

Report of the Strategic Director, Place, to the meeting of Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 22 March 2022

X

Subject:

City Centre Regeneration

Summary statement:

This report updates the Scrutiny Committee on progress with city centre regeneration since the previous report of 12 February 2020

Jason Longhurst
Strategic Director, Place

Portfolio:

Regeneration, Planning and Transport

Report Contact: Angela Blake
Phone: (01274) 434093
E-mail: angela.blake@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Regeneration and Environment

1. SUMMARY

This report updates the Scrutiny Committee on progress with city centre regeneration since the previous report of 12 February 2020

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bradford is one of the biggest and fastest growing districts in the UK in addition to being one of the youngest. Business success, jobs growth, skills and improved transport connectivity are essential to our ambition to be the UK's fastest growing economy over the coming decade.
- 2.2 Covid-19 has had a profound, adverse impact on the City Centre. We have seen a decline in city centre footfall, in line with national and regional trends. At the height of the lockdown footfall in Bradford City dropped to 20% of normal levels with a similar picture in our town centres. The most recent data shows footfall at around 80% of pre-Covid levels. Getting office workers back into our city and centres is the key remaining element to recovering to pre-pandemic footfall levels.
- 2.3 The City Centre remains a focus for the Council as part of our wider approach to economic growth across the district. Due to its size and scale it is also recognised as a Strategic Priority Area in the city region's Strategic Economic Plan.
- 2.4 Bradford City Centre is home to 2230 businesses that employ 29,000 people which is one in seven of all jobs in the district. The City centre is a key location for sectors with future growth potential such as financial and business services, digital and creative industries. It also hosts a number of important economic and cultural assets, including the University of Bradford, Bradford College, the Alhambra and the National Science and Media Museum.
 - The city centre remains the key location for employment in the district with 29,000 employee jobs. Office based jobs dominate with 9,100 jobs in financial and business services and 10,500 in the public sector. There are 3,500 retail jobs and 2,750 hospitality, leisure and culture jobs based in the city centre.
 - Employment in the city centre increased by 2% over the year 2020 compared to national fall of 2%.
 - Bradford's city centre is a top UK retail centre generating over £345 million of comparison retail expenditure in 2019. The development of The Broadway shopping centre has brought a whole new dimension to the city, accelerating the city's retail ranking by 42 places and drawing in millions more shoppers to the city centre.
 - There is a strong and vibrant presence of cultural and visitor attractions in the city centre. Prior to the pandemic around four million people visited City Park each year, with the National Science and Media Museum attracting over 500,000 visitors and the Alhambra Theatre hosting over 250,000 theatregoers each year.

- Over 12,000 people live in the City Centre which includes many students studying at the University of Bradford. The city centre population has grown by 20% since 2011 compared to a UK population growth of 6%.
 - The University of Bradford had a Student population of 9,960 in the 2020/21 academic year and 1,452 staff.
 - The city has seen over £1 billion of investment in the city over the last seven years including the Broadway shopping centre, the Southgate office development and three new hotels.
- 2.5 To compete economically we have to ensure the city centre is a liveable and vibrant place to attract and retain businesses and talent. The Council has been proactive in leading and facilitating a range of interventions to assist the city centre in its transformation including the reshaping of the retail offer around the Broadway Centre, the creation of a new market on Darley Street, the remodelling of the city centre railway stations redevelopment of the former Odeon into the Bradford Live venue and the establishment of a new residential neighbourhood 'City Village'.
- 2.6 The revitalisation and growth of the city centre business sector and the subsequent generation of new high quality jobs and skills training opportunities is essential to the sustainability of these initiatives. New offices accommodating modern businesses, creating high quality jobs will mean millions of pounds being spent on places to live, shopping, personal services, theatre and music venue tickets, fresh food, dining and drinking in cafes, bars and restaurants.

