

Date: 29 March 2019

Subject: Town Centre Challenge: Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation

Report of: The Mayor of Greater Manchester

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update following the recent public consultation on the establishment of Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for the Town Centre West area of Stockport Town centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority is requested to:

- i. Note the outcome and responses to the consultation undertaken by the Mayor on the proposed designation of an area of land in Stockport as a Mayoral Development Area.
- ii. Give due consideration to the proposal by the Mayor to designate an area as a Mayoral Development Area and notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposes to reject the proposal.
- iii. Note that the Mayor may designate the area of land as a Mayoral Development Area following the expiration of the consideration period where the GMCA has not rejected the proposal, and the consent of the member of the GMCA appointed by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council has been given.
- iv. Note that subject to approval at recommendation ii above, the Mayor shall publicise the designation, notify the secretary of state of the designation and the name to be given to the Mayoral Development Corporation, as follows: “Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation.”
- v. Note that the Mayor in consultation with Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council will establish a shadow board in advance of the designation of the area to set the strategic direction for the area.
- vi. Mandate GMCA officers to work with MHCLG and Stockport Council on the development of the necessary legislation, and to assist with the drafting of the constitutional and financial arrangements for the proposed Mayoral Development Corporation, in consultation with the Mayor.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

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- Risk Management – see paragraph 1.2
- Legal Considerations – see paragraph 6.2 – 6.3
- Financial Consequences – Revenue – see paragraph 1.2 and 2.6
- Financial Consequences – Capital – see paragraph 2.5

- Number of attachments included in the report – N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[Town Centre Challenge Report to GMCA on 26 January 2018](#)

[Town Centre Challenge Report to GMCA on 28 September 2018](#)

[Stockport Council Cabinet Report on the Creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation in Stockport's Town Centre West – December 18th 2018](#)

[Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation Report to the Joint AGMA/GMCA Board on 11 January 2019](#)

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		Yes
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		N/A
TfGMC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
N/A	N/A	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Last September the Greater Manchester Combined Authority agreed to support in principle the creation of a Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) to secure the opportunity to regenerate the Town Centre West area subject to further work. It also agreed a draft set of principles for any Mayoral Development Corporation to be agreed by a future Greater Manchester Combined Authority meeting.
- 1.2. The January 2019 meeting of the joint GMCA / AGMA Executive Board meeting received an update on further work, including engagement with Homes England and a delivery options analysis and agreed the general principles that would apply to any Greater Manchester MDC. It also endorsed the Mayor undertaking a consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a MDC for the Town Centre West area of Stockport town centre and endorsed the general principles which would apply to any GM Mayoral Development Corporation. Such principles as planning powers to remain with a local authority and a commitment of the host authority to underwrite costs and the provision of resources.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. Stockport's Town Centre West area has the potential to be a new urban village of up to 3,000 new homes with complementary mixed use development and the social infrastructure required to support a significant increase in the residential population.
- 2.2. The focus on the regeneration of this part of Stockport is a key part of the Mayoral Town Centre Challenge which was launched in November 2017. A key part of that challenge is to ensure that a stronger housing and employment offer is developed in Greater Manchester's Town Centres – as their role as retail centres changes, and to ensure that we are maximising the opportunity of developing brownfield land in sustainable locations. This integrated regeneration approach is vital to maximise the viability of such brownfield land sites for housing and employment.
- 2.3. Stockport Council has put the redevelopment of the Town Centre West area at the heart of its ambition to reshape the residential offer in Stockport and its approach to the Town Centre Challenge initiative. Increasing the residential population of the town centre is a key component of the Council's approach to supporting and enhancing the town centre as a whole and its ambition to make Stockport a destination of choice in which to live, work, play, and connect.
- 2.4. Large-scale regeneration would ensure that Town Centre West is a healthy, sustainable place which incorporates innovation and smart technology into design and urban living as well as the appropriate social, physical and green infrastructure to support existing and new residents.

- 2.5. As part of the Town Centre Challenge initiative, the GMCA is deploying revenue support in the shape of a Planning Delivery Fund to help address capacity issues and bring in additional and specialist expertise. More substantial investment via GMCA existing funds such as the Housing Investment Loan Fund and walking/Cycling Challenge Fund may also be considered by the MDC once established.
- 2.6. In accordance with the wider principles for any Greater Manchester Mayoral Development Corporation there is a commitment from the host local authority to underwrite running costs (e.g. Board and Chair, staffing, and associated operational activities and expenses).

