

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Economy and Growth Select Committee

16 September 2021

TITLE:	Buxton Projects Update
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Damien Greenhalgh - Deputy Leader & Executive Councillor for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
CONTACT OFFICER:	Helen Pakpahan - Senior Regeneration Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	All Buxton wards

Appendices Attached

Appendix 1: Branding toolkit

Appendix 2: Updated FHSF & VES governance structure.

1. Reason for the Report

1.1 To update members on a number of initiatives of relevance to Buxton.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To note works undertaken to deliver Visitor Economy Strategy(VES) actions to date including development of new branding and proposal for annual monitoring.

2.2 To endorse updated governance structure, with identified named participants and current project working arrangements.

2.3 To note works currently being undertaken to support project delivery.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 This report provides updates on the following projects:

a. Visitor Economy Strategy & Buxton Branding

b. Future High Street Fund & Heritage Action Zone Governance

c. Future High Street Fund (FHSF) and Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Projects

d. Buxton Health Hub

e. Buxton Civic Groups

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The initiatives will have the potential to help deliver the following aims of the Corporate Plan:

- Aim 1 - Supporting our communities to create a healthier, safer, cleaner High Peak.
- Aim 3 – Protect and create jobs by supporting economic growth, development and regeneration. – specially linking to the delivery of thriving and flourishing town centres and high streets

5. **Alternative Options**

5.1 No options are identified as the report is for information

6. **Implications**

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

None. It should be noted that public realm improvements are intended to improve natural supervision and visibility from CCTV cameras as part of design developments.

6.2 Workforce

None. It should be noted that a FHSF Project Officer is to be recruited to support delivery capacity of the project.

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

None required.

6.4 Financial Considerations

The Visitor Economy Strategy and branding has been funded by a grant of £62,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £5,500 from the Council's Regeneration revenue budget.

The due diligence, building survey and car park review are being met from the established FHSF budget including grant funding contribution.

The public realm consultancy costs are funded by Heritage England.

6.5 Legal

Not relevant to the recommendations of this report.

6.6 Climate Change

Not relevant to the recommendations of this report.

6.7 Consultation
Not relevant to the recommendations of this report.

6.8 Risk Assessment
A detailed risk assessment has been prepared and reviewed by 151 officer as part of business case submission and this is updated for monthly officer meetings and reports to Transformation board.

7. Details

Visitor Economy Strategy & Buxton Branding

7.1 In February 2021, the Council formally adopted the Buxton Visitor Economy Strategy and action plan, funded by the Heritage Lottery fund, which set out a 'road map' as a collective response to support long term growth and prosperity of the town's visitor economy.

7.2 It is proposed that an annual review of delivery is undertaken to monitor delivery. A summary of actions in progress or delivered by all partners to date, together with the identified lead partner is under development.. This will be a collective responsibility of all partners, but the annual review will be shared with Borough and County Councils for information after the end of each financial year.

7.3 The February 2021 committee report noted that the Heritage Lottery fund had agreed for underspend on VES strategy, could be used to support a review and replacement of Buxton's previous branding ('England's leading Spa Town) which was not universally popular with businesses. The new draft branding scheme was commissioned and has been very positively received by a wide range of Stakeholders including Vision Buxton, Buxton Town Team, Buxton Cresecent Heritage Trust and Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire.

7.4 Since this February report, a soft launch event to local Businesses was hosted by Vision Buxton in May 2021 and following this positive reception the business toolkit has been finalised and is proposed to be fully launched in October together with both in-person and virtual training events for businesses to explain how to use and maximise its benefit. These have been funded using European Social Fund (ESF) resources and will be managed by Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire.

7.5 The new branding includes two key messages:

- **Freshingly Buxton** Buxton is a place to revive, recharge and revitalise – is a place to come to for pure water, the clean air, the Peak District, the culture, the escape, the connectedness, the warmth and friendliness. Visitors can return refreshed and revitalised in body and spirit after a break here. It is cultured, but not stuffy, it is spirited, independent and friendly.
- **Buxton in the Peak District** Buxton is a the ideal base for the Peak District – it is a place where you don't have to choose between the

outdoors and more cosmopolitan, comfortable attractions of town (quality accommodation, dining, theatre, pubs, cafés and shops- in Buxton, you can have both. It is the best of both worlds.