3. CITY CENTRE GROWTH SCHEME

- 3.1 The City Centre Growth scheme closed to new applications 31 March 2021.
- 3.2 The scheme was created in 2012 in response to the scale of the challenges facing the city centre. The impact of the economic downturn, and the reality of a slow recovery, suggested a renewed approach to stimulating regeneration in the city centre was required.
- 3.3 As a direct result of the recession, the Westfield Broadway shopping development in the city centre had stalled in 2008. The Association of Town Centre Managers' benchmarking research highlighted Bradford performed well below average for a city of its size – particularly on shopper population and comparison retail, compounded by low footfall, short dwell time, high numbers of vacant units and stiff competition from a growing offer in Leeds city centre.
- 3.4 These factors added to existing low confidence levels and a subsequent lack of private sector investment and meant it was unlikely that market forces alone would be sufficient to re-balance Bradford's economy or address the abnormal costs, risks and historic lack of occupier interest.

- 3.5 The council executive took the decision to develop an ambitious plan for Bradford city centre. The resulting city plan set out the strategic approach to achieving economic growth and physical development of the city centre for the next ten years. It provided a framework to create the conditions for business – to make the city centre a great place to set up, grow and run a business.
- 3.6 Delivery of the City Centre Growth Scheme followed a successful bid for Regional Growth Fund investment, matched by the council’s own funding. The scheme included improvements to the public realm within the city centre and a programme of Heritage Street enhancements, transforming much of the city centre built environment and matching the quality design of the award winning City Park.
- 3.7 A grant scheme was launched late 2012 offering business rate rebates to businesses creating new and additional jobs in the City Centre, either by expanding their existing businesses or by opening new operations. These rebates were offered for up to three years and based on a “refund” of £16k rates for every new job created, with the ceiling being the business’s annual rates bill.

Business Rates Rebate Scheme	
Businesses assisted to grow	167
New start-up businesses assisted	33
New jobs created	567
Inward investments	32

- 3.8 A capital grant was introduced a year later, enabling eligible businesses to access up to a 50 per cent contribution towards property refurbishment costs and machinery and equipment required for growth.

Capital Grant Scheme	
Businesses assisted to grow	113
New jobs created	236

- 3.9 The City Centre Growth Scheme delivered a steady reduction in the number of vacant units and its impact helped to mitigate the impact through a difficult period for the traditional high street.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Vacancy rate	21.17%	20.03%	20.33%	19.74%	20.41%	21.03%	22.50%

By being flexible and adaptive to the needs of local businesses the scheme encouraged investment at a time when the high street faced great challenges.

The scheme offered grants which helped to de risk investment and encourage growth and expansion. This was coupled with a comprehensive wrap around

support including business development support, assistance with recruitment and staff training, simplified planning processes, and assistance with accessing regional, national and European funding and support.

Delivery of this targeted support has helped develop a better understanding of the challenges facing retail sector and the high street. This knowledge is helping to inform and shape thinking around the future of the city centre and how to support a diverse city centre encompassing residential, leisure, independent retail as well as the traditional high street offer.

4. CITY CENTRE FOOTFALL

4.1 Footfall

4.1.2 The latest data for footfall in the Bradford BID demise was recorded by the six City Centre cameras in week commencing 14 February 2022.

Weekly Footfall 14 Feb 2022 - 20 Feb 2022

	Year to date %		Year on year %		Week on week %	
	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021
Bradford BID Area	144.9%	-65.2%	104.4%	-58.5%	-16.9%	7.4%
North & Yorkshire	142.2%	-67.7%	104.0%	-64.3%	-10.4%	11.7%
UK	166.0%	-71.5%	131.5%	-69.0%	-7.3%	12.7%

4.1.2 The total number of visitors to Bradford BID for the last 52 weeks is 18,969,256 which is 63.8% up on the previous year. The total number of visitors for the year to date is 2,647,944 which is 144.9% up on the previous year. As the cameras were installed in late 2019 we do not have full year on data for comparison with pre Covid position. The one camera that was in situ in this week (on Broadway) in 2019, is showing a 21.8% reduction in footfall in 2022 versus the same week in 2019.

4.2 Vacancy Rates

4.2.1 Data collated by Bradford Business Improvement District for the City Centre area provides an insight into the levels of openings and closures. This information demonstrates the impact on the high street and particularly on the hospitality and leisure sectors.

- 4.2.2 The percentage of vacant units in the City Centre in December 2019 was 20.86%. This compares with 22.18% recorded in the most recent count in December 2021. This 1.32 % increase equates to a net six additional vacant units. Bradford, like most towns and cities has been impacted by the loss of high street names, with the pandemic accelerating the changing face and role of the high street.