3. CONSULTATION AND RESPONSE

- 3.1 A Consultation exercise has now been undertaken in respect of the designation of an area of land as a Mayoral Development Corporation for a period of 8 weeks between 14 January and 10 March 2019 in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- 3.2 In summary, the consultation received 205 responses, of which 88.73% of respondents were Stockport residents. Eleven organisations responded to the consultation. In percentage terms the response to the specific questions were:
 - There was overall broad support for the development of a MDC in Stockport with 78.43% of people either agreeing or strongly agreeing that this was the best way to drive forward long term regeneration.
 - 80.88% agreed that the MDC would support and improve Stockport town centre as a whole.
 - 60.29% agreed that the boundary was appropriate.
 - 47.55% agreed or strongly agreed that the MDC should not have planning function nor functions in relation to granting discretionary rate relief as opposed to 21% who disagreed.
 - 36 qualitative feedbacks suggested that proposals could go further; including a broader geographical area and a range of leisure and cultural opportunities.
- 3.3 Appendix A to this report sets out the specific consultation questions and sets out in more detail the consultation responses. To note, all responses will be published on gmconsult.org in due course and will be publicly available.

4. PROPOSED NAME AND BOUNDARY FOR THE MDC

- 4.1. The consultation exercise sought the views of the public, property owners and residents in the area, businesses, and other stakeholders on the proposed name of 'Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation' and the proposed boundary. Both the name and the final boundary will be confirmed in an Order laid before parliament to formally designate the area of land as a Mayoral Development Corporation.

- 4.2. The proposed name of 'Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation' received a mixed response from the 151 people who responded to this question, with some agreeing that the proposed name was factual and informative but that it lacked vision and aspiration. In the absence of a consensus among suggested alternative names it is proposed that the formal name used to establish the Mayoral Development Corporation remains 'Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation' with further consideration given to determining a more engaging 'trading' name as part of an overall approach to marketing and branding.
- 4.3. Stockport town centre's retail and leisure areas are purposely not included in the proposed boundary on the grounds that the Council is already taking a very proactive role in those sectors. Its acquisition of Merseyway shopping centre, and redevelopment proposals it has developed, form a strategy for supporting the retail offer in the context of a rapidly changing retail sector; while the Council's direct investment in the Redrock leisure development reflects its commitment to the leisure sector for the future of the Town Centre. The Council's investment in regeneration elsewhere in the town centre is contributing to improvements east of the A6, most notably in the Market Place and Underbanks and Covent Garden areas, and this approach will continue in parallel with the Mayoral Development Corporation proposal.
- 4.4. 60.29% agreed or strongly agreed that the boundary was appropriate 20.09% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The remaining respondents either didn't have a view, or chose not to answer.
- 4.5. 20% of those who did not endorse the Mayoral Development Area boundary suggested that it should be expanded to include other parts of the town centre.
- 4.6. The proposed Mayoral Development Area boundary that was published in the consultation was devised to facilitate creating additional residential development in an area that does not currently have extensive residential land uses. For that reason, large existing residential neighbourhoods are not proposed for inclusion in the proposed Mayoral Development Area. Bringing forward additional residential development and an increase in the residential population within the proposed Mayoral Development Area is expected to support the provision of additional social infrastructure and amenity that benefits the residents of adjacent areas.
- 4.7. For the reasons outlined above it is therefore proposed that the boundary as defined in the consultation should be unchanged for the purposes of any designation of a Town Centre West Mayoral Development Area or creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation.

5. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC CASE

- 5.1. The proposed Mayoral Development Corporation will support the delivery of up to 3,000 new homes along with new employment development and supporting social infrastructure, open space, and amenity. In order to assess the overall economic benefit of this scale of development the Strategic Regeneration Framework which is being prepared for Stockport Council will include an economic impact assessment based on emerging land use proposals to assess the estimated job creation potential, overall economic uplift, and economic additionality of the proposed Mayoral Development Corporation.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1. The Mayor may designate the area of land as a Mayoral Development Area following:
- The outcome of the positive consultation exercise;
 - the expiration of the consideration period where the GMCA has not rejected the proposal and
 - the consent of the member of the GMCA appointed by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council has been given.
- 6.2. Following satisfaction of the above, the Mayor shall:
- Publicise the designation; and
 - notify the Secretary of State of the designation and the name to be given to the MDC .
- 6.3. Once the secretary of state has received notification of the designation, he must establish a mayoral development corporation for the area and give it the name as notified by the Mayor. Following discussions with MHCLG it is anticipated that the Order could be in place as early as summer 2019. In the meantime a shadow board will be established, the Strategic Regeneration Framework will be published for public consultation and a detailed delivery plan produced.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. Recommendations are found at the beginning of the report.

