Programme Design of the HAZ funding process.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Kettering Town Centre, like many areas, is facing the challenge of a changing Town Centre environment. Although Town Centres are still important shopping places, they are also increasingly important places for people to live, work and enjoy leisure time. In recognition of these universal challenges, Historic England (HE) launched a £95 million fund in May 2019 named High Street Heritage Action Zones scheme (HAZ).
- 2.2 The HAZ programme enables local authorities through a competitive process to bid for funding. The primary purpose of the fund is to support historic high streets and town centres through physical improvements, community engagement and cultural activities. Any funding awarded through HAZ must be match funded by the Council and would seek to leverage further investment from the private sector.
- 2.3 On 14<sup>th</sup> September, Historic England announced that Kettering was one of 69 towns nationally that had been successful and that the Council will, following the development and approval of a Stage 2 Programme Design, receive external funding of up to £1,985,000 over the next four years. The programme requires the Council to match fund the grant, the Council will look to work with the private sector to leverage additional investment – meaning a total investment of around £4 million would be made into Kettering Town Centre. The contribution can consist of monetary, as well as, ‘in kind’ match funding, which refers to utilising non-monetary resource, for example, Council staff time, volunteer support, equipment.

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2.4 The HAZ programme provides funding to support project delivery within high streets set within conservation areas over a period of four years. The main objectives of the programme are:

- To change perceptions of heritage and high streets
- To support sustainable economic and cultural growth on and around high streets
- To restore and enhance local historic character

2.5 An expression of interest (EOI) which aligns with these objectives was developed and submitted for Kettering Town Centre's primary shopping area which is within the boundaries of the conservation area and adheres to the criteria, as set out with the HAZ programme guidance, which focuses specifically on High streets within conservation areas.

2.6 The EOI submitted by Kettering Borough Council focused on the following areas;

- Physical improvements to historic buildings, including;
  - **Shopfront Grants\*** – to support improved shop frontages guided by a new Shopfront design guide;
  - **Historic Building Grants\*** – providing essential repairs to protect buildings and support conversion to new uses;
  - **Residential Grant\*** – to facilitate conversion of commercial buildings to residential to an agreed standard and size to ensure the Town Centre offers a range of living opportunities
- **Education and Cultural programme** – activities and grants to celebrate and raise awareness of the heritage of our historic high street

*\*The funding profile for these grants are likely to consist of HAZ, Council and private sector landlord contributions*

2.7 Stage 2 of the process requires the Council to work with Historic England and our local stakeholders to develop and submit a Programme Design by January 2020, with a view that delivery will commence from April 2020 and run for a maximum of four years.

### **3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

3.1 The EOI aligns with the implementation of the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018 - 2025. This plan was developed following feedback from the Kettering Town Centre Conference 2017.

3.2 The EOI was developed and submitted within a tight timescale and acted as a high-level application submission, however key stakeholders representing a range of private, public and community interests in the Town Centre were informed about the development of the expression of interest and provided letters of support.

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Additionally, the ruling and opposition parties of the Council both provided letters of support, all of which were submitted along with the application and provided significant evidence of the far-reaching level of support an initiative of this kind will have.

- 3.3 To successfully progress with Stage 2 of the process further consultation would be held during the development of the detailed business case.

#### **4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Kettering Town Centre Action Plan (AAP), adopted in July 2011, sets out aspirations for the town centre up to 2021. The vision for Kettering Town Centre is 'to create a vibrant heart for Kettering; a place that is characterful, distinctive and fun'.
- 4.2 The AAP sets out a vision to bring more residential and employment uses into the town centre in addition to enhancing the experiential qualities in the Town Centre including its heritage assets. This vision resonates with the objectives of the Heritage Action Zone.
- 4.3 The Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018 - 2025 sets out 19 projects based on the guiding principles of the AAP 'Clean and Refresh' and 'Art and Culture Revitalised' these directly relate to the HAZ EOI.

#### **5. FINANCIAL RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Stage 2 - Programme Design is not a competitive process, Historic England have clear expectations on the production of high quality, detailed business cases. Whilst Historic England will provide advice on the development of the programme design, no enabling funding will be available, meaning an in-kind resource commitment will need to be made by the Council which would be met from existing staffing resources.
- 5.2 The process for Stage 2 requires the Council to demonstrate how they can match fund the HAZ funding allocation and provide an indication of the spending profile.
- 5.3 The stage 2 programme design which will include the Council's match funding and anticipated spend profile will be reported to a future Executive Committee and Full Council for approval.

#### **6. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The project will require a new post of HAZ Project Manager. This post is a requirement by Historic England and will be key in delivering the project. It is

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envisaged that a portion of this cost will form part of the Council's overall match funding.

- 6.2 Additional staffing to support the project will consist of time allocated from established posts.

### 7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Implications will be considered as part of Stage 2 – Programme Design.

### 8. **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Implications will be considered as part of Stage 2 – Programme Design.

### 9. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive;

- 9.1 Note the submission and success of an Expression of Interest for Kettering Town Centre to the High Street Heritage Action Zone Fund
- 9.2 Endorses that the Council moves to completes Stage 2 – Programme Design

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