

Crawley Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Agenda for the **Overview and Scrutiny Commission** which will be held in **Ashurst Main Hall - The Charis Centre**, on **Monday, 14 March 2022** at **7.00 pm**

Nightline Telephone No. 07881 500 227

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Piggott".

Chief Executive

Membership:
Councillors

T G Belben (Chair), K Khan (Vice-Chair), M L Ayling, R G Burgess, R A Lanzer, T Lunnon, S Mullins, A Nawaz, A Pendlington and S Piggott

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The order of business may change at the Chair's discretion

Part A Business (Open to the Public)

Pages

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, councillors are reminded that it is a requirement to declare interests where appropriate.

Councillors must also declare if they are subject to their party group whip in relation to any items under consideration.

3. Minutes

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 31 January 2022.

4. Public Question Time

To answer any questions or hear brief statements from the public which are relevant to the items on this agenda. The period will end after **15 minutes** or later at the Chair's discretion.

5. Proposed Changes to the Essential Car User Allowance Scheme

To consider report CEX/57 of the Chief Executive.

Rule 16.4 (Special Urgency Notice) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules will be applied and a decision will be taken by the Cabinet on this matter at its meeting on 16 March 2022.

The reason that it will be necessary to publish the report later than the 5 clear days required is following a request from the Unison Union, who need to finalise their consultation with their Branch Executive members. As this is a staff related matter and to assist with Unison coming to an agreed position on the Essential User Car Allowance Scheme a request for the additional time was agreed by the Chief Executive, who felt it was important that their views be included in the final report for Cabinet's consideration.

If the decision was delayed further, this would take us into the next municipal year, creating further uncertainty to the staff affected.

The Leader of the Council as the Chair of Cabinet, and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission have been consulted and have confirmed their support for the use of the urgency being acceptable.

This report will be included in a supplementary agenda.

6. Town Centre Regeneration Programme Third Edition

13 - 30

To consider report PES/397 of the Head of Economy and Planning.

7. Forthcoming Decision List - and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

To consider any requests for [future items](#). Those highlighted items have been referred to the Commission.

The next scheduled meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission is currently set for Monday 4 July, where the reports below are referred.

Cabinet 6 July 2022

OSC 4 July 2022

| | Item | PFD |
|---|---|-----|
| 1 | Treasury Management Outturn 2021 – 2022 | Yes |
| 2 | Financial Outturn 2021-2022 (Quarter 4) | |

8. Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

To receive a brief update on the [Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee](#) (HASC).

9. Supplemental Agenda

Any urgent item(s) complying with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public

The Commission is asked to consider passing the following resolution:-

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraphs specified against the item.

Part B Business - Closed to the Public
11. Crawley Towns Fund Project Business Cases

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Exempt Paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

To consider report PES/399 of the Head of Economy and Planning.

| | Pages |
|--|----------------|
| <p>12. Metcalf Way Depot and Workshop - Redevelopment</p> <p>Exempt Paragraph 3 <i>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</i></p> <p>To consider report HPS/31 of the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services.</p> | <p>47 - 58</p> |

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Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 31 January 2022 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

T G Belben (Chair)

K Khan (Vice-Chair)

M L Ayling, R G Burgess, R A Lanzer, T Lunnon, S Mullins, A Nawaz, A Pendlington and S Piggott

Also in Attendance:

Councillor M G Jones and P K Lamb

Officers Present:

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Ian Duke | Deputy Chief Executive |
| Heather Girling | Democratic Services Officer |
| Karen Hayes | Head of Corporate Finance |
| Amanda Kendall | Head of Crawley Homes |
| Clare Prosser | Tenancy Services Manager |
| Clem Smith | Head of Economy and Planning |
| Paul Windust | Chief Accountant |

1. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures were made:

| Councillor | Item and Minute | Type and Nature of Disclosure |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Councillor R A Lanzer | HASC (Minute 10) | Personal Interest – Member of WSCC |
| Councillor R A Lanzer | HASC (Minute 10) | Personal Interest – WSCC Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing |

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 10 January 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

4. 2022/2023 Budget and Council Tax

The Commission considered report [FIN/549](#) with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and the Chief Accountant. The Council has a statutory responsibility to set a Council Tax and Budget in advance of the commencement of the new financial year. The Council Tax has to be set by March each year. During the past year the Council had continued to review its spending plans and considered options to amend spending to meet new priorities.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- Due to the variation in the inflation estimate, the accuracy of this within the fees and charges was queried. The Council's financial advisors currently provide advice and model the inflation estimates. It was an assessment to increase fees whilst still providing services, without impacting on service users.
- Clarification as to whether an environmental review would take place on the essential and casual car user allowances, together with the employment benefit analysis. It was acknowledged it would be a substantial change for officers involved and there was a need to make savings at a time when the council was struggling to recruit. Whilst work had taken place there was not a demand to prolong the review.
- Given the current cost to the council for processing cheques it was queried if it was appropriate to charge an administration fee to discourage customers paying by cheque and incentivise other payment options. The pandemic had highlighted that other payment options were available but in other circumstances these had not been used. It was felt assistance should be offered to customers to transfer them to other methods.
- It was queried whether the revenue cost of borrowing as a percentage of revenue spend should be tabled within the report as the cost of borrowing for capital projects had increased. This could be included going forward given the council's current position.
- Confirmation provided regarding the increase capital budget for Tilgate Park lake erosion in that it had previously been agreed with the Park for a certain amount of capital in return for cost-neutrality. This increased fund was required for lake erosion works as a result of environmental improvements required.
- It was noted within the pay policy statement 2022/23 that the pay award had not been agreed within the current financial year. The exact date was currently unknown due to ongoing negotiations.
- Recognition that there were several aspects within the local government finance reforms that could affect the council; business rates, new homes bonus, the Levelling Up paper and any potential restructuring around local government could result in substantial change.
- Confirmation provided that some of the EU exit fund had been spent at Port Health but further funds needed to be allocated.
- Further discussion took place on the supplementary agenda. It was clarified that 121 units referred to households. There was always the need to ease the reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation and increase the provision of temporary accommodation as much as possible. Housing policy was strictly adhered to, and

it was also noted that the numbers on the housing register had not reduced over the years.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report, supplementary agenda and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

5. Treasury Management Strategy 2022-2023

The Commission considered report [FIN/557](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance on the Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/2023 which the Council was required to approve before the start of the financial year in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management and the Council's financial regulations.

