

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	7 February 2018
<b>Executive Member/ Reporting Officer:</b>	Cllr Brenda Warrington - Executive Leader Robin Monk, Director of Place
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>GREATER MANCHESTER TOWN CENTRE CHALLENGE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	This report seeks the Council's approval to participate in the Greater Manchester Mayor's Town Centre Challenge, which is part of the major effort to create world class town centres in Greater Manchester.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That the Council approves the nomination of Stalybridge Town Centre for participation in the Greater Manchester Mayor's Town Centre Challenge.
<b>Links to Community Strategy:</b>	Prosperous Tameside
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	In line with Council policy
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	There is limited information about the full extent of this scheme and the requirements of GM districts. The GMCA have proposed a budget for Mayoral developments which includes the Town Centre challenge. This budget has yet to be approved and properly scrutinised as part of the GMCA budget setting process. No provision has been made as part of Tameside MBC's existing or planned budgets, so any initiative, as it stands, would have to be funded from external sources.
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	It will be expedient for the Council to indicate its interest in the scheme even if the details and criteria of the same are not finally developed. It will be important to the Council given the historical nature of Tameside and the 9 towns that we clearly articulate why we may be putting forward one town above the others in order to be successful in competition with the other GM authorities.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Access to Information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer, Ade Alao, Head of Investment and Development:



Telephone: 0161 342 2795



e-mail: [ade.alao@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:ade.alao@tameside.gov.uk)

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report seeks the Council's approval to participate in the Greater Manchester Mayor's Town Centre Challenge, which is part of the major effort to create world class town centres in Greater Manchester.
- 1.2 Greater Manchester is a city region of towns on a collective journey to world class status. The regional centre is experiencing unprecedented growth and there is an opportunity to accelerate the spread of this growth to the 8 principal towns, 20 smaller towns and over 50 further significant local and suburban centres in the conurbation.
- 1.3 The GM Mayor's Town Centre Challenge proposal, approved by the GM Combined Authority on 27 October 2017, makes the case for a multi-stakeholder GM-wide intervention to accelerate growth and create a city region of world class town centres.
- 1.4 The main proposition of the GM Mayor's Town Centre Challenge is a dedicated resource from the GM Mayor and GMCA to support a long term strategic approach to promoting growth and removing barriers to development in town centres, especially non-principal town centres, through:
  - a) Collaboration with the individual local authority and other public and private stakeholders on an agreed vision and masterplan
  - b) Collaboration on specific projects with long term catalytic benefits
  - c) Creating a public and private sector investment platform to support delivery
  - d) Linking with central government to unlock local delivery (e.g. Housing Deal)
  - e) Use of the full range of powers available to facilitate delivery
- 1.5 There is no dedicated funding support identified for the GM Mayor's Town Centre Challenge at this time. However, the GM Mayor and GMCA have committed to working over the coming months to identify appropriate funding to support the emerging programme for the initiative. That the Council nominates Stalybridge Town Centre for participation in the Greater Manchester Mayor's Town Centre Challenge.

## **2.0 TAMESIDE CONTEXT**

- 2.1 In line with others in GM, town centres within Tameside have undergone considerable change over recent years following on from the global financial crisis, property market downturn and the impact of competition from out of town centres and on-line retailing. The issues are particularly significant within the smaller town centres who have struggled to retain a retail role.
- 2.2 The GM Town Centres Study in 2013 identified that there was a retail revolution underway that would result in 21% less retail space and 31% fewer stores in town centre venues by 2020. This is now manifesting with town centres needing to find a new purpose and play a different role to the past to remain successful places.
- 2.3 The recommendations from the 2013 study proposed a mixed-use development approach for each of the 8 GM primary town centres including housing, non-retail businesses, public services and education/college sites based on the unique characteristics and opportunities available. This, to a large extent, is being implemented in Ashton as part of the Vision Tameside transformation programme.
- 2.4 The GM Strategy refresh identifies town centres as a strategic priority for GM, specifically identifying the potential of Ashton-under-Lyne and Stalybridge. There is also recognition

that issues impacting town centres across the GM area vary considerably and this is particularly the case relating to the town centres within Tameside.

- 2.5 Despite these challenges, Tameside town centres retain their important function as arenas for civic, community and economic interaction. They are also mainly in accessible locations with significant heritage, entrepreneurship and local authenticity qualities.
- 2.6 Visioning and master planning proposals have been undertaken for most of Tameside's town centres over the past 5 years. The challenge is therefore to take the necessary steps to create the conditions for investment in the town centres through increased investor/developer confidence to ensure that they continue to play a critical role for the residents and businesses within the Borough.
- 2.7 Tameside town centres are at a pivotal point in terms of their future direction. It is evident that many are not performing as well as they could in terms of vacancy rates, footfall and are also facing increased competition from other town centres outside of the borough. The retail and leisure sectors have experienced significant change, but Tameside town centres still retain a core offer with great potential, if this is properly harnessed. The Council has been proactive in taking a lead in identifying what more needs to be done to further support the regeneration of town centres.
- 2.8 The GM Town Centre Challenge therefore represents an opportunity to build upon the strong vision and rationale already in place, to progress delivery frameworks which include development or enhancement of key sites and strengthening planning policy to ensure future investment is focussed on town centres. It is also a significant opportunity to maintain dialogue with key stakeholders including businesses, landowners and residents. There is an increasing appetite for major regeneration which increases footfall, acts as a stimulus to the economy, improves the leisure offer and increases retention of local consumer expenditure.

