

## Town Delivery Plans: All Member Briefing Note

<b>For:</b>	Breckland District Councillors, Town Councillors, Parish Councillors, MPs
<b>From:</b>	Town Delivery Plan Project Team
<b>Date:</b>	26/03
<b>Purpose:</b>	To update Members on progress and plans for the Town Delivery Plan Programme

### Executive Summary

- The Town Delivery Plan Project is a significant undertaking, intended to support the long-term success of Breckland's economy. Started initially in 2019, but paused due to Covid, the project is now fully back up and running and a key delivery partner – Hatch - has just been appointed to support the Project.
- The Project will provide a robust evidence base and compelling shared vision for the future of our towns, set in the context of significant projects we can deliver in each of our five market towns (Thetford, Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham and Watton). This work will should place Breckland's towns in pole-position to unlock new external resources and investment while also using our shared resources more efficiently and effectively to deliver transformational change across the district.
- The whole project is expected to last a year, to March 2022. The work will be completed iteratively, with the first focus on a single town (Dereham) which is due to commence in April 2021 and will act as guide to the approach for the remaining towns, which will be delivered in groups of two thereafter.
- A key element of the Project is engagement at the District and Town level, to help shape and inform the plans and the evidence that underpins it. As such, Members will have opportunities to inform and shape plans at District and Town level throughout.

### Project Background:

- The Project was approved in Autumn 2019 by Breckland's Council, in response to a number of challenges. These include: (a) compared to other parts of the country Breckland has not been as successful in securing external investment, (b) the Council needs an agreed shared vision and set of priorities for the future to guide future investment, (c) Given the range of social and economic challenges and opportunities faced in Breckland, a robust evidence base is needed to guide decision making and unlock funding opportunities
- It was identified that the scale of the project, and need for detailed technical expertise, would require an external delivery partner to support the programme, with resources identified from Breckland's inclusive growth reserves and Norfolk Pooled Business Rates to deploy.
- An initial procurement process was run in March 2020 for a delivery partner. Unfortunately, the pandemic caused this work to be paused, and was restarted in Autumn 2020, with a fresh procurement to reflect the changes brought about by the pandemic.
- This procurement exercise was concluded in February 2021, with the appointment of a key delivery partner – Hatch , working with We Made That – market leaders in the field of economic development with significant relevant experience. Hatch started the commission on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

### Project Aims & Objectives:

- The project will be a process through which all Breckland can align aspirations and vision, define the exciting roles our Market Towns will play in the future and the action-orientated plan we need to achieve them.

- It will help define an agreed overarching vision for the district, with priority interventions for the market towns will all help contribute to this ensuring that the plans make up more than the sum of their parts. At the same time, the plans will be tailored to each town to address their individuals' challenges and capitalise on their advantages.
- It should put Breckland in a strong position in terms of attracting and securing external investment for projects and priorities, being specifically designed to achieve investment, and identifying a range of different private and public sector funding sources that will help the district realise our ambitions.
- It will identify priority projects, activities and interventions which will make the biggest difference in the future enabling a laser focus on where we look to target precious resources.
- It will create a substantial, new and standalone evidence base upon which we can make future decisions and secure future investment. Considering all the key drivers and issues impacting Breckland – social, economic, environmental.
- Although named “Town” delivery plans, it will cover the entirety of the district and beyond. With a town level focus enabling specific and detailed considered attention to each of Breckland’s five market towns and the hinterlands surround them.
- As a result, this work should deliver the following products (8 in total):