During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and Chief Accountant, Councillors made the following comments:

- Clarity sought and obtained on the likelihood of a negative interest rate and the value of investments as a result of a potential move to a negative rate. It was acknowledged that it was now unlikely to achieve negative interest rates.
- It was commented that commercial investments were shown at the market value from March 2021. It is estimated the investments would stay at the same value. It would be beneficial to have historic cost, valuation and re-valuation. This could be considered as part of the Treasury Outturn report.
- Confirmation that investment net rate of return (net of all costs) included rent *as it was due* for commercial investments: property.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

6. 2021/2022 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3

The Commission considered report [FIN/554](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance on the quarter 3 budget monitoring, which set out a summary of the Council's actual revenue and capital spending for the quarters to December 2021 together with the main variations from the approved spending levels and impact on future budgets.

During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and Chief Accountant, Councillors made the following comments:

- Income streams continued to be affected by the pandemic but it was acknowledged that grant funding had been available to assist. It was recognised that this was not a long term sustainable solution.
- Recognition that although the overcharge refunds were going into quarter 3 figures for 2021/22 this was awaiting auditors' agreement.
- It was queried how the pandemic had impacted on contractors' sickness given the high levels of repairs and the costs required.
- Recognition that Three Bridges station was still listed as a capital project and clarification was sought as to the risk if the project did not proceed. It was identified that the funding had been allocated and there was an opportunity to improve the rail and bus infrastructure from the station. It was anticipated a planning application would come forward in March however it would be looking at the same water neutrality implications and the constructions work would have an impact.

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- Clarification was sought regarding the memorial gardens play improvements completion. (Note: unfortunately Covid had delayed the installation of a water fountain). Details were also sought as to the major works at Milton Mount flats.
- Confirmation that the 'contingencies' budget included all the major HRA projects.
- As this was potentially her last attendance at OSC, the Commission took the opportunity to record its thanks and gratitude to the Head of Corporate Finance, Karen Hayes for all her hard work, diligence, dedication and support she had provided not just the Commission but the Council as a whole, throughout her many years of service.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

7. Extension to Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) - Car Cruising

The Commission considered report [CH/195](#) of the Head of Crawley Homes. The report sought approval to the extension of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to prohibit car cruise activity by a further 3 years when the existing PSPO expires.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Crawley Homes and Tenancy Services Manager, Councillors made the following comments:

- Acknowledgement that additional measures were being investigated to prevent car cruise activity including enforcement, the issuing of warning letters and fixed penalty notices (FPN).
- It was paramount to liaise with local businesses and this had resulted in some successes in key locations associated with car cruises (for example Sainsbury West Green) where additional measures had been installed such as traffic calming and mobile CCTV units.
- Joint working and consultation with the police, WSCC, Manor Royal Business District and Gatwick Diamond Business Watch had proven positive.
- Recognition that whilst liaison had taken place between the police and the car cruise organisers it was not the council's position to propose alternative locations, merely to send a clear message through joint working and the extension of the PSPO that certain behaviours would not be tolerated and help reassure residents and businesses that unreasonable conduct relating to car cruise activity was being addressed.
- Acknowledgement that the FPN was currently set at a £100 which applied to all individuals taking part in car cruise activity. Following this, on non-payment of the FPN reminder letters can follow and subsequent court action if the fine remained unpaid. Warning letters had been a deterrent for the activity to cease in the past. The amount of fines collected currently resided within the NASB budget.
- Recognition that whilst during March 2019-October 2021 there were 146 incidents reported to the police and 131 incidents reported to the council during the same period, some of these could have been duplicated.
- Confirmation provided that since the PSPO was made, the council had issued 83 breach of PSPO letters. 4 of these related to repeat offenders. Until recently, no fixed penalty notices were issued, 32 have now been issued.
- Acknowledgement that the car cruise gatherings posed both a nuisance and danger to the wider public road users and it was felt the seriousness had not altered, however the frequency of the larger events had increased.
- Recognition that the current car cruise activity was a health and safety concern in addition to an anti-social behaviour issue and the Commission offered its general support for the extension to the Public Space Protection Order – Car Cruising to continue to enhance public safety through a targeted approach.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

8. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

PART B BUSINESS - CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

9. Crawley Innovation Centre - Draft Towns Fund Business Case

Exempt Paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

The Commission considered report PES/395 of the Head of Economy and Planning. The report presented the draft business case seeking Towns Fund monies for the Crawley Innovation Centre project, following endorsement and support for the project from the Crawley Town Deal Board and sought Cabinet approval for the Towns Fund business case for the Crawley Innovation Centre and for a summary version to be submitted to the government.

The Commission was advised of 3 amendments to the recommendations set out in section 2.2 of the report:

The Cabinet is recommended to

- 1) amend the following wording of recommendation 2.2 and in recommendation 2.2(d) as follows:

Amend '£8.6 million' to read '£8.4 million'

- 2) add the following recommendation to Crawley Innovation Centre – Draft Towns Fund Business Case FIN/395 before consideration of the report:

2.2(g) *“Authorise the Council's S151 Officer to request the Local Enterprise Partnership's powers of flexibility in order to ensure the Getting Building Fund (GBF) monies are defrayed in 2021-22 in accordance with the LEP's requirements by spending any residual GBF monies on the new Town Hall capital scheme and then rolling forward the equivalent sum from the Town Hall scheme into 2022-23 to ensure delivery of Crawley Innovation Centre project”.*

The Reason for Recommendation was further amended and a [supplementary agenda](#) would be published to document the changes.

During the discussion with the Head of Economy and Planning, the following comments were made:

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- Recognition that the option proposed enabled the Council to acquire a suitable property should one become available to enable delivery of the Crawley Innovation Centre project.
- Acknowledgement that the option proposed enabled the Council to deliver on opportunities, whilst protecting, consolidating and enhancing economic diversity.
- There was overall support for the proposal which was poised to play a key and interesting role in delivering on aspirations, investment and future needs within the town.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report, amendments, additional recommendation and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

Re-Admission of the Public

The Chair declared the meeting reopen for consideration of business in public session.

10. Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

An update was provided from the most recent HASC meeting. Key items of discussion included:

1. The impact of temporary measures introduced as a result of Covid

Addressing the current backlog in dentistry care. NHS England is responsible for funding to support dentistry services and majority of budget is allocated on operations. Since the pandemic 7 practices had closed and during March-June 2020 dentists could only offer pain relief due to the restrictions in place, but urgent treatment centres were in place. This has subsequently increased but with limited patients, with approximately 85% now operating however there was a backlog and a struggle with recruitment. Additionally many people were finding it difficult to register and this lack of access to NHS dentistry sometimes impacted on other NHS services in West Sussex.