- 7.6 The brand toolkit is attached (Appendix 1) which also includes details of how branding can be used, logos and graphics. A presentation on evolution of the above themes is available to [view online](#).
- 7.7 The Council is proposing to utilise some of the Additional Restrictions Support Grant, awarded in July 21, to fund delivery of tourism campaigns utilising this new branding between November and March 22 to encourage footfall, winter breaks and pre-booking of summer 2022 visits. This will help increase visibility of messaging using the new branding, and help position Buxton as a key destination for 2022.
- 7.8 It should be noted that this branding is primarily a product for the visitor economy, but can also be used by other sectors to help reinforce the sense of place. It does not replace individual organisations' or businesses (or Council's) own branding but it is intended to supplement them to help increase awareness of Buxton and embed the association of Buxton as a place to visit and stay within the public's perception.

Future High Street Fund and Heritage Action Zone Governance

- 7.9 The Economy & Growth committee of 4th February 2021 noted changes in the future working required to support the Future High Street Fund(FHSF) and Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) projects including the disbanding of the former VES Board and the establishment of a new structure (Adoption of VES Strategy & Future working report and appendices February 2021).
- 7.10 The approved governance structure has now been updated to include named individuals and positions (Appendix 2). Vision Buxton, Buxton Town Team and Buxton Civic Association were invited to comment. The Town Team has suggested that an additional retailer representative is added to the Stakeholder group, which has been accepted and incorporated. The chairman of Vision Buxton considered there to be too many elected members on the Stakeholder group (5 of 12 places) but it is not proposed to reduce representation of members as this would reduce oversight by democratically elected representatives from wards affected. The Civic Association did not respond.
- 7.11 With regards to the FHSF project, an officer group group tasked by project delivery has been established led by the Chief Executive. It is not proposed to commence the FHSF Stakeholder or the Delivery Board until such time as site acquisition analysis has been considered by the Council's senior leadership team.
- 7.12 In respect of the Buxton HAZ, a Project Group has been established that will be responsible for assessing grant applications. The Project Group is lead by the Buxton HAZ Project Officer. A quarterly update on the delivery of the HAZ, including community engagement, the cultural programme and education will be provided to the Project Board.

Future High Street Fund (FHSF) and Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Projects

- 7.13 The letter confirming award of £6,608,222 for Buxton's revised FHSF business case was received on 7th April 2021 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 7.14 The funds will be issued to the Council as non-ringfenced grant payments under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, for expenditure as agreed in the approved business case with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting out the grant offer between the Council and MHCLG being approved on 25th August 2021. The Council has prepared a draft Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, in line with MOU requirement and are awaiting confirmation from MHCLG that this draft plan is acceptable.
- 7.15 To support FHSF project delivery, due diligence works including building survey have been commissioned overseen by the Chief Executive, as chair of officer delivery group. An initial draft report on due diligence and suggested approach to potential acquisition is expected in the early autumn and a report to Executive will be prepared when this process has concluded and Officers have considered findings.
- 7.16 To support both FHSF and HAZ project delivery outside of The Springs curtilage, IBI Group have been appointed as lead consultants to prepare design options for the public realm on Spring Gardens following a fully open procurement process. This work will include a holistic design covering the full length of Spring Gardens, with a focus on key intervention priority areas as identified by public consultation in January 2021. Heritage England are funding the consultancy costs in full, as they are inviting a submission of an uplift grant request to compliment the FHSF resources and deliver a holistic scheme beyond the funding cap which was permitted under the terms of the FHSF criteria. In the first instance, an officer group including FHSF, HAZ, Planning and DCC Highways is being established and a transparent process for sharing emerging proposals and listening to Members and community feedback will be set up following an inception meeting in September. It is currently proposed that some initial works, potentially to rationalise double-pedestrian crossing at Terrace Road could be expertited for delivery in 2022 using FHSF resources.
- 7.17 Discussions are on-going with six business and/or property owners within the HAZ area. These include four priority buildings identified for grant aid. In addition we are continuing to work closely with the owners of the White Lion in order to secure a series of works necessary to secure the historic fabric of the building. These works are anticipated to be completed this financial year. Additional funds have been secured from Historic England to cover the works required to reinstate the damaged Grade I listed urn back onto The Slopes which was formerly damaged following vandalism. An initial specification of works has been completed by Bench Architects. Due to the public position of the urn a structural review of the proposed works is to be completed by Price and Myers prior to tender. The structural review and final specification are expected 30th September 2021.
- 7.18 The Cultural Consortium successfully secured a grant of £100,000 from Historic England to support the delivery of a three year programme of events