APPENDIX A – CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Mayoral Development Corporation – Regenerating Stockport’s Town Centre West: Consultation summary

Overview

During the consultation period between January 14 and March 10, 2019 205 responses were made. Of these, 199 were online applications, three were postal responses, and three came in from partners via email.

Throughout the questions below, a selection of quotes from respondents are included. All of the responses – both qualitative and quantitative will be published on gmconsult.org¹. The quotes below have been selected to demonstrate a broad indication of either positive or negative sentiment from the respondents.

Q - Do you agree that a Mayoral Development Corporation would be the best way to drive forward long-term regeneration for Stockport’s Town Centre West?

- 78.43% (160 people) **agree or strongly agree** with the proposals,
- 8.82% (18 people) **didn’t have a view either way**.
- 12.74% (26 people) either **disagreed or strongly disagreed**.

We received 36 **qualitative responses in relation to this question**. These included:

- That it was encouraging to see Stockport drive positive change – *“It’s great news that Stockport is, at last, being included in the GM improvement plan.”*
- There was some criticism that the town centre had been neglected – *“It used to be a busy thriving shopping place. With high parking charges and business rates they have virtually forced people to shop elsewhere.”*
- Other comments about the need to consider wider implications of the proposals – *“A major improvement of the A6 access to Manchester is the first priority, not creating major problems with building works and subsequent housing without this being in place first and clear evidence it’s working.”*
- Another comment questioned the need – *“Existing mechanisms exist to develop and deliver a regeneration framework; the MDC would simply become another opaque administrative layer in the development process.”*

Q - Do you agree that the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for the Town Centre West area, to lead regeneration would help support and improve Stockport Town Centre as a whole?

- 80.88% (165 people) agreed that the setting up of the MDC would deliver regeneration that would support Stockport Town Centre as a whole,
- 16.67% (34 people) disagreed that this would be the case,
- The remaining five respondents chose not to answer this question.

We received 87 qualitative responses in relation to this question. These included:

¹ Where respondents have given express permission.

- On the whole the comments were positive – *“Love the idea of Stockport being transformed into a modern and hopefully tasteful place to go to ... I would like to see building's that are in keeping with the town's heritage and history.”* To add to this – *“The town centre has long been in need of a substantial redevelopment to clear out old and unattractive businesses and spaces. The vision is good as long as there is funding and support to make it happen in a realistic time scale.”*
- There was some doubt over the ability to make positive change – *“Stockport is beyond any recovery ... “Under Offer” posters on the windows are an indication of the lack of interest.”* And – *“I do not believe the Mayoral Development Corporation would actually be able to deliver the promise. I also fear that the intention is to swamp the town centre with cheap small and badly built flats that have no place as family homes.”*
- Some offered caveats for the development of the MDC - *“it mustn't give developers a free ticket to build what they like, the homes must be sustainable, of good quality with all amenities and infrastructure in place.”* Along the same lines - *“Town's centres need to offer something else to residents, people still want places of interest to visit, be that eatery's, nice scenery, family friendly activities, beautiful places with good atmosphere.”*

Q - Do you agree that the boundary is appropriate?

- 60.29% (123 people) **agreed or strongly agreed** that the boundary was appropriate
- 20.09% (41 people) either **disagreed or strongly disagreed**
- The remaining respondents either **didn't have a view, or chose not to answer.**

We received 55 qualitative responses in relation to this question. Some respondents didn't feel that the plans went far enough, with multiple other areas being suggested for inclusion:

- *“The A6 needs to be included. We need to design out A6 traffic and redevelop buildings either side of the A6 to retain the best and replace the best. We need more trees in Stockport, to create shade and soften the concrete and tarmac jungle that it has become during the last decade.”*
- *“It might be worth extending the current A6 boundary further across ... so that the A6 itself can be integrated into the plans. And so that the old housing stock / industrial stock just to the east of the A6, much of which is old and run down, might also be considered.”*
- *“Kings Reach Business Park and Yew Street need to be included as there is a significant lack of infrastructure in this area, primarily public transport.”*
- *“Areas on the fringe of Edgeley, adjacent to King Street West and Wood Street, are dominated by poor quality social housing that is no longer fit for purpose. The boundary should include these areas with a view to improving these sites and maintaining the quantum of social housing across the wider development.”*

Q - What do you think of 'Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation' as a name for this MDC?