5. RETAIL AND LEISURE

5.1 Broadway Shopping Centre

The shopping centre has reported strong footfall throughout December and the centre was consistently busy through following the start of post Christmas sales”.

- 5.2 Quote from the Centre Manager “The Broadway team has worked hard alongside our retailers to create a welcoming environment that is safe for customers. We’ve been really pleased and grateful that the vast majority of customers who visit the centre respect the protocols in place for their own, and other people’s safety.

“The retail industry has faced challenges in the past few years like never before and whilst there have been casualties, the vast majority of brands have adapted and continued to trade.

“The Broadway has bucked trends this year with seven new retailers joining the Centre in 2021; we’re committed to providing visitors to the centre with even more choice and expanding the breadth of products and services that can be purchased at The Broadway.

“We’re holding conversations with a number of exciting new retailers preparing to sign leases in 2022 and will announce these in due course”.

- 5.3 Despite the impacts of Covid the Broadway shopping centre continues to report increasing visitor numbers. At the end of 2019 the footfall figures for the centre showed an increase of 11.1% on the previous year.

5.4 SPARKLING BRADFORD

- 5.4.1 The **Sparkling Bradford Winter** campaign has been shortlisted in the UK Content Award for the Travel/Leisure Content Campaign of the Year.

- 5.4.2 Due to changing circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns and restrictions, the campaign demonstrated agility and creativity by moving entirely online. The campaign made full use of social media, video, website and media engagement to create a dynamic and effective content marketing campaign, with a focus on encouraging future visits, engaging local communities and businesses to create a positive image of the district.

- 5.4.3 The campaign also encouraged people from across the district to share images of their local lockdown discoveries and celebrated the 'People who make Bradford Sparkle'.

5.4.5 Businesses in the Bradford district have reported an increase in footfall and customer enquiries, following the Sparkling Bradford winter campaign which has seen a 70 per cent uplift in engagement this year.

5.4.6 The bi-annual initiative, which launched in 2018, has received 30 new business sign-ups and reached more than two million people online during the 2021-2022 winter campaign. Visits to the website also increased by almost double in comparison to the summer campaign.

5.4.7 Delivered by partners; VisitBradford, The Broadway Bradford, Bradford Business Improvement District (BID), Ilkley BID and Bradford Council, Sparkling Bradford aims to boost the region's economy, as well as showcase visitor experiences across the district.

6. The Cultural Offer

6.1 St George's Hall

6.1.1 The 18-month programme of works on the Grade II listed building began on site in July 2017. This major refurbishment – the first in over 30 years – included improvements to the external envelope (full restoration of the stone masonry and full re-roofing), refurbishment of all internal spaces (public areas, kitchen, auditorium and back stage areas) as well as other maintenance works (such as rewiring and improvement to both ventilation and fire protection provisions).

6.1.2 Major works were also carried out to improve customer experience. The gradient of the tiers was amended to improve sight lines and seats either re-padded or fully replaced to ensure optimum comfort whilst retaining the acoustic quality of the Hall. The 165-year-old venue re-opened to the public on 15th February 2019 and, in March 2019, Bradford Civic Society unveiled a new blue plaque on the historic building.

6.2 Evening and Night-time Economy

6.2.1 The Council is supporting the City's developing night-time and evening economy, helping to create a safe, vibrant and well balanced offer. Work is continuing to encourage a diverse range of venues and activities to attract increasing visitor numbers into the city centre.

6.2.2 Additionally, the Council's Culture and Economic Development teams are working closely in a cultural led recovery, merging arts and culture with business to create strong and vibrant high streets with Gainshare funding secured from WYCA. This also involves joint work with Highways and Landscape Design. As part of this funding we have delivered a series of interventions

6.2.3 We are launching Night-time Reps, a programme to recruit 5 x 18-30 year-olds to work across the District to develop a night-time economy manifesto for young people. One of these young people will be dedicated to the City Centre and will be working closely with the BID team. This will be at the heart of a culture led night-