2. Financial Assessment Improvement Programmes

It was questioned how effective has the Financial Assessment had been and whether the previously identified priorities were appropriate, particularly as not all customers had been assessed since 2019.

Prepayment cards were currently being investigated and the procedure was going to be reviewed to provide an improved more personalised service with more communication. However unfortunately there are still some cases unresolved but all have ongoing dialogue to ensure that they would soon be determined.

The debt recovery programme was going to be reviewed and further training was scheduled for assessors including disability awareness training.

Assessments were now going to be carried out on time and the improvement programme was welcomed.

11. Forthcoming Decision List - and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

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14 March

1. Changes of the Essential Car User Scheme
2. Town Centre Regeneration Programme v3
3. Towns Fund - To seek approval of business cases (PART B)

4 July

1. Treasury Management Outturn 2021 – 2022
2. Financial Outturn 2021-2022 (Quarter 4)

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.15 pm

T G Belben (Chair)

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Crawley Borough Council

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission
14 March 2022

Report to Cabinet
16 March 2022

Town Centre Regeneration Programme **Third Edition**

Report of the Head of Economy & Planning - **PES/397**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Town Centre Regeneration Programme (TCRP) was first published in February 2016 and, following significant progress in terms of programme delivery, an updated version was approved in 2018.
- 1.2 The intention was to complete a further update in early 2020 however the onset of the coronavirus pandemic and its subsequent impact on Crawley's local economy required the council to focus instead on leading and coordinating the economic recovery of the town.
- 1.3 Since 2018 and despite the pandemic, further progress has been made to deliver many objectives within the TCRP and in December 2021, the council published its 'One Town' Economic Recovery Plan as an overarching document for all of our existing delivery programmes, including the TCRP.
- 1.4 This report presents a summary of that progress, reflecting the future path to economic recovery from the pandemic and seeks approval of a revised, updated version of the TCRP.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission consider the report and decide what comments, if any, it wishes to submit to the Cabinet.

- 2.2 To the Cabinet:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- a. Approve the updated Town Centre Regeneration Programme (Appendix A) prior to a period of stakeholder consultation as set out in section 7.1 of report PES/397.
- b. Delegate authority to the Head of Economy & Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development to approve the final version of the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, noting and considering any responses or representations received following the period of stakeholder consultation and undertaking minor modifications, if required.

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3 Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the updated TCRP prior to a period of targeted consultation with stakeholders, partners and businesses.

4 Background

- 4.1 The regeneration of Crawley Town Centre is one of the top priorities for the Council's administration.
- 4.2 Originally published in 2016 and updated in 2018, the TCRP sets out Crawley Borough Council's ambition and objectives for regeneration across the Town Centre, both physically and economically.
- 4.3 Both the original development and subsequent updates of the TCRP involved a comprehensive programme of consultation with stakeholders and partners, intentionally cementing commitments and putting partnership working at the heart of the document and its subsequent outputs.

5 Description of Issue to be resolved

- 5.1 Created as a 'living document', the programme is now nearly seven years old and significant progress has been made following the successful completion or further development of a number of key regeneration objectives and activities.
- 5.2 Furthermore, in March 2021, a substantial Towns Fund investment of £21.1m was awarded to Crawley Borough Council to deliver the Town Investment Plan. The Plan includes a number of transformative regeneration schemes, including three with a specific focus in the town centre that will unlock jobs and boost economic activity.
- 5.3 The coronavirus pandemic has had a devastating effect on Crawley's local economy and the town centre. In December 2021, Crawley Borough Council published its 'One Town' Economic Recovery Plan; an overarching, strategic plan for all our existing delivery programmes including the TCRP. A key priority of the Plan is a focus on Town Centre renewal by enabling a vibrant neighbourhood and sustainable economic future for the town centre via qualitative investment, building on our recent achievements.
- 5.4 The Town Centre Regeneration Programme has therefore been updated to:
- recognise and celebrate our achievements, demonstrate progress and promote future plans
 - promote the excellent outcomes from the Crawley Growth Programme schemes delivered to date
 - highlight current activity whilst championing the Council's continued commitment to partnership working and its ongoing renewal and expansion.
 - ensure that priority schemes are aligned with those identified in the Crawley Growth Programme and Towns Fund, complementing the Borough Council's Economic Recovery Plan which was published in response to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Crawley's economy.
 - maintain the document's usability and significance for the council, partners and stakeholders

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6 Information & Analysis Supporting Recommendation

- 6.1 A comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement with over 65 business organisations took place during development of the original TCRP and this engagement has continued for both individual regeneration projects and the programme as a whole. This engagement has supported the successful approach being taken by the council and endorses the ongoing commitment from key partners and stakeholders.
- 6.2 A review the original aims and objectives has been undertaken to ensure they reflect the current and future priorities for the town centre, as follows:-

Ambition: To become a dynamic, sustainable business growth hub with a bold and vibrant community heart for Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond. This will drive a diverse retail, leisure and cultural offer, excellent public realm, high quality town centre living and a thriving evening economy.

Objectives:

1. Excellent public realm
2. Vibrant community heart for Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond
3. Diverse retail, leisure, cultural and business offer
4. High quality, sustainable residential accommodation supported by a rich mix of community facilities
5. Dynamic and sustainable business growth

The objectives are supported by the following seven themes.

1. Investing in revitalised public realm, highways and infrastructure
2. Bringing forward key town centre opportunity sites
3. Creating the conditions for new high grade business space
4. Developing town centre neighbourhood amenities
5. Governance, engagement and co-ordination
6. Marketing, branding, inward investment
7. Complementary policy.

- 6.3 Thanks to the support of our partners and Crawley Borough Council's commitment to the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, a lot of work has been done, much achieved and much progress has been made since the second edition was published in 2018. Key achievements include:

- **Crawley Growth Programme** – a further successful bid to the LEP for funding, bringing the total Local Growth Fund investment to £15.4m which will unlock a combined private/public sector £60 million investment, delivering a range of large scale regeneration, public realm improvements and sustainable transport schemes.
- **Towns Fund** – £21.1m funding received to deliver the Town Investment Plan.
- **Queensway and The Pavement** – completed in 2019, this £2.2m project extended the public realm regeneration from Queens Square along key connector streets
- **Station Gateway** – planning permission granted for a significant residential-led mixed-use development including a new train station. Funding secured for complementary and integrated highways and public realm improvements and an enhanced bus station.