We received 151 responses to this part of the consultation. Overall:

- People felt the name was too long, confusing and wouldn't engage the public. *“It feels too long and will lead to an acronym that many people may not understand.”*

- Some people felt that the name didn't demonstrate the aspiration of the proposals.
- There were some comments that said that whilst the name wasn't overly 'exciting', it does explain what the MDC is to some extent.

Other suggestions included:

- Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation
- Stockport Rejuvenation
- Stockport New Town
- Think about some of the existing features - Viaduct Village or King Street Park
- Stockport Downtown Development West
- Stockport West Development Hub
- West Side Development

Q - Do you agree that any MDC should not have planning functions nor functions in relation to granting discretionary rate relief?

- 47.55% (97 people) **agreed or strongly agreed** that the MDC should not have planning function nor functions in relation to granting discretionary rate relief,
- 21.08% (43 people) either **disagreed or strongly disagreed**,
- The remaining respondents (29.9%) either **neither agreed or disagreed** or didn't respond to the question (1.47%).

Q - Do you have any other comments about the regeneration of Stockport's Town Centre West through a Mayoral Development Corporation?

We received 118 responses to this part of the consultation. Broadly positive in their sentiment:

- Comments included the style and approach to regeneration - *"Just please make it a regenerated town that reflects Stockport's character. A place that is a pleasant experience with tasteful bars, cafes and theatres etc. A town to be proud of now and for future generations."* And – *"Please do it sympathetically and mindful of the current communities, whilst encouraging new residents to settle. The current character of the area and its historical architecture should be preserved and enhanced."*
- There were multiple comments on creating a regeneration programme fit for residents and businesses, where people are at the heart of the development – *"I would like the focus to be on both quality of life for residents, and enabling local businesses to succeed."* And – *"I hope this project will be honest, transparent, community inclusive, aspirational and in the best interests of the people of Stockport as a whole."*
- And finally - *"We have the potential here to build a new neighbourhood fit for citizens ... I have faith in a MDC to deliver this."*

Q - Are you responding on behalf of yourself or an organisation?

We received 13 responses from either those people who are responding to the consultation on behalf of a group or an organisation or as an agent on behalf of a group or organisation. The organisations that responded were:

- KAST Energy Technologies
- F.R.Monkhouse Limited & F.R.Monkhouse Limited Pension Scheme
- J. R. Foy and son LTD
- Stockport Community Interest Co Ltd - trading as Vision Stockport
- United Utilities
- Network Rail
- Environment Agency
- Bardsley Construction Ltd
- Entwisle Paddon &Co Ltd
- Manchester Civic Society
- Homes England
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Q – Contact details

190 people gave their names, postcodes, and a means to contact them (postal or email address) in order to keep them updated as the proposal develops.

Q – Which local authority areas do you live in?

Out of the 204 people who responded to this question, 88.73% (181 people) are residents of Stockport. Four respondents were from somewhere else in the North West, two from National organisations and 17 others were from other Districts within Greater Manchester.

Demographic information

We collected a range of information from respondents about their personal demographics. This information showed that:

- The majority of respondents (82.35% were white British) with the remainder being from other ethnic groups or preferring not to state.
- There was a mix of different religions across the respondents (36.27% Christian, 44.12% having no religion, 3.43% from other religions and 13.24% preferring not to state)
- More men completed the consultation than women. Men made up 51.96% of respondents, with 35.78% being women and the remaining preferring not to state or not completing the question.
- When asked if people identified as transgender, 85.29% said no with the remainder being respondents answering the other available options.
- 155 people answered the question on sexuality, with 69.61% identifying as heterosexual or straight, 4.41% gay or lesbian and the remaining respondents either identifying as another sexuality, preferring not to state or not completing the question.
- 76.47% said that they don't have a disability. 10.78% identified that they had some form of disability (learning, mobility, sensory or other disability). The remaining respondents either preferred not to state or didn't complete the question.

To see all completed responses, these will be published on gmconsult.org. All respondents, whose responses are published, have given permission for them to be released.

