

# **Report to the Local High Streets Task & Finish Panel**

**Date of meeting: 24 February 2020.**  
**Report Reference: LHS-001-2019/20.**



**Portfolio: Community and Partnership Services.**

**Subject: Update Report to Local High Streets Task and Finish Panel.**

**Responsible Officer: John Houston (01992 564094).**

**Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564243).**

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That members note this report and provide guidance to officers on any future data needs.**

## **Report:**

1. The Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 19 November 2019 agreed to the establishment of a Task and Finish Panel to undertake a review of the challenges and opportunities with regard to Local High Streets across the District. This decision was reached given the increasing concern about the long-term viability of high streets across the country following the ongoing impact of increased online spending and other changes in the retail environment.

2. It was also agreed that officers would undertake some baseline research in advance of the first meeting of the Task and Finish Panel to provide an evidence base to support deliberation. Officers are therefore in the process of developing an evidence pack which will be presented to members at the first meeting of the Panel on 24 February. This baseline information will include evidence from the annual high street survey regarding vacancy rates and changes in occupancy; data from business rates; information from specially commissioned surveys and input from consultation events.

3. This will be an ongoing process and officers are currently conducting face to face survey work on local high streets to supplement the existing consultation. Members are asked to review the evidence pack and provide further direction on additional information to support their review.

## **Reasons for Decision:**

To support the Task and Finish Panel's review of High Streets.

## **Other Options for Action:**

N/A.

## **Consultation undertaken:**

A range of events and initiatives have been undertaken to seek views and perceptions of our high streets. These will be included in the evidence pack which will be presented to members.

**Resource implications:**

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

There are no legal and governance implications arising directly from this report.

**Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:**

A key element of future high street sustainability will be the maintenance of a clean, green and safe environment for customers and residents to use.

**Background Papers:**

Report to Overview and Scrutiny dated 19 November 2019.

*Subject:* A plan to support investigations into future Town Centre viability.

**Impact Assessments:**

Not applicable at this time.

**Risk Management:**

Not applicable at this time.

**Equality:**

Not applicable at this time.