### **3.0 GM TOWN CENTRE CHALLENGE - CRITERIA**

- 3.1 No specific criteria are outlined for the GM Town Centre Challenge and it is up to individual districts to nominate whichever town centre is most suited for their area. However, districts have been asked to consider the following issues in choosing a town centre as the focus for the challenge:
  - The potential number of housing units that could be delivered
  - Links to existing public transport nodes (and potential rail station devolution)
  - Evidence of how the proposals coming forward genuinely have, or create, a sustainable housing demand
  - Financial viability
  - Deliverability
- 3.2 Districts have also been asked to consider town centre locations with the strengths and opportunities where early success could be achieved to build real momentum rather than adopt a merely needs based approach. The strengths and opportunities could include the existence of well-developed vision, plans and schemes and/or strong buy-in of key stakeholders in addition to other factors.
- 3.3 While principal town centres are not specifically excluded, the focus of the GM Town Centre Challenge particularly emphasises non-principal town centres. It is understood that most GM districts are nominating secondary town centre for the Mayoral Challenge. Ashton town centre already has a clear vision and masterplan in place and a delivery programme which is

well underway. The benefits of including Ashton in the GM Town Centre Challenge will therefore bring little added value given this context and the need in other Tameside town centres. For this reason, Ashton has been excluded for consideration at this time.

3.4 An analysis of an appropriate criteria for assessing Tameside's town centres could include taking the following broad themes into account:

- **Need** – Deprivation Index, Experian retail ranking
- **Strengths** – Catchment population, GMAL score
- **Opportunities** – No of housing units developable, pedestrian survey

3.5 An attempt is proposed to use available datasets to provide a basis for assessing the need, strengths and opportunities of Tameside's town centres to identify a location for the GM Town Centre Challenge that best meets its requirements. Data has been drawn from a wide range of records including English Indices of Deprivation 2015, Experian GOAD Retail Property Intelligence 2017, Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) Model, Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) Evidence Base and Tameside Local Plan Evidence Base.

3.6 Taking the above into account, a proposed summary assessment of 8 Tameside's town centres against these themes using a small number of proxy indicators is shown in the table below:

Themes /Town Centre	Need		Strengths		Opportunities		
Indicators	Deprivation <sup>(1)</sup>	Retail Ranking <sup>(2)</sup>	Catchment <sup>(3)</sup>	GMAL Score <sup>(4)</sup>	Housing Units <sup>(5)</sup>	Pedestrian Survey <sup>(6)</sup>	Total
Audenshaw	1	5	2	3	1	1	13
Denton	2	3	4	3	3	1	16
Droylsden	2	4	3	4	5	4	22
Dukinfield	3	5	2	2	1	1	14
Hattersley	4	5	1	1	1	1	13
Hyde	4	3	4	4	1	1	17
Mossley	1	1	2	3	1	1	9
Stalybridge	2	4	4	4	5	5	24

**Notes:**

- (1) Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 - (1 = least deprived, 5 = most deprived)
- (2) Experian Town Centre Retail Ranking 2017 - (1 = highest ranked, 5 = lowest ranked)
- (3) Experian Town Centre Catchment Population 2017 - (1 = lowest, 5 = highest)
- (4) Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels Score (measure of accessibility and density of public transport provision) - (1 = least accessible, 5 = most accessible)
- (5) Number of housing units developable on available land within 10 minutes walking distance (800m) – (1 = least no. of units, 5 = most no. of units)
- (6) Tameside Retail & Leisure Study 2017 (draft) - findings of survey of pedestrians, undertaken by NEMS Market Research in July 2017– (1 = most customer satisfaction, 5 = least customer satisfaction)

3.7 It is important to note that this summary analysis has only used a small number of indicators available from existing datasets as proxy indicators. A more comprehensive assessment will require the use of a much wider range of indicators, scoring of other non-numeric factors and weighting of the relative value of each criterion against the objectives.

- 3.8 From the above assessment, it is proposed that Stalybridge is nominated for the first round of the GM Town Centre Challenge and that Droylsden and Hyde are considered for future rounds.

#### **4.0 NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 All 10 GM districts have been invited to nominate one individual town centre for the first round of the GM Town Centre Challenge along with a summary narrative of the opportunities presented.
- 4.2 Once nominated, the GM Mayor's Office and GMCA will work with individual districts to develop a programme of activities to progress the GM Town Centre Challenge.

#### **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 As set out at the front of this report.