

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:**           **CABINET**  
**DATE:**               **TUESDAY, 12 JUNE 2012**  
**REPORT BY:**       **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**  
**SUBJECT:**           **FLINT MASTERPLAN**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To inform Members of the outcome of the Flint Masterplanning exercise and secure agreement for the use of the document to inform policy and funding priorities as the basis for regenerating the town.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The need for a masterplan, to guide the physical regeneration of the town, was identified as part of the Town Action Plan Programme (the Council's strategic approach to tackling town centre decline) and from the need to regenerate or redevelop the maisonettes: this was agreed at Executive Committee in December 2011.

2.02 In 2008, the Town Centre Healthchecks Study concluded that whilst "Flint is a relatively healthy town centre improvements to the Council's residential property, enhancements to the eastern gateway and the provision of improved car parking, should be the top priority actions".  
(Roger, Tym & Partners Final Report, Aug 2008, page 49)

2.03 Following the study, the Flint Town Partnership was established and undertook a range of town centre improvement projects, including the re-establishment of the street market and development of the Swinchiard Brook footpath. The need for a long-term Flint Masterplan was agreed by the Partnership on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010.

2.04 A working group was set up and DTZ were commissioned in August 2011. The brief stated that the Masterplan needed to:

- improve the built character of the town
- improve the town's image and contribute to its sense of place
- provide housing stock that holds and increases in value
- improve the layout of the town, specifically the links between the two retail areas and between the town and the waterfront
- create better distinctions between private and public spaces
- improve the quality of life for residents

2.05 DTZ approached the work in three main phases (Baseline, Strategic Framework and Draft Masterplan) with each involving a significant amount of consultation with Members, the Town Council, residents,

businesses, stakeholders and the wider community and users of Flint, with particular care taken to involve the residents of the maisonettes. Consultation summary documents were produced at each phase and made available in public areas in Flint for those unable to attend the consultation events. This led to a high level of awareness of the Master planning process among local residents. The comments received from all the consultation events were then fed back into the Plan.

The Masterplan was finalised in March.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The Masterplan sets out a long term approach to the physical regeneration of Flint; these are shown on the attached plan. It will provide:

- a clear plan to encourage investment;
- new, high quality town centre housing;
- improved visitor appeal by connecting the waterfront with the town centre;
- improved public space and ease of movement around town
- improved promotion of the town

3.02 The main physical recommendations from the Masterplan are:

- (1) Sydney/Duke Street: Removing the maisonette blocks (representing nearly a quarter of the original medieval planned town – as depicted in Speed’s Map of 1610) and creating a new residential area of mixed tenure and residential types, made up of streets, gardens, squares and terraces. New streets will link Church Street with Duke Street, with housing and landscaping on Duke Street which will mark the line of the original town wall/ditch. Two buildings will appear as ‘gatehouse features’ when entering the community from the east.
- (2) Feather/Coleshill Street: Removal of the maisonette blocks. Retain the existing library with a view to remodelling, if necessary, to accommodate more public services. Creation of a better link route between Church Street and Flint Retail Park to facilitate footfall.
- (3) Enhance the area around St. Mary’s and St. David’s Church, including redesign of the open space around this important building to create a memorable setting, whilst keeping Church Street open to traffic.
- (4) Improving the route between Church Street and Flint Castle, particularly at Castle Street – including the use of a historical

'time line', interpretation of Flint Castle, improved landscaping and lighting to the Castle, creating a sense of drama and importance.

- (5) Retain Flint War Memorial in its current position, but renovate and upgrade it to create a more appropriate and thoughtful space. New residential development will frame and enclose the Memorial Gardens at a respectful distance to create improved shelter and enclosure.
- (6) Highway remodelling on the A548 to re-create a small public square on the north side of Trelawny Square – following the original town layout. This would entail extending the pavement and reducing the highway to two lanes. The new public space would extend around the Town Hall and along Chester Street and would decrease pedestrian crossing distances and improve links between the Castle and the Town.

3.03 Apart from the physical Plan, the process resulted in creating a new vision for Flint and a comprehensive Action Plan with both physical and non physical projects for the short, medium and long term. The Masterplan will be used to inform Planning Policy, guide housing regeneration, inform the town regeneration process and the Flintshire Connects programme.

3.04 Next steps will include:

- (1) identifying the number and mix of housing needed
- (2) a car park review
- (3) implementing early improvements to the public realm
- (4) producing a marketing plan to promote the town to both visitors and investors
- (5) developing a Flintshire Connects facility in the town.

3.05 The draft Masterplan is available in the Members' library. Artist impressions giving an idea of what the new Duke Street, Church Street and housing areas may look like were displayed in Flint Library for approximately 8 weeks; these are appended.

3.06 The Masterplan provides a clear framework for both the regeneration of the town centre and the redevelopment of the maisonette sites and adjacent multi-story car park. It will ensure that the redevelopment of the new housing sites is undertaken sensitively and appropriately, given the town centre location, with the objective being to recapture a sense of place that is based on the town's historic past.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Members approve the contents of the Flint Masterplan, authorise Officers to develop further the project proposals and that the

masterplan is used to inform future Planning Policy development for Flint.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 None at this stage.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 Town centres play a key role in providing accessible goods and services for those most vulnerable. Town centres are also a key source of local employment, actions and activities that help to strengthen the vitality and viability of towns and communities.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 The masterplan has included consideration of environmental concerns and includes measures to improve the environment.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The masterplan seeks to enhance and expand the vitality and viability of Flint Town Centre. The town centre provides vital, locally based services, especially to those without access to private transport. The masterplan incorporates a proposal for a one stop shop on the ground floor of the existing County Council offices.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 The County Council, Flint Partnership and the Working Group, as well as the local community and town council, will continue to be involved with the development of the actions and aspirations contained within the masterplan.

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 As outlined above

#### **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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