

Winchester City Councillor Report

September 2021

1. Central Winchester regeneration

Winchester City Council's long running regeneration plans to revitalise its city centre have taken another step forward. It is currently undertaking an evaluation process to bring forward a mixed-use development for the area, with new homes, flexible workspaces, a night-time economy and new public spaces.

The Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the scheme has now been approved; this is the first stage in the formal process of business case development. The document set out the aims, provided an option appraisal for delivery options and then set out the preferred way forward for the proposed development site. Subject to further review in the next stages, proposals for this phase of development incorporate the site of Winchester Bus Station, Kings Walk, the old Friarsgate Medical Centre and Coitbury House.

An Outline Business Case will now be prepared for consideration in the Autumn; this will look in more detail into the delivery route and financial viability. Extensive fees have been incurred to date and will continue to be incurred going forward, these are also being investigated.

Proposals to repurpose the existing Kings Walk building as a creative quarter have been dropped. Instead short term improvements to the ground floor and public areas surrounding Kings Walk, including new outdoor eating spaces and improved seating have been agreed. This should improve provide temporary amelioration to a long neglected area of town.

The wider regeneration is likely to be brought forward with a development partner who will need to go through a formal selection process. It is likely that the main development is still therefore some way off.

2. Covid-19 support for businesses

Winchester City Council has received extensive funds from the Government to help support local businesses through the pandemic, much of which has now been distributed. Two additional grant schemes have just been launched as part of this, targeted at businesses and organisations who have been impacted by COVID-19. These comprise a new COVID-19 Business Challenges (CBC) grant programme and a further round of the Transformation, Adaptations and Diversification (TAD) grant.

The one-off CBC grant aims to compensate organisations and businesses based in the Winchester district for loss of income during the six week period from 1 July to 16 August 2021. For further information about the CBC grant visit: <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/business/business-grants> The deadline for CBC applications is **Monday 27 September 2021**.

The additional TAD grant funding is being made available to help those who have or plan to make adaptations to their services and/or to diversify or transform their services, products and business model to reach new customers and markets, including new practices that support longer term resilience. Priority will be given to those who have not previously applied or been awarded a TAD grant. The deadline for TAD applications is **Monday 13 September 2021**.

Laurence Ruffell Hugh Lumby