- time economy working with the BID team to support our ambition to be A UNICEF Child Friendly District putting young people at the heart of our decision making
- 6.2.4 Bradford is LiT festival placed beautiful light installations intriguing the public and gaining significant positive media attention for the district.
- 6.3.5 Major highlight was the presentation Dan Archers *Borealis* in City Park. The only chance to see this amazing northern lights-inspired installation in the UK were in Bradford and then in London. It attracted significant increased footfall to the city centre with 20,000 audience members visiting Bradford City over on Friday 5th & 6th November.
- 6.2.6 In January we launched a NTE grant programme to stimulate cultural events during the winter months to encourage footfall in the evening 8 of the events will be delivered in the City Centre by the end of March.
- 6.2.7 We have three live feasibility studies on cultural venues and one project in delivery in the City Centre which are in line in line with our bid for city of Culture in 2025
- (i) Kala Sangam £4.5 million redevelopment of its Grade II listed building to remove existing physical barriers, opening access throughout this heritage space to all. Works include installation of a new accessible lift; Changing Places facilities; a remodelled, accessible entrance and foyer; a new 200 seat, ground floor theatre; signage; premises for BCB Radio; and 3 new dedicated studio spaces for artistic use and community/CYP engagement.
 - (ii) Vintry House A £1.5million repurposing of Vintry House a sustainable and accessible multi use major event and digital creative space with room for galleries and workspace.
 - (iii) Art Hotel – A redevelopment of the Wool Exchange into a Boutique Hotel as part of an identified need offer quality, unique accommodation offers in city centre
 - (iv) NSMM £6.1 million Sound and Vision represents one of the biggest coherent programmes of investment, improvement and change to the site since it opened in 1983. The project aims to contribute to the re-energisation of Bradford’s cultural heart through three distinct focus areas— the Science Museum Group’s collections; STEM; and community participation. The development of two new galleries will uncover key collections stories which are relevant to all our lives. The project will also deliver practical improvements through the introduction of a new lift to improve circulation around the museum.
- 6.2.8 Through its business grant incentives the Council continues to encourage businesses that add to the distinctiveness and diversity of offer within the city centre. The impact of these schemes can already be seen in areas such as North Parade and Ivegate where the support offered has encouraged investment from a number of quality independent operators, helping to promote the city centre as an evening destination.
- 6.2.9 During the last twelve months a number of new bars and other leisure venues have opened in the city centre, including the Old Crown, Drum Winder, Wine Lodge, Nightrain and Rabbit Hole, Remy International Wine Bar on Broadway as well as 30 North on North Parade and the Silver Fox on Rawson Square.
- 6.2.10 Two new bars and two eateries have recently opened in the Sunbridge Wells complex, all adding to the increasing vibrancy of the evening economy.

6.2.11 Work is still required to ensure that the right food and beverage and leisure offer is available to attract a wider range of people into the city centre, with a diverse range of venues and activities.

6.3 **Bradford UNESCO City of Film**

6.3.1 Bradford City of Film, now in its 11th year of operation, continues to go from strength to strength, not only in terms of activities within the District, such as community events, screenings, talks, learning opportunities, and tours, but also international collaboration and promotion. In 2019, during the 10th Anniversary year, 30 events were hosted and further community events supported.

6.3.2 Recently City Hall has hosted the well-publicised filming of Helen Mirren and Jim Broadbent for scenes from the new film, The Duke. Less high profile, but importantly City of Film was closely involved in production of the film Ali and Ava starring Adeel Akhtar and Claire Rushbrook. City of Film worked with Incommunities and residents of Holme Wood, some of whom appear as extras.

6.3.3 As University of Bradford graduates were among the film crew, local people have been involved both in making the film and starring in it. Filming took place in the grounds of the Cathedral, as well as Holme Wood, Undercliffe Cemetery, Laisterdyke and Tong.

7. **City Centre Developments**

The next three years will see a major transformation of the centre as key developments progress and complete.

7.1 **One City Park**

7.1.1 To help address the shortage of high quality Grade A office accommodation in the city centre, the Council acquired the former Police HQ building site to provide a platform for a new city centre office development.

7.1.2 The City needs a regenerated office market to boost business growth, create jobs, support the retail sector and stimulate the provision of new housing. The development at One City Park (OCP), will deliver Grade A accommodation in a unique, attractive and price competitive location.