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- **Eastern Gateway** - £8.85m public realm and highways improvement scheme commenced construction in 2021 to implement new cycling and walking infrastructure, soft landscaping to create a pleasant environment and support key development opportunities to come forward at strategic opportunity sites. Due to complete Summer 2022.
- **Employment & Skills Plan** – successful bids to WSCC and DWP for over £400k funding to deliver the Employ Crawley service (extended in 2021 to include a Youth Employment Support Hub), supporting hundreds of local residents on their journey into work or into higher skilled, higher paid employment.
- **New Town Hall** – Demolition of existing site and construction commenced of a major mixed-use development including a new town hall, significant residential development and 77,000 square feet of new build Grade A office space.
- **District Heat Network:** Construction of a new energy centre on the former town hall site to help reduce energy and carbon emissions for connected local residents. Phase one completed in 2022
- **Planning permission granted for over 1400 residential units in the town centre; 635 delivered to date.**
- **Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID):** In November 2019, town centre businesses voted in favour of establishing a BID, which will unlock more than £2m of investment over the next five years and help to create a thriving a town centre.
- **Crawley College STEM Centre** – brand new £5m facility, opened in 2021, providing virtual and mixed reality technology and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) facilities.
- **Town Centre Signage and Wayfinding** – new monoliths and finger posts installed across the town centre, including a Historic High Street Conservation Area sign.
- **Establishment of Historic High Street Business Forum and Professional Services Business Forum**
- **Inward investment:** New [website](#) launched and an inward investment programme developed to promote the wealth of opportunities in the town and attract new investment.

7 Implications

- 7.1 Subject to Cabinet approval of this third draft, a period of wider consultation with key partners, stakeholders and businesses will be undertaken.
- 7.2 Following completion of the consultation period, responses and representations will be noted and considered by the Head of Economy & Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development and the final TCRP will be published in July 2022.
- 7.3 Staffing
Resources are in place (or budgeted for as part of project development proposals) to deliver the programme. There are no additional staffing implications associated with these recommendations.
- 7.4 Financial
There are no direct financial implications associated with this report
- 7.5 Legal
There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

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7.6 Equalities

Equality impact assessments will be carried out where and when appropriate in respect of the individual regenerations schemes listed in the programme

8. **Background Papers**

'One Town' Crawley Economic Recovery Plan 2022-2037 – report [PES/391](#) to Cabinet 24 November 2021

Town Centre Regeneration Programme – Second Edition – report [PES/261](#) to Cabinet 29 November 2017

Contact Officer:

Lynn Hainge, Economic Regeneration Manager
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Crawley – A Place to Grow
Town Centre Regeneration Programme
Version three – JULY 2022

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Foreword

Since 2016, Crawley Borough Council and partners have been busy delivering an ambitious, exciting and successful programme to revive and regenerate the town centre – breathing new life into key locations in order to realise the area's full potential as a fantastic place to visit, live, work and do business.

The Programme has seen some major improvements to public spaces including £5.4m public realm regeneration schemes in Queens Square, the heart of the town centre, and along Queensway and The Pavement.

Crawley's economy has been badly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with the majority of town centre businesses forced to close during periods of lockdown and restrictions, a dramatic fall in visitor numbers and the negative impact of furlough and home-working. In response, the Council has led efforts to boost the town centre economy and generate new business investment and jobs by continuing to lead and facilitate the development of major programmes of new infrastructure, amenity and residential development.

In December 2021, Crawley Borough Council published its 'One Town' Economic Recovery Plan; an overarching, strategic plan for all our existing delivery programmes including the Town Centre Regeneration Programme. A key priority of the Plan is a focus on Town Centre renewal by enabling a vibrant neighbourhood and sustainable economic future for the town centre via qualitative investment, building on our recent achievements.

A range of major developments have continued to make good progress including construction of a new town hall, brand new Grade A business space and high-quality residential accommodation, along with major improvements to public space and road networks.

Helping to bring our ambitions to fruition is £21.1m secured from the Towns Fund; this will deliver a number of transformative regeneration schemes (including three with a specific focus in the town centre) that will unlock jobs and boost economic activity. This, in addition to the £15.4m previously secured from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver the Crawley Growth Programme, is clear evidence of the confidence that exists in Crawley as a place to invest.

At the heart of this Programme is our work with stakeholders and the community, ensuring everyone sees the benefit of a regenerated Crawley town centre. There's something for everyone in our Regeneration Programme – we hope to see you soon!

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Working in partnership to deliver regeneration

www.investcrawley.co.uk

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Our ambition for Crawley town centre

To become a dynamic, sustainable business growth hub with a bold and vibrant community heart for Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond. This will drive a diverse retail and leisure offer, excellent public realm, high quality town centre living and a thriving evening economy.

Our objectives

1. Excellent public realm
2. Vibrant community heart for Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond
3. Diverse retail, leisure, culture and business offer
4. High quality, sustainable residential accommodation supported by a rich mix of community facilities
5. Dynamic and sustainable business growth

Regeneration in action

Seven key themes will help us transform the town centre and bring our vision to life:

1. Investing in revitalised public realm, highways and infrastructure
 2. Bringing forward key town centre opportunity sites
 3. Creating the conditions for new high grade business space
 4. Developing town centre neighbourhood amenities
 5. Governance, engagement and co-ordination
 6. Marketing, branding and inward investment
 7. Complementary policy
-

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Crawley - a town of opportunities

Crawley already has a thriving business presence and a great retail and leisure offer but it still has a lot more to give. Just some of the existing town centre retailers and businesses include:

Business:

- ASB Law
- ASSI (Air Safety Support International)
- Barrington James
- EMW Law
- DMH Stallard
- Graves Jenkins
- Irwin Mitchell
- Rapidata
- Rapp UK
- RDJW Architects

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- Regus
- RSM
- SHW
- Theradex (Europe)
- Travelopia
- Vail Williams

Along with a diverse retail offer which, despite the huge changes in retailing, continues to evolve, a rapidly increasing number of town centre residential properties have been delivered with many more in the pipeline.

Leisure options are excellent in the town centre with a large leisure park home to top names like Hollywood Bowl, Cineworld and Nuffield Health, along with a wide range of restaurants. Crawley's Historic High Street has a growing cluster of pubs, bars and restaurants.

