

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	24 January 2024
Executive Member:	Councillor Jack Naylor, Executive Member (Inclusive Growth, Business & Employment)
Reporting Officer:	Julian Jackson, Director of Place Nicola Elsworth, Assistant Director Investment, Development and Housing
Subject:	STALYBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK
Report Summary:	The report provides an update on the preparation of a Development Framework for Stalybridge Town Centre and the ongoing work to facilitate the delivery of its regeneration.
Recommendations:	That Executive Cabinet be recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the Stalybridge Town Centre Delivery Framework to support implementation of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme and act as a material consideration when consulting on planning applications in the area to guide proposals for development in accordance with the principles within the Framework. (ii) Note the ongoing work in relation to delivery of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme.
Corporate Plan:	Key aims of the Corporate Plan are to provide opportunities for people to fulfil their potential through work, skills and enterprise and to ensure modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment that works for all generations and future generations. The Stalybridge Town Centre Delivery Framework will deliver against these aims in the areas of job creation, modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment.
Policy Implications:	The Stalybridge Town Centre Delivery Framework will support the policy aims of the Council's Corporate Plan, proposals within Places for Everyone agreed at Council 20 July 2021, the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021, Tameside Climate Change & Environment Strategy, the Council's growth priorities agreed at Council February 2020, Housing Strategy 2021-2026, Council's Unitary Development Plan and the emerging Homes, Spaces, Places, plan.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	<p>This report provides an update on the work that is progressing on the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme.</p> <p>The Council has been awarded £19.9m in external capital funding from the UK Capital Regeneration Projects scheme administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). This funding will have a significant impact on the regeneration of the Town Centre.</p> <p>It is essential that all expenditure relating to this site continues to be procured in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules with advice and guidance provided via STaR as appropriate.</p>

In addition, the attainment of value for money should also be clearly evidenced on any further expenditure incurred together with supporting details of the benefits that the development of the site will realise for the Council.

**Legal Implications:
(Authorised by the
Borough Solicitor)**

The report provides both an update on work that has progressed to date but also seeks to approve the Stalybridge Town Centre Delivery Framework to support implementation of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme. In addition to compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and guidance provided by STAR in relation to procurement activity it will also be necessary to ensure strict compliance with the conditions attached to external grant funding to mitigate against any risk of clawback of funding provided under the scheme.

Risk Management:

A risk register for the project is in place and regularly reviewed. The main risks are summarised in Section 4 below.

Access to Information:

Not confidential

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Mike Reed, Head of Major Programmes.



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council has identified Stalybridge Town Centre, as one of its priority areas to deliver the objectives of the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021-26 in making our town centres hubs for living, culture, employment and services supporting a sustainable retail sector. Stalybridge Town Centre was selected as Tameside's focus for the GM Mayor's Town Centre Challenge in 2018.
- 1.2 On 15 March 2023 it was announced in the 2023 UK Budget that Stalybridge had been selected as one 16 Capital Regeneration Projects nationally and therefore the Council would be awarded grant funding of £19.9m to support delivery of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme. The delivery of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme is co-ordinated by the Stalybridge Strategic Project Board comprising all Stalybridge elected members and chaired by the Executive Member (Inclusive Growth, Business & Employment), advised and supported by the Stalybridge Delivery Group which involves local stakeholders.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the ongoing regeneration of Stalybridge and to seek approval of the Stalybridge Town Centre Delivery Framework (the Framework) prepared to support implementation of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme.

2. THE STALYBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The Framework (**Appendix 1a and 1b**) has been prepared to provide an overarching strategy for the delivery of major regeneration, to attract new investment, support the future development of formal planning policy, and help to avoid piecemeal development.
- 2.2 The Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge Action Plan – Our Place Our Plan (2019), which was subject to public consultation and engagement in 2018/19, has previously set out the broad aspirations for the Town Centre. These are to create a:
- A Vibrant and Visited Town
 - A Sustainable Town
 - A Prosperous Town
 - A Liveable Town
 - A Safe and Clean Town
 - A Proud Town
- 2.3 The Framework supports the themes of the Action Plan, primarily focussing on increasing the town centre population, repairs to heritage buildings and improvements in access to public transport and associated public realm works, in turn enhancing the overall environment. The Framework is focused on the immediate opportunities unlocked by the award of £19.9m in external capital funding from the UK Capital Regeneration Projects scheme administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), and completion of the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme through Historic England that runs from March 2020 to March 2024. This funding will have a significant impact on the regeneration of the Town Centre and it is important to delivery this in the context of a longer term plan.
- 2.4 The Framework will build on the strengths of Stalybridge and its contribution to Greater Manchester with specific reference to its character and built heritage; excellent transport links locally and regionally; future development sites held by the Council; and new opportunities such as sustainable town centre living.
- 2.5 There are a range of opportunities within Stalybridge to respond directly to the aspirations identified for the Town Centre that also address challenges facing Stalybridge. The Framework therefore seeks to co-ordinate delivery of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme and assist in the implementation of a longer-term strategy which will help

address housing need whilst reinvigorating the Town Centre and enabling it to contribute more fully to the local economy and to broader regeneration aims.