7.1.3 The Council completed a robust, comprehensive procurement process resulting in Muse being identified as the preferred developer and at its meeting on the 2nd January the Council's Executive Committee resolved to confirm this appointment and to enter into a formal Development Agreement with Muse to deliver the OCP scheme. At the same meeting the Executive also resolved to allocate financial commitment up to a maximum funding commitment into the Council's budget programme to cover the cost of delivering the OCP scheme This provision was included in the Capital Investment Plan for 2020 -24 and was confirmed at the Budget Meeting of the Council on the 20th February 2020.8.1.4 The scheme will deliver a state of the art building providing 5,240sq m of Grade A office space. The accommodation will achieve a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) 'Excellent' rating and an Energy Efficiency rating of 'A'.

- 7.1.5 In June 2020, MHCLG announced a call for Local Authorities to make submissions for grant funding from the newly announced 'Getting Building Fund' which was a Government response to the negative impacts of the Covid 19 early lock-down event intended to accelerate the delivery of regeneration projects that would boost economic growth. The Council submitted the OCP scheme as a potential project which was initially approved to go forward to the full appraisal process to be carried out by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).
- 7.1.6 The Council submitted a Full Business Case for £7.5m of GBF grant funding to assist the delivery of the OCP scheme and this has progressed through the Combined Authority's rigorous assurance process and received final approval for the grant funding in February this year.
- 7.1.7 Although the Covid 19 crisis has inevitably caused severe disruption to the scheme since the appointment of Muse the company and the Council have nevertheless made significant progress as illustrated in the key milestones table below:

1.	Development Agreement between Muse and the Council completed	16 th March 2021
2.	RIBA Stage 3 Design completed	16 th July 2021
3	Detailed Planning Permissions Secured	8 th November 2021
4	RIBA Stage 4 Designs completed	22 nd October 2021
5.	Procurement process to appoint a Main Building Contractor commenced	11 th Oct 2022
6.	Appointment of Main Building Contractor programmed to complete	31 st Mar 2022
7.	Main Building contract programmed to Start on Site	16 th May 2022

- 7.1.8 Assuming that the Council is able to successfully appoint a Main Contractor by the end of March the OCP scheme is programmed to reach Practical Completion Stage in July 2023.

8.2 City Centre Markets

- 8.2.1 The demolition of several buildings on Darley Street undertaken by the Council's appointed contractor, Kier Construction, is nearly complete following a demolition process which started in March 2021. This has been a complex operation in a very confined site with specialist structural support needing to be inserted to maintain the structural integrity of the surrounding buildings. The project should move from the demolition phase into the construction phase during March with the new market building and adjacent market square opening during Autumn 2023.
- 8.2.2 The new state of the art building will deliver a modern multi-level market offering, together with a brand new market square capable of hosting open air events and outdoor trading. One floor of the market will sell non-food and specialist goods, one floor will sell fresh foods and one floor will be dedicated to food and beverage with communal seating.

8.2.3 Following the opening of the new market, the Oastler Centre and Kirkgate Centre market will close.

8.3 **Bradford Live**

8.3.1 The redevelopment and conversion of the former Odeon Cinema is now in its construction phase with the appointment in April 2021 of RN Wooler, a Keighley-based construction company.

8.3.2 Progress on site has been positive with many elements of the old building being stripped back to enable the full transformation of the entire facility.

8.3.3 Like many projects, progress on site has been affected by the combined impact of both Covid-19 and Brexit. Once opened, the redeveloped former Odeon cinema will strengthen the range of live cultural and conference events in the city centre with predicted annual visits of circa 300,000. This will provide a substantial boost to the existing retail/leisure city centre businesses and will further strengthen Bradford's 2025 City of Culture bid.

9. **Station Gateways**

9.1 Both Bradford city centre stations are being redeveloped into high quality gateways to the City with funding from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority under both the West Yorkshire+ Transport Fund (WY+TF) and Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) programmes.

9.2 Improvements to Forster Square station will include a range of interventions including new lifts from Cheapside / Manor Row together with improved station facilities, considering the needs of all users, enhancing safety and security throughout. Morgan Sindall have been appointed as the Council's delivery partner to undertake the further development of design throughout 2022 with works being on site from 2023 to 2024.