Supporting the vibrancy and neighbourhood facilities is Crawley College; part of the Chichester College group and rated 'Outstanding' by OFSTED. The facility offers education opportunities to thousands of local students each year and in 2021, saw the opening of a new £5m state-of-the-art STEM Centre on its campus.

Retail & Leisure:

- B&M Home Store
- Decathlon
- Dunelm
- Hotel Chocolat
- iStore
- M&S
- Next
- Pret a Manger
- Primark
- River Island
- Superdry
- Turtle Bay
- Wildwood

Key strategic opportunity sites include:

- Crawley Station and Car Parks
- Telford Place
- County Buildings
- The Broadway and Cross Keys
- Town Hall (land North of The Boulevard)
- Crawley College
- MOKA, Station Way

There's still room for business to grow and we're looking to create even more space to enable a diverse range of businesses to both start and develop.

Recent years and months have seen a host of successful new openings and moves into the town centre including Five Guys, Dunelm, Wagamama, Barrington James and Taco Bell not to mention a good range of independents.

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Progress So Far

Thanks to the support of our partners and Crawley Borough Council's commitment to the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, a lot of work has taken place since the first edition was launched in 2016.

Crawley Growth Programme: Working in partnership with West Sussex County Council, successful bids to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership for £15.4m helps pay for a number of transformational improvements including public realm and road infrastructure, sustainable transport improvements and business space upgrades. See page 8 for more information.

Towns Fund: In 2019, Crawley was 1 of 101 places invited to develop Town Deal proposals as part of the Towns Fund. Following submission of a Town Investment Plan in 2020, Crawley was granted £21.1m to help boost job creation, business growth and economic recovery. See page 20 for more information

Queens Square: This £3.2m, award-winning regeneration scheme was completed in 2017 and has attracted £30m private sector investment into the surrounding area. The Square has re-established itself as the heart of the town centre and has become a focal point for events. See page 8 for more information.

Queensway and The Pavement: Completed in November 2019, this £2.2m project extended the public realm regeneration from Queens Square along key connector streets; Queensway and the Pavement, improving sightlines to Memorial Gardens and Crawley College. See page 8 for more information.

Station Gateway: Planning permission granted in 2021 for a significant residential-led mixed-use development including a new train station. Funding secured and concept designs prepared for complementary and integrated highways and public realm improvements along Station Way and Friary Way. See page 8 for more details.

Town Hall: Demolition of existing site and construction of a major mixed-use development including a new town hall, significant residential development and 77,000 square feet of new build Grade A office space. Phase one due for completion in 2022. See page 10 for more details.

District Heat Network: Construction of a new energy centre on the former town hall site to serve new and existing buildings and help reduce energy and carbon emissions for connected local residents. Phase one due completed in 2022. See page 10 for more details

Geraint Thomas House: Attractive, modern design for 91 affordable homes on a former public car park site. Completed in 2021. See page 23 for more details.

Affordable Homes: A number of Council led affordable housing development schemes have been delivered or are under construction in the town centre, providing a sustainable location for people to live and work. Supported by a number of private developments, this recognises that more people are choosing to live and work 'in town'. See page 23 for details.

Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID): In November 2019, town centre businesses voted in favour of establishing a BID, which will unlock more than £2m of investment over the next five years and help to create a thriving a town centre. See page 18 for more information

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Employment and Skills Programme: Launched to improve the prospects and opportunities for Crawley residents and updated in 2019, this programme of work has seen significant progress including Employ Crawley, a new Youth Employment Support Hub and a Town Centre Skills Academy. See page 23 for more information.

Signage and wayfinding: New town centre signage has been designed and installed, in line with the place branding design. See page 20 for more details.

Crawley College STEM Centre – brand new £5m facility, opened in 2021, providing virtual and mixed reality technology and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) facilities. See page 10 for more information

Town Centre Professional Services Forum: Forum of professional services companies that meet on a regular basis with the aim of making a demonstrable difference to the town centre's day and night economy and local skills and employment. See page 18 for details.

Historic High Street Forum: Forum of High Street businesses tasked with improving the environment and footfall in the High Street Conservation Area which benefits existing and new businesses with a particular focus on supporting the evening economy. See page 18 for more information.

Inward investment: New website launched and an inward investment programme developed to promote the wealth of opportunities in the town and attract new investment. See page 20 for more information.

Crawley: A Place to Invest

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Investing in revitalised public spaces

Joint partners, Crawley Borough Council (CBC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC), secured £15.4m of funding from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), as part of a £73 million public funding investment package. The funding is supporting delivery of the Crawley Growth Programme to deliver a range of public space, sustainable transport infrastructure and highways improvements, alongside property acquisition /refurbishment to boost the supply of modern business space.

Queens Square - 2017: A £3.2m project jointly funded by WSCC and the LEP and delivered by CBC. Construction work to transform the heart of the town centre included high-quality granite paving, greatly improved lighting, granite seating/planters and a central, decorative water feature. The town's bandstand was successfully relocated to Memorial Gardens, creating an attractive new performance space. The project has been a catalyst for wider investment, attracting more than £30m private sector investment in the surrounding properties in the form of new occupiers (including Decathlon, Metrobank and La Rusta), building renovation and store refurbishment.

Queensway and The Pavement – 2019: Delivered through the Crawley Growth Programme, as an extension to the successful regeneration of Queens Square, this £2.2m scheme was completed in November 2019 and included high-quality paving, larger disabled parking bays, new seating, cycle racks, signage and lighting. The scheme opened up the entrance to Memorial Gardens, with sympathetic landscaping and improved sightlines towards Crawley College and County Mall.

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Eastern Gateway 2021-2022: An £8.8m Crawley Growth Programme project, led by WSCC to improve the public space, connectivity and reduce the existing severance of the town centre created by large roads. Works commenced in 2021 to implement new cycling and walking infrastructure, soft landscaping to create a pleasant environment and support key development opportunities coming forward at strategic opportunity sites including the Town Hall, County Buildings, Crawley College and Telford Place.

Station Gateway 2022-2025: integrated highways and public realm improvement scheme including the regeneration of Friary Way and the bus station. The £5.4m public space project, funded by the Crawley Growth Programme, will see greatly improved cycle and pedestrian access between Crawley train station, bus station, County Mall and The Broadway. Additional funding of £2m from the Towns Fund will deliver an enhanced bus station. The scheme will improve bus and traffic flows and soften the landscape to improve and enhance the living environment in this area. This will help to progress a major development on the site itself, led by the Arora Group, including over 300 high-quality, new apartments and the transformation of Overline House to create a new Crawley train station.