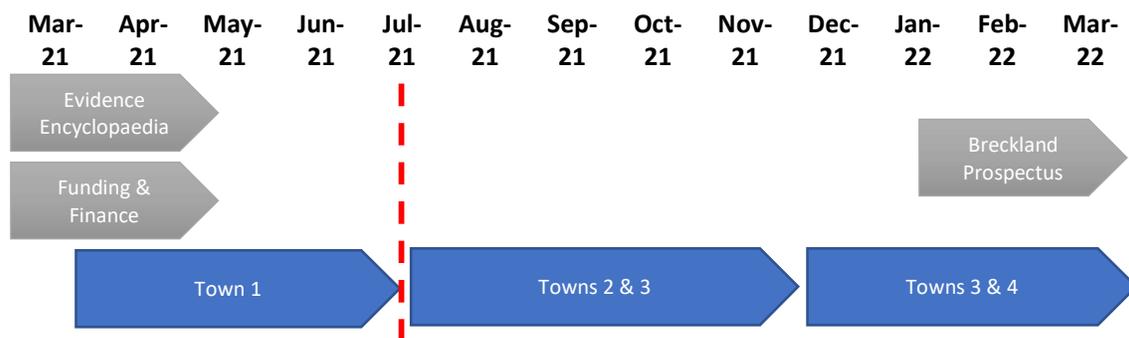


#### Project Team & Approach:

- The appointed delivery partner Hatch specialise in delivering industry-leading research, strategy, and funding advice for public and private sector clients in the UK and internationally. They have a proven record of supporting local authorities to secure substantial funds under schemes such as the Future High Street Fund, Housing Infrastructure Fund, Borderland Inclusive Growth Deal and Stronger Towns Fund. Over the past year they have secured £69m in High Street Fund investment for public sector clients and £90m from the Stronger Towns Fund.
- Hatch will be partnered with We Made That who are an urban design practice. They have extensive experience in developing responsive area strategies, preparing incisive urban research and designing public realm projects, all through socially-engaged design processes.
- Hatch and We Made That are forming a dedicated project team to the commission and will work closely with Officers and Members at District and Town levels to bring together the work.
- Within Breckland Council the project is championed by Executive sponsors through the Leader of the Council, and Executive Member for Community, Leisure & Culture.

### Headline Timetable:

- Overall, the Project is a significant undertaking and is expected to take 12 months to fully complete. A high level draft is set out below, but this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- The work will be developed iteratively, and in stages, with each stage starting with a detailed desktop evidence base development and review.
- Town level focus will be applied in stages – with a single town considered initially, in order to inform the approach and methodology for future towns. It is expected that Town 1 will be concluded by July 2021, and from that point Towns tackled in groups of two for better economies of scale and efficiency of engagement.
- The 8 separate products will be developed over the 12 months, and whilst published at different times, will be updated and adjusted based on experiences across the Project.



- Town 1 is identified as Dereham, but future towns and detailed sequencing will be developed later into the Project. As projects near starting in each Town, more specific briefing will be shared with Members with an interest in that Town.

### Engagement Plans:

- Engagement is being carefully designed to maximise input from local people and to develop buy-in from stakeholders. Hatch, We Made That and Breckland are committed to doing the work *with* and not *to* stakeholders. This is not a standalone 'Breckland Council' project – Breckland Council has taken the step to resource this, but it is intended to be a Project for the whole District.
- Within the development of each Town Delivery Plan a programme of engagement will be deployed to include at least 6 touch points for stakeholders, including:
  - One-to-one engagement with key stakeholders.
  - Walking workshops in each town (dependant on Covid-19 restrictions).
  - Online 'Meet the Team' sessions.
  - 3 x focused Online Workshops (two focusing on understanding the context of the town and the other on possible interventions).
  - Online publication of outputs for comment.
- This will sit alongside on-going engagement activity to keep stakeholders informed and engaged via dedicated webpages and press releases.
- The scope of this engagement will be as broad as possible – including residents in Towns and the surrounding areas, community and voluntary groups, public sector bodies, businesses and business organisations (to name but a few).

- All engagement will be conducted on the basis of an iterative and ongoing process, with those engaged able to shape, inform and respond to plans as they develop.
- As members you will be a key part of this engagement. From the project team you can expect to see targeted communication, particularly when this comes to your town, data being generated, and multiple touch points throughout the work.

#### Questions or comments

If you have any questions, please get in touch with the project team directly: [tdps@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:tdps@breckland.gov.uk)

A dedicated website for the project will be published shortly to provide updates as well.

**HATCH**



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WE MADE THAT  
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