9.3 The Interchange is a combined bus and rail station that will see significant redevelopment over the next couple of years in addition to much needed maintenance works planned by the Combined Authority. Due to the level of activity at the Interchange Balfour Beatty have been appointed separately by the Council and WYCA to deliver both the maintenance and improvement works. The WY+TF and TCF works include major changes to the current entrance off Bridge Street relocating the existing taxi rank/drop off point as well as incorporating a new access off Hall Ings, upgrade of the Interchange's retail offer as well as improving the passenger experience of transferring between bus and rail journeys. Works will be carried out in two phases with the first phase concentrating on the maintenance investment in the station building fabric before the wider improvements commence. It is currently anticipated that works will commence late 2022/23 and take approximately 24 months to complete.

10. **Relocation of Coroners Court**

10.1 The new Coroner's Court in Bradford opened in February 2022, providing a vital provision for families and communities of Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale.

- 10.2 The West Yorkshire West Coroner's Court has moved from inside Bradford Magistrates Court to an independent and newly refurbished building in Cater Street, Little Germany.
- 10.3 The new Coroner's Court has many improvements over the previous one, consisting of three courtrooms, of which two can hold jury inquests, flexible office accommodation to promote co-working with partnering agencies and state of the art digital audio recording and secure video conferencing technology, enabling virtual hearings when necessary.

11. **City Centre Residential Developments**

- 11.1 Bradford's City Plan sets out a vision for Bradford city centre providing an excellent place to call home, allowing people from many different households the opportunity to benefit from the advantages of city centre living. Work is on-going to support retail, leisure and evening economy to encourage city centre living.

11.2 **City Village Master Delivery Plan**

- 11.2.1 Following a shift in retail trends and the cementing of the city centre's retail core in and around the Broadway shopping centre, the 'top of town' area needs a new identity and direction.

- 11.2.2 A Master Delivery Plan was commissioned by the Council in 2019 in order to produce a delivery plan to regenerate the area and improve its connectivity to the rest of the city centre.

- 11.2.3 The Council is proposing to revitalise and re-purpose this area to create a 'village' neighbourhood that will be a vibrant, healthy and attractive area with 1,000 new homes, a revitalised independent shopping offer, topped by the new food led Darley Street Market, and flexible business spaces.

- 11.2.4 A new residential led mixed use development is an exciting opportunity for the Council to work collaboratively with public and private sector partners to deliver a place where people will choose to live work and play.

- 11.2.5 As with similar major regeneration plans progress on the City Village scheme is hampered by the effects of the Covid 19 crisis, but work has been revitalised in recent months to bring this key city centre project forward to fruition.

- 11.2.6 The Council has recently secured the engagement of the Combined Authority together with revenue resources to accelerate the final feasibility elements of the project that are intended to culminate in the preparation of an agreed delivery and funding mechanism that can be used to engage with Private Investment/Development and Public Sector funding partners on a meaningful basis by the end of this year.

11.3 **Current Developments**

We are starting to see a shift in terms of quality, with some top spec conversions commanding rental figures of up to £950 per month. Residential developments currently on site in the city centre include –

11.3.1 Conditioning House

11.3.2 The refurbishment of Conditioning House, a Grade II Listed Victorian warehouse building, will deliver 150 new homes (82 one-bed, 67 two-bed and 1 three/four-bed) with office suites, a gym and cafe at the lower ground and ground floor.

11.3.3 The Council's Economy & Development Service secured funding of £1.5m from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Local Growth Fund to contribute to the cost of delivering this prominent regeneration project and the owner/developer of Conditioning House, Priestley Homes, successfully delivered the 150 high quality apartments in during 2021.

11.3.4 Following practical completion of the redevelopment project the new scheme was launched on to the city centre residential property market and to date over 90% of the apartments have been sold or let.

11.4 High Point Building

11.4.1 Similar to Conditioning House, the Economy & Development Service have been successful in securing £2.9m of grant funding from the WYCA Local Growth fund to assist the delivery of this iconic 13 storey city centre commercial property that been vacant and derelict for over twenty-three years. The Owner/Developers, Circus Developments (Bradford) Ltd., intend to carry out rehabilitation and redevelopment work to bring this iconic heritage building back into productive use providing 87 new apartment homes with complementary ground Floor new commercial/business space.

11.4.2 High Point building, designed by local architects John Brunton & Partners for the Bradford Permanent Building Society opened in 1973, and after a merger with the Huddersfield Building Society in 1975 the building became the new HQ for the 'Bradford and Huddersfield Building Society', which later became the Yorkshire Building Society (YBS) in 1982.