Sustainable transport improvements 2022-2025: Funded by the Crawley Growth Programme, the project will support sustainable living in the town centre and improve the environment and living conditions for new residents. Work includes a new and improved bus station in the town centre, enhanced bus stops and the roll out of a new fleet of low emission and hydrogen buses from Metrobus, supported by enhanced bus routes.

Improving walking and cycling 2022-2024: WSCC and CBC have identified key cycle route improvement priorities in the town centre, supported by the Crawley Transport Strategy 'New Directions'. £1.1m drawn from the Crawley Growth Programme will help to improve connectivity by removing physical barriers and improving crossing facilities at locations where a need has been identified.

The Broadway and Cross Keys – undetermined: There is potential for public space improvements to complement new build residential development and retail space and align with other developable sites coming forward in the area. Drawing on other public funding sources may also be an option here.

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Opportunity sites – seizing the moment

There are a number of key town centre sites either in the pipeline or providing opportunities not yet taken up. As town centre living continues to grow and to meet the demand for modern, town centre business space, all such sites are for mixed use.

Station Gateway: The Arora Group, in partnership with Network Rail, CBC, WSCC and Govia Thameslink Railway, is to transform the existing railway station site. This will include the complete refurbishment and extension of Overline House, providing 81 apartments, with two additional floors and ground level business/retail units. Three additional new blocks comprising 223 apartments will be built to the west of Overline House. Planning permission granted April 2021.

Town Hall: 2019-2024 Crawley Borough Council and developers Westrock have commenced construction of a major mixed-use, phased regeneration scheme that includes The Create Building; a new, nine storey building comprising a new Town Hall and 77,000 sq ft Grade-A office space, adjacent to 273 new apartments, including 109 affordable homes, a new public square, new commercial units and infrastructure for a district heat network.

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Current timescales expect phase one completion in 2022, followed by phase two in 2023-2024.

Crawley College: brand new facility on campus, opened in Spring 2021, is home to a suite of innovative and interactive spaces, containing virtual and mixed reality technology and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) facilities which put the college at the cutting edge of training delivery across a range of subjects. The £5m centre was funded by the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership; recognising the skills needs of local employers in the Gatwick Diamond. This is the first phase of development for a wider masterplan covering the whole campus, which will allow the release of some land in the north of the College site to be released for residential-led mixed-use development.

Telford Place: Crawley Borough Council is working in partnership to bring forward a mixed-use development scheme on this site. The scheme will deliver new homes and commercial space as part of the regeneration of Crawley town centre. The site, currently used as a temporary car park, will provide a variety of tenures. A planning application is expected in 2022/23.

County Buildings: Crawley Borough Council is working closely with owners WSCC, to find partners with the aim of delivering a mixed-use development at this key town centre site. It is a prime location for high-grade commercial and residential use, offering another exciting opportunity for a major town centre regeneration scheme.

The Broadway and Cross Keys: The planning vision is to establish vibrancy in this part of town through the activation of unused areas, increased permeability of footfall flows to the historic High Street and the strengthening of perimeter sites including active edges on all sides of developments. The first phase is complete with 78 new apartments above ground level commercial space delivered at 15-29 The Broadway.

Institute of Technology – a successful bid, led by the Chichester College Group to create an Institute of Technology, will deliver a £10m state-of-the-art hub on the Crawley College campus, housing engineering and digital 'learning factories' to provide new pathways for learners to expand their knowledge and develop valuable skills that are in demand from local employers. Expected to be complete by 2024.

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Crawley - The Place to do business

Great space for business

- **Town Centre Commercial Space and Business Networking Hubs:** Working with stakeholders, we aim to provide prominent venues for businesses and local entrepreneurs to hot-desk, co-work, meet and to do business. Their locations will maximise usage by micro-enterprises and business people on the move. Funded by the Crawley Growth Programme, a priority project will see regeneration of the building at the corner of Queens Square and Queensway (where Decathlon occupy the ground floors) to deliver high-quality, flexible business space on the upper floors. A planning application is expected in 2022. Other suitable sites will continue to be considered / encouraged for similar use.

- **Commercial Eastern Gateway masterplan:** Funding from the Towns Fund will be used to produce a comprehensive delivery plan for the build out of further phases of new commercial space at the eastern gateway to the town centre, retaining and enhancing the town centre's professional services employment base, building on momentum generated by the new Create Building.

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- **Digital connectivity:** aiming to connect the entire town by 2023, CityFibre is extending its full fibre network to Crawley and delivering gigabit-speed internet to homes, businesses and community spaces, ensuring that businesses can remain competitive and enabling new opportunities for home working.
 - **Delivering new commercial space** – the new Create Building will deliver 77,000 square feet of Grade A commercial space over five floors that will seek to attract companies from the professional services business sector looking to trade from high quality premises in Crawley town centre. The building has excellent natural light and benefits from LG7 LED lighting with gigabit superfast broadband available throughout.
 - **Upgrading existing commercial space:** Creating and improving relationships with property owners is encouraging building upgrades and refurbishment, e.g. high quality, residential conversion at 1-3 Queens Square and the Boulevard. Enforcement powers will be considered where properties are of a poor quality and owners are not willing to make the necessary improvements.
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Crawley – A Place to Call Home

Supporting a town centre neighbourhood

As the way we live continues to change and the need increases to find more space for housing while reducing our impact on the environment, town centres can provide an excellent solution for a more sustainable living environment. Crawley town centre will encompass good quality living, a wealth of facilities, amenities, jobs and excellent sustainable transport options which will encourage modal shift and reduce congestion. Sustainable developments are required within the town centre which are defined as ‘development that meets the social, economic and environmental needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future.’

