

Appendix 1

Gloucester City Centre Strategy 2015-19: Strategic Priorities and Key Actions (indicative)

In order to develop a draft City Centre Strategy a series of draft proposed strategic priorities along with some indicative key actions are set out below for consideration – these will be fully consulted upon with key stakeholders in the formulation of the draft Gloucester City Centre Strategy.

Strategic Priority 1

To create a thriving, diverse and sustainable commercial, retail, leisure and cultural city centre that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors throughout the day and night

- Deliver the £60 million Kings Quarter scheme including a new Transport Hub / Bus Station in partnership with Stanhope and their commercial agents
- Engage with partners and developers to bring forward the Blackfriars development and remaining sites at the Docks / Quays
- Perform a comprehensive audit of the city centre using the ATCM toolkit to assess what is required to improve the look, feel and structure of the city centre in the short, medium and long term to make it more attractive / user friendly
- Ensure that the City Plan adopts a simpler and more efficient and effective planning approach and that key development projects are fast tracked
- Develop and deliver a city centre office accommodation strategy and conduct an office market review to highlight commercial investment opportunities, inform planning policy, ascertain future demand for Grade A office accommodation and the potential for existing office refurbishment
- Improve the aesthetic appeal of the city centre through a programme of public realm renewal and city centre enhancements including cladding of unsightly facades, a new Tourist Information Centre, car park and lighting improvements, heritage grants, heritage interpretation boards / signage and improved linkages between the city centre and Quays
- Strengthening the evening economy offer to include extending retail trading hours and public venue opening hours, expanding the offer provided by venues to appeal to a wide demographic, planning and implementing an evening programme of commercial and cultural events, seeking Purple Flag accreditation, implementing a Best Bar None scheme and working with partners to improve public transport provision
- Enhance the city's indoor and outdoor market offer, so it appeals to a wide audience and generates increased footfall
- Support the delivery of and promote the £1.2m Southgate Street Townscape Heritage Initiative to local businesses and potential investors
- Support Gloucester Cathedral in delivering their £5m redevelopment scheme, Project Pilgrim
- Develop and strengthen the city's retail niche (affordable fashion)

Strategic Priority 2

To maintain and improve the vitality and viability of the city centre

- City Centre Manager to lead on the development and delivery of a coherent approach towards the development of a city centre Business Improvement District (BID) that actively engages with all lead stakeholders with the aim of delivering a dedicated business plan and successful BID ballot by the end of January 2017.
- Deliver the Gloucester Supports Business grant schemes to 20 businesses to assist new start-ups, expanding businesses and those businesses looking to locate in the city centre
- Develop a pilot “After Work Perks” scheme to target city workers / residents to stay in the city centre beyond 5pm
- Utilise support mechanisms to encourage the growth of a thriving, diverse culture of independent businesses within the city centre. Independent businesses support local character and prosperity, community well-being, local decision making and spend, local employment, entrepreneurship, competition and product diversity. There are over 260 independent businesses within the city centre which equates to approximately 57% of all city centre businesses.
- Investigate innovative approaches to utilising empty shop units. For example, window dressing, pop-up art galleries / community facilities
- Develop flexible initiatives and incentives to encourage greater footfall into the city centre e.g. flexible parking, Shop Gloucester campaign / Loyalty Card expansion
- Support local procurement by encouraging “inter-trading / support local” amongst city centre businesses by producing a new business directory and website / online search and database download facilities

Strategic Priority 3

To draw on Gloucester’s strengths as an historic city to create a hub for culture, tourism and leisure

- Develop a unique city centre profile that differentiates Gloucester from other UK cities, establishes its key target market, develops a brand identity and creates key messages
- Develop a comprehensive city centre marketing plan
- Create and deliver an effective place marketing strategy that encapsulates Gloucester as a destination where people choose to live, work, shop and visit, whilst inspiring civic pride within the local residential population
- Work with partners to ensure delivery of a high quality year-round events programme and street animation throughout 2015/16 that includes Residents’ Weekend, Independents’ Week, Big Eat Week, Tall Ships, Night Markets and the History Festival / Heritage Open Days
- Look at opportunities for street art to improve the look of the city centre
- Investigate options for establishing a new cultural venue for the city centre
- Grow the Meet and Greet Scheme and measure its impact on increasing footfall
- Improve the quality of the City of Gloucester website with particular focus on improving

promotion of, and information about, the Gloucester offer. For example, the promotion of eateries within the city.

Strategic Priority 4

To maintain and enhance the city centre as a location for business, skills and learning

- Deliver quality skills and lifelong learning support programmes across the city centre - in particular, focus on customer service, ambassadorial and hospitality training, traditional and heritage based construction skills, retail (with a focus on digital) and upskilling / addressing general skills gaps
- Ensure all city hotels are supported in gaining official accreditation through national schemes, such as Visit England's National Quality Assessment Scheme or the AA's accommodation scheme
- As part of the Blackfriars / Westgate creative industries area, work towards enhancing the proportion of workspace provided for creative and innovative businesses
- Deliver world-class ICT infrastructure throughout the city centre (superfast broadband, WIFI and 4G) by working closely with providers and other stakeholders to facilitate the required infrastructure and raise awareness amongst the business community of the business benefits
- Provide financial support to enable businesses to access training, information and support through our business grants and our 'Gloucester Supports Business' programme

Strategic Priority 5

To meet transport needs within the city centre, encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport whilst providing well located car parking

- Deliver the Gloucester Central Transport Hub providing a new bus station and associated infrastructure, including highway alterations and improvements to pedestrian, cyclist, taxi and public transport infrastructure to help facilitate the regeneration of the King's Quarter area of Gloucester city centre
- Encourage the use of and increase the attractiveness of public transport and car sharing schemes in the county
- Encourage employers to work with their employees to travel to work by sustainable transport means and work with key stakeholders such as Stagecoach on bulk purchasing of tickets
- Implement a cycle hub in the city
- Contribute towards the delivery of a comprehensive railway station improvement scheme, which offers better integration and pedestrian links into the city centre
- Work with Asset Management to deliver a parking strategy that contributes towards city centre vibrancy and encourages greater dwell time

Strategic Priority 6

To positively manage the city centre environment, ensuring it's clean, safe and accessible

- City Centre Manager to establish a programme of regular liaison and consultation with local businesses, public agencies and other city representatives to identify priority projects and services that will benefit the trading environment of the city centre
- Establish and maintain a comprehensive database of all city centre businesses – approximately 450 businesses within the city centre
- Prior to redevelopment, utilise Kings Square as a income generating events location
- Deliver improvements / upgrades to City Centre CCTV system to also incorporate WIFI
- Work with partners including AMEY and Neighbourhood Management Service to deliver a fit for purpose and flexible maintenance and cleanliness system
- Deliver a maintenance and cleanliness programme to improve key buildings, streets, landscaped areas and business premises and the lighting of key buildings at night
- Work with partners to deliver the Safer Gloucester Strategy in order to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti social behaviour in the city centre

Strategic Priority 7

To increase the availability and quality of homes within the city centre through new build and utilisation of existing premises

- Work with Housing Enabling Service to explore the potential of Live / Work units in the city and raise awareness with relevant stakeholders
- Establish a project group and work with developers, commercial agents and owners to bring forward extant planning permissions for 541 dwellings in the central area. The group would also work towards securing a further 400+ residential dwellings in the city centre
- Investigate the potential of offering housing grants to convert long term vacant city centre premises especially upper floor premises
- Encourage high quality housing and commercial development across the city in order to attract the right calibre of businesses and skilled workers