11.4.3 After further continued growth YBS left High Point Tower in about 1997 for a purpose built, modern head office building on the outskirts of the city close to the M606. The building was allowed to deteriorate into a very poor internal condition, with signs of wear to the exterior concrete panels. This opportunity to regenerate the building offers a rare option to secure the long term future of this iconic building, that continues to occupy a high profile location at the top of town and within the Council's emerging 'City Village' priority regeneration area.

Circus Developments are currently on site carrying out the refurbishment works and practical completion of the scheme is programmed to be achieved by the end of October 2022.

12. Townscape Heritage Scheme

12.1 Centred in the "Top of Town" area of the Bradford City Centre Conservation Area, this £2 million scheme supports property owners to improve heritage buildings by providing grant contributions of up to 60% to repair and reinstate traditional features such as shop fronts, and bring vacant floor space back into use.

12.2 Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund over four years, the scheme aims to; improve historic buildings, the quality of townscape, increase property values and encourage business investment in the area. 29 applications for funding have been received, and the 2 grant awards have been made. Projects range from reinstating period sash windows through to residential conversions of empty space

are being developed, and the scheme has generated interest from investors around the country. The societal/economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic have slowed progress, but a two-year extension to the scheme has been requested from the Heritage Fund.

- 12.3 Townscape heritage will deliver public realm improvements to the open space around the statue of Richard Oastler on Northgate. The scheme is also working with educational and interested groups to promote the history and heritage of the area, and careers working in the built environment and conservation. An exhibition of student work has been on show at Cartwright Hall.

13. **Top of Town Public Realm Improvements**

- 13.1 Building on the public realm improvements being delivered as part of the Townscape Heritage scheme, the Landscape Design & Conservation Team has made a success bid to the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme, supporting Integrated Actions for Sustainable Urban Development.
- 13.2 The proposals will enhance the streetscape at North Parade, Rawson Square and Northgate, with objectives to Promoting Climate Change Adaptation, Risk Prevention and Management (surface water flooding mitigation) and Preserving and Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency (rehabilitating land and creating biodiverse habitats).
- 13.3 The proposals have gone through two rounds of community engagement, and are going out to tender. Start on site is planned for June (after the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations event on North Parade) and completion by December 2022.

14. **Transforming Cities Fund**

- 14.1 Transport funding has been made available by the Department for Transport to enable core cities and regions to undertake a transformational agenda and bid for projects that improve productivity by investing in public and sustainable transport infrastructure across the City.
- 14.2 In 2020 Bradford submitted a series of Strategic Outline Business Cases seeking funding for four inter-connected TCF projects including:
- **Bradford Centre Cycling & Walking Improvements** – which comprises major interventions to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities within the city core whilst improving sustainable connectivity between Bradford Interchange and Forster Square stations. The project also improves links between City Park and Bradford Live as well as connectivity to the National Media museum.
 - **Bradford Interchange** – as described previously the TCF element of the Bradford Interchange transformation creates enhanced connectivity of the Interchange to the city centre by creating a new pedestrian access opposite City Hall whilst also improving the forecourt environment at the Bridge Street entrance to create a more pedestrian friendly facility.
 - **West Bradford Cycle Superhighway** – This project continues the programme of development of fully segregated cycling links complimenting both the Leeds / Bradford and Canal Road projects. The route extends from the city centre core out to Thornton village.

- **South Bradford Park & Ride and Expressway** – this project will deliver a park and ride facility in south Bradford adjacent to the M606 of a minimum 500 spaces. This facility will provide public transport connectivity between the outer ring road and the city core via dedicated bus services running on an improved bus expressway along Manchester Road.

15. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

15.1 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no financial issues arising from this update report

15.2 RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are no risks arising from this update report

15.3 LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no legal issues specifically arising from this report.

16. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

16.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific sustainability implications arising from this report

16.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no specific impacts.

16.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific community safety implications

16.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are no Human Rights implications

16.5 TRADE UNION

There are no Trade Union implications

16.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

All activity detailed in this report is focussed within the City Ward

16.7 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no data protection or security matters arising.

17. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

18. RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 The Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the contents of this report.

19. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

19.1 Regeneration and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee reports - 23rd October 2018 and 12th February 2020.