- **Employ Crawley:** A flagship project within Crawley Borough Council’s Employment and Skills Programme, Employ Crawley launched in 2017 and has been hugely successful in supporting hundreds of local residents on their journey into work. Delivered in collaboration with Jobcentre Plus, West Sussex County Council and a range of partners, the service secured additional funding in 2020 to provide a dedicated Youth Employment Support Hub – directly in response to the impact of the pandemic on local young people. See page 21 for more information.
- **Memorial Gardens:** Ensure this flagship town centre park is used to its full potential. This has been assisted by the redevelopment of Queens Square and Queensway which opened up the entrance of the park, relocated the bandstand into a prominent location in the gardens and improved sightlines to Crawley College and County Mall. A new and improved children’s play area in the gardens, including accessible play equipment and a wheelchair swing, opened to the public in 2020.
- **A new Cultural Quarter:** Funding from the Towns Fund will be used to design a new cultural quarter in the town centre, identifying locations for new cultural and events venues, set up a pop-up programme of arts and cultural events and unlock new cultural amenities as key assets for a vibrant town centre neighbourhood.
- **Crawley market:** Crawley’s existing market is located along the Broadway and Haslett Avenue West every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 9.30am to 4.30pm. The

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regeneration of Queensway includes specifically designed space to enable a quality market to grow and thrive.

- **Crawley Museum:** A combination of Heritage Lottery fund and Crawley Borough Council capital programme funds enabled the conversion of The Tree, one of the oldest buildings in the town centre into Crawley's museum.
- **GP Surgery/NHS Clinic/dentist services:** As the volume of residential accommodation grows in the town centre, the demand for GP Surgery and NHS dentist services is likely to grow. Officers are reviewing these services with health sector colleagues to determine if additional provision is required, both as amenities for the new neighbourhood and to attract footfall.
- **Town Centre parking:** sustaining a variety of accessible and secure options for parking across the town centre, the council will continue to invest in and make improvements to its car parks at the Town Hall, Orchard Street and Kingsgate.
- **Bridgefield House:** Purchased by Crawley Borough Council in 2018, the site has been developed to provide a part 8/part 6 storey building, comprising 98 affordable flats, with associated parking and landscaping. Completed 2021.
- **Improving public toilet provision:** Along with reviewing existing provision to ensure modern facilities are provided in the right location, the new Town Hall will provide fully accessible public toilet facilities, including a new adult Changing Place facility, similar to the one that opened in County Mall in 2017. These innovative facilities include hoist assistance and an adult sized changing bench to provide a safe, hygienic and dignified experience for people with disabilities.
- **Town Centre maintenance and cleaning:** The council will provide a robust and responsive town centre maintenance and cleaning programme to ensure the quality of public spaces is kept to a high standard.
- **Health, safety and wellbeing:** Crawley Borough Council and its partners are striving to create a town centre which is safe and has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors. This includes investing in culture, public art and performance; working with partners to address health inequalities, deliver safe and healthy homes and working with food retailers and caterers to promote healthy, safe food through schemes like Eat Out Eat Well.

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Governance, engagement and co-ordination

- **Engagement and partnership with town centre site owners/landlords:** The council is strengthening relationships with town centre site owners and landlords in order to work together to attract new businesses and bring vacant units back into use, to develop a common vision for town centre regeneration and establish co-operation and partnership in regeneration delivery.
- **Independent retailers support:** Enable independent retailers to have a strong voice within town centre plans and help them take part in its delivery. Support them to access services which strengthen business including bespoke training and small business grant schemes.

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- **Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID)** – *A new Town Centre BID was established in 2020, following a successful ballot in which 68% of eligible businesses voted in favour. In excess of £2.25m will be invested into the BID area over the next five years, delivering a range of projects and initiatives designed to make the town centre safer and more vibrant, where businesses feel more connected and where the offer is widely promoted and showcased. The funds will be spent on priority initiatives as set out in the Town Centre BID Business Plan. More information can be found at www.crawleytowncentrebid.co.uk*
 - **Town Centre Professional Services Business Forum:** this forum includes representatives from town centre banks, law and accountancy firms, commercial agents, architects and Crawley College. Regular meetings are held with the aim of making a demonstrable difference to the centre's day and night economies, and local skills and employment, complementing and supporting objectives outlined in both the Town Centre Regeneration Programme and the Employment and Skills Programme.
 - **Historic High Street Business Forum:** A group of High Street businesses was formed in 2017 with a view to improving the business environment and driving footfall to this unique, historic part of the town centre. Meeting on a regular basis, the forum has developed a High Street action plan to support their work, with a particular focus on the evening economy and creating a safe place to visit.
 - **Strengthen links between the town centre and Manor Royal:** Explore and define how town centre stakeholders, through the Town Centre BID, should co-operate more closely with the Manor Royal BID. Strengthen business and commercial links between the town centre and Manor Royal.
 - **Diverted Giving** – the council is proactively working with key partners, including Crawley Open House, Greater Change, Sussex Police, Town Centre BID and the Safer Crawley Partnership to support local businesses and the street homeless community. This includes an increased presence of Community Wardens and outreach workers, responsive street cleansing, education and the use of new technology to promote and enable 'responsible giving' by the public.
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Marketing, branding and inward investment

- **Towns Fund** – In 2019, Crawley was 1 of 101 places invited to develop Town Deal proposals as part of the Towns Fund. Following submission of a Town Investment Plan in 2020, Crawley was granted £21.1m to help boost job creation, business growth and economic recovery. Guided by the [Town Deal Board](http://www.investcrawley.co.uk/partners/towns-fund), the Council is working with partners to deliver ten priority projects, including a new commercial eastern gateway plan for the town centre, a transformed bus station and sustainable transport interchange and a new cultural quarter in the town centre. More information can be found at www.investcrawley.co.uk/partners/towns-fund
- **Vibrant town centre events programme:** Help to create a clear identity and character for the town centre whilst generating footfall and promoting a positive reputation through a high-quality programme of events. The Council supports a year round programme of events that benefit the town centre including Run Gatwick, Crawley Pride, Armed Forces Day and Crawley Festival. The programme is being expanded in partnership with stakeholders including the Town Centre BID, Historic High Street Forum, Professional Services Forum, Arts Council, retailers and other businesses. 2022 will see a special programme of events

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celebrating the town's 75th anniversary. The council takes its lead from an internal events team and dedicated Events Officer.