that are designed to celebrate the cultural heritage of the high street. A programme launch will take place over the 1st and 2nd October 2021 and will include a series of stalls alongside a rolling projection of the short film that was created for the 'Capturing a Moment' Pilot Project. The first year of the cultural programme will build on the Pilot Project by curating 'Portraits of the High Street Past and Present' to create a visual HAZ gallery. The gallery will use street flags and empty shop windows, colour images and digital displays to reveal the people of the place and the words that connect them to it. The first year will also see the formation of a 'Young People's Engagement Panel'.

7.19 A Community Engagement Steering Group has been established to support the management and delivery of a programme of events designed to engage key priority groups of our community in the HAZ. The 'Get Involved! Buxton HAZ Community Activity Plan' has been created and is awaiting review and approval by the steering group members.

7.20 All other elements of Future High Street fund delivery, including wider redevelopment design, are not yet scheduled to commence until the above works have been completed and the Council's Executive has made a decision on site acquisition.

Buxton Health Hub

7.21 An IED Report dated 5 June 2018 considered progress made in planning for the regeneration of the former Nestle Waters bottling site off Station Road, Buxton. Via the report, the involvement of the Council was authorised in a wider public sector partnership tasked with the development of a business case to support the delivery of a Health, Care and Public Service Hub on part of the site.

7.22 Since 2018 the Council has continued to meet with project partners, principally the Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust, to drive the project forward. An Outline Business Case was completed by consultants Turner & Townsend in December 2019. The company has been invited to provide a fee proposal for developing a Full Business Case. This will be the subject of a further report to Members in due course.

7.23 Capital funding for the construction of a Health Hub has yet to be confirmed. The Regional Delivery Director (Midlands) NHS England has invited project partners to put forward the delivery as a potential medium sized pilot under the Cavell Centre model, which is new model used by the National Health Service to create a 'healthcare campus' based on a template design that can be delivered in appropriate locations across the country.

Buxton Civic Groups

7.24 In May 2020, Vision Buxton approached the Council with a request for a core-funding package to support a devolved fund for projects and administration costs of a new group. This had cost implications of £27,000 over first three years. The Council does not have an identified budget for this, and there would be considerable financial implications both in terms of fairness to other communities and legality with regard to procurement if such a proposal was

met, so on this basis, the Council has turned down this request. It should also be noted that it has also been our policy not to core-fund the set-up and administration costs of community led organisations. However to support their work going forward, the Council has agreed to fund:

- Upgrading of Visit Buxton website, to incorporate new branding and host toolkit (managed by Vision Buxton) £2,400
- Development of a revised town investment video and updated coach trip familiarisation pack using resources from Welcome Back. £9,000

7.25 Vision Buxton, along with other stakeholders has decided to establish a new group, under the title 'We Are Buxton' as a regular forum for liaising with HPBC, DCC and other bodies. The group is not yet formally constituted and terms of reference will not be developed until after inception meeting on 22nd September. The Council has indicated our willness to engage and potentially support future projects on a case by case basis.

Neil Rogers
Executive Director (Place)

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

[Adoption Buxton VES and future working](#)"

Contact details

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