- 2.6 The overarching vision of the Framework is 'to deliver a thriving place throughout the day and evening optimising Stalybridge's excellent connectivity, waterfront, heritage, culture and passion to provide a hub for living, culture, employment and services supporting a sustainable retail sector'.
- 2.7 The primary objective of the Framework is to co-ordinate delivery of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme and assist in the implementation of a longer-term strategy to secure the successful regeneration of the Town Centre and the surrounding area. The specific objectives that will help achieve this are:
- Bringing forward identified development sites
 - Attracting further investment in the Town Centre
 - Delivering improved public realm and accessibility
 - Encouraging greater footfall throughout the Town Centre in the day and the evening
 - Changing perceptions of Stalybridge
- 2.8 The following key actions have been identified for the period to March 2026 to progress the delivery of the Framework utilising the secured Capital Regeneration Projects funding:
- Completion of the roof repairs at Stalybridge Civic Hall.
 - Delivery of repair works and internal restoration to enhance the provision and accessibility of the Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and Library.
 - Procurement of a developer partner for the Council owned land at Stalybridge West.
 - The delivery of Stalybridge West enabling works, including potentially a new multi-level non council car park facility in the Town Centre and a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Tame.
 - The preparation of a Public Realm and Movement Strategy for the Town Centre.
 - The delivery of public realm works to improve pedestrian routes and access to public transport.
- 2.9 Progress on delivery and associated timescales will be reported regularly to the Council's Executive Cabinet, Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel, Stalybridge Strategic Project Board, and the Stalybridge Delivery Group.
- 2.10 The period to March 2026 will see the delivery of significant regeneration with a number of physical projects delivered in Stalybridge Town Centre. The Council will continue to work with partners to attract further external funding and investment to complement this work. The successful delivery of these important capital projects as part of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme will contribute to the achievement of the vision and primary objective to secure the successful regeneration of the Town Centre and the surrounding area.

3. ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 The Framework has been prepared to take full account of the various pieces of consultation and engagement in Stalybridge over recent years. An extensive consultation and engagement process in 2018/19 informed the preparation of the Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge Action Plan which set out the aspirations for the Town Centre and forms the baseline for this Framework. The consultation exercise allowed the public to share their ideas and aspirations for Stalybridge and enabled a shared vision of the future to be developed. The primary method of data collection was through a questionnaire with 540 surveys completed and over 350 comments posted on exhibition boards at a drop-in event. Input was also collected from three local schools.
- 3.2 The following priorities emerged from this engagement exercise:
- Reinvention of the Civic Hall to bring it back into everyday use;

- Provide additional support for new and existing shops and businesses;
- Improve car parking facilities;
- Improve access to the river and canal;
- Provide new cultural and arts activities;
- Redevelop vacant brownfield land; and
- Build more affordable homes to support community in the Town Centre.

3.3 The Framework has been prepared to provide the delivery strategy that will address the key priorities identified in this engagement. Additional engagement has been undertaken during preparation of the Framework with the Stalybridge Project Board, comprising all Stalybridge Elected Members, and the Stalybridge Delivery Group which includes key stakeholders in the town. Furthermore, the Stalybridge Project Officer Group, chaired by the Director of Place and comprising officers across the Council, including planning, estates, highways and greenspace, has been consulted. As the individual projects and supporting strategies identified within the Framework are progressed, these will be subject to their own engagement and consultation processes.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 The main risks associated with the Framework are identified in the table below.

Risk Area	Detail	RAG Rating	Mitigation	RAG Rating
Delivery / Financial	Lack of external funding available for enabling infrastructure, work to heritage buildings and public realm.	Yellow	£19.9m has been secured from DLUHC to progress delivery up to March 2026. Opportunities for further funding will be monitored.	Green
Delivery	Lack of interest in the market to demonstrate deliverability of individual projects.	Yellow	Early market engagement work undertaken in relation to Stalybridge West has demonstrated interest from the property market to deliver development.	Green
Delivery	Some sites are private ownerships.	Red	The Council is engaging with the private landowners to agree shared objectives and opportunities for future development	Yellow
Delivery	Private land owners progress development opportunities that are inconsistent with the Council's objectives.	Red	The Council will continue to engage proactively and seek to influence outcomes within the confines of planning (as Local Planning Authority) and in accordance with the Framework principles.	Yellow
Delivery	The Framework has insufficient planning weight to ensure that development complies with its objectives.	Red	The Council will engage with partners and private landowners to ensure shared objectives and opportunities for future development are delivered in accordance with the framework.	Yellow
Financial	Development of sites is not viable.	Red	Detailed work has been progressed to identify and address viability challenges	Yellow

			associated with sites at Stalybridge West.	
Programme	Lack of resource capacity to undertake work streams in line with expectations.		Internal resource has been identified. Requirements for any additional delivery resource following recent capital grant funding awards is currently being reviewed.	

5. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The Framework provides a strategic approach to the transformation of Stalybridge Town Centre, building on development activity undertaken to date and representing a significant acceleration in its scope and delivery. It sets out the key actions identified for the period to March 2026 to progress the delivery of the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme against the principles of the Framework utilising the secured Capital Regeneration Projects funding whilst supporting further investment and development.
- 5.2 In order to ensure effective delivery, the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme Dashboard has been established and is monitored at meetings of the Stalybridge Strategic Project Board. The current status of project delivery in the Town Centre is as follows:
- Work to the Civic Hall building started on site in August 2023 and delivery is progressing as planned with completion scheduled by Summer 2024.
 - Further survey and design work is being completed on the proposed works to the Ashley Cheetham Art Gallery and Library to enable works to start on this building in July 2024.
 - Delivery of the Phase 1 public realm works on Market Street are on site. The first stage between Melbourne Street and the bus station opened to traffic in November 2023. The final stage between Melbourne Street and Trinity Street will complete by February 2024.
 - The public realm strategy for future phases has been commissioned and is due to be completed in Spring 2024.
 - A Development Prospectus has been prepared for the Council owned Stalybridge West sites. A strategy for delivery of the enabling infrastructure and procurement of a partner for future residential development is being prepared and will be subject to a future report in 2024.
- 5.3 The interventions supported by the Framework and the Stalybridge Regeneration Programme will support delivery of the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Tameside Corporate Plan, the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy, Places for Everyone, Unitary Development Plan and the emerging Homes, Spaces, Places, Plan.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 As set out at the front of the report.