- **City Status Bid:** In December 2021, Crawley submitted a bid to become a city as part of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the town's 75th anniversary celebrations. Even if unsuccessful, the bid is a fantastic opportunity to showcase all that is great about Crawley and celebrate the town's strengths, including our sense of community and our exciting regeneration programmes www.crawley.gov.uk/citybid
- **Strong town centre place branding:** A strong, dynamic and honest place brand has been developed for Crawley town centre through partnership work and research with stakeholders. The brand, which aims to help create a positive image and attract more footfall, business and resident pride, can be seen on town centre signage, hoardings around key development sites and the inward investment programme.
- **High quality signage and wayfinding:** Monoliths and finger posts have been installed across the town centre, underpinned by a wayfinding strategy to encourage visitors to explore and navigate the main character areas. Additional signage was installed in 2021/22, including a new Conservation Area sign in the Historic High Street.
- **Inward Investment Programme:** The council has been working with key partners to deliver an innovative inward investment programme, designed to showcase the growing business investment in Crawley and the wealth of development and occupier opportunities in the town. The programme includes regular business newsletters, marketing materials, Investor Tours and a programme of targeted events e.g. business breakfasts, participation at Real Estate Live.
- **Invest Crawley website:** the council has developed a regeneration website to promote the physical, economic and community regeneration of the town. The site, which features the place branding, includes an interactive development map, highlighting key opportunity sites to potential investors and occupiers. Visit www.investcrawley.co.uk for regular updates on Town Centre Regeneration Programme projects.
- **Arts & Culture** – Working in partnership with Creative Crawley and other stakeholders to deliver a three year programme of creativity in Crawley. The project, headed by £1m investment from Arts Council England, will support local people to engage in high quality arts and cultural activities, attracting further investment and footfall to the area. It will provide a benchmark for delivering Crawley's innovative regeneration plans using arts and culture as a catalyst for social and economic change.

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Crawley – A Place to Inspire

Complementary policy

- **The Crawley Local Plan 2015 and emerging 2022-2037 Local Plan:** The council has developed clear planning policy and guidance to enable the sustainable regeneration of the town centre through Crawley's Local Plan which is being refreshed for the period 2022-2037.

The emerging Local Plan highlights the town centre as an economic centre of Crawley and a key component of Crawley's economic role in the sub-region, stating that "*redeveloping and revitalising the town centre....will reinforce the status of Crawley as the place to do*

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business in the south east. The revitalised town centre will be the heart of the town, providing a central point for local people and others from across the region to enjoy social activities, shopping, culture and entertainment both during the day and at night. It will have a welcoming and attractive family-friendly environment. The town centre will become a business growth hub and a recognised neighbourhood with local facilities supporting its residents."

Over 2,000 residential dwellings are set to come forward within the town centre during the Plan period and with a growing residential population, the "town centre is increasingly becoming a neighbourhood in its own right, requiring supporting facilities and services required to meet the needs of people that live there". The relevant Local Plan policies for the town centre respond to the need to:

- protect the retail core with flexibility to enable a broad range of other uses, where appropriate, capable of diversifying Crawley's offer;
- facilitate the development of town centre neighbourhood facilities/amenities;
- ensure 'active and engaging frontages' at ground floor level;
- promote a 'town centre first' approach to considering proposals for main town centre uses in Crawley, including for hotel and visitor accommodation.
- highlight 'key opportunity sites' for mixed use development within the town centre boundary, where development must demonstrate that it "positively contributes to the vitality and viability of Crawley town centre and sustainable economic growth and job creation in the borough".
- Promote a vibrant town centre with a successful evening and night-time economy
- Support the creative industries and encourage innovation
- Managing the balance between commercial and residential uses

The appropriate balance of mixed uses across the area is imperative in order to contribute to a vibrant new neighbourhood and a dynamic hive of business and economic activity in the town centre.

The council is committed to formulating complementary policy which allows it to protect the unique character and distinctive uniformity of Crawley's new town architecture whilst encouraging and enabling high-quality development proposals within the town centre that are in keeping with the surrounding environment.

• **Employment and Skills Programme 2019-2024:** The council, in partnership with stakeholders, has developed a clear programme of action to tackle some of the skills issues affecting some Crawley residents. The plan highlights workforce qualification, employment and average salary levels, and identifies priorities for improving workforce skills development and employment.

• **Employ Crawley:** A flagship project within the Employment and Skills Programme, Employ Crawley was launched in 2017, expanded in 2020 to provide a Youth Employment Support Hub and has gone from strength to strength with hundreds of local residents assisted on their journey into work and into higher skilled, higher paid employment since it opened. Operating from the Town Hall, Crawley Library and community based locations, Employ Crawley helps local people access a range of free and bespoke support, advice and guidance from specialist organisations in the town, matching local residents to job opportunities and helping employers access a local talent pool. Visit www.investcrawley.co.uk/employment-and-skills to find out more.

• **Town Centre Skills Academy:** In 2019, the council won Skills Academy status for existing and forthcoming construction sites in the town centre, including Kilnmead, the new Town Hall and the Crawley College STEM Centre. Skills academy status is granted by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) if there is a commitment from site developers,

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working with the College, Jobcentre Plus and the council to maximise the recruitment of local residents into construction site jobs and apprenticeships.

- **Climate Emergency ‘Action to Zero’** – published in November 2021, the plan sets out how the council will meet its carbon reduction targets by working in partnership to deliver energy and transport projects including the development of a countywide electric vehicle charging network, delivery of a District Heat Network in the town centre, a range of sustainable transport improvements and working with developers to achieve water neutrality.
- **Crawley College Construction Skills Hub** – funding from the Towns Fund will deliver a new construction skills hub on the college campus, focusing on delivering green technology skills to support decarbonisation and net zero objectives
- **Affordable housing:** The council is committed to ensuring affordable housing developments are unlocked within the town centre, building on the success of previous schemes including Kilnmead, Bridgefield House and Geraint Thomas House.
- **Community safety:** Work with police, Town Centre BID ambassadors, voluntary sector and local agencies to uphold the town centre as a safe and friendly environment with a positive reputation.
- **Action through enforcement:** Working with colleagues in the Town Centre BID and other stakeholders, the council will consider taking enforcement action to oblige town centre property owners to tackle and improve poor quality buildings, remove unauthorised development and ensure compliance with planning conditions. This will improve the town centre environment and encourage pride, footfall and investment.
- **Transport Strategy** – the council is committed to enabling healthier and more sustainable transport options and is working with partners to deliver a new Transport Strategy, working closely with West Sussex County Council, to improve how we travel around the town and improve the choice of transport options available. ‘New Directions for Crawley’ set out a vision of a walkable town, supported by sustainable public transport, car clubs and safe cycling, using a mix of innovative and integrated transport facilities to serve everyone’s needs.

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A regeneration plan founded on stakeholders

Achieving this ambitious long-term goal for a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable town centre can only be achieved through a comprehensive public/private partnership. We will continue to work with town centre stakeholders to make it happen. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our existing town centre partners for their work so far and look forward to creating with them a bright and prosperous future for the town centre.

Working in partnership to deliver regeneration

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