

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

8 April 2021

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM MIDDLETON

CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

For the period February – March 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Following the decision for meetings to be postponed to allow for officers to allocate time to the COVID response, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all officers for their hard work in working closely with our partners and to play our part in protecting our residents.

Specifically I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the property team, under Matthew Henry's leadership they have played a vital role in securing necessary locations to be used as vaccination sites across our borough, notably the collaboration between ourselves, Alive and the CCG in getting the Corn Exchange up and running efficiently and effectively.

Across the rest of my portfolio work continues in terms of our town fund BID and we work with advice from the government in terms of prioritising projects within the bid.

At a previous town board meeting it was agreed that 2 working groups be set up 1 for public realm and 2nd for guildhall and creative hub. This is in order for us as a council to work with various stakeholders and individuals across the town who have skills and experience in different sectors. Public realm will fall under my portfolio and the Guildhall under Cllr Nockolds.

Towns fund

We still await a decision on our towns fund application we were hoping for this to be made by the end of March, unfortunately this will now not be the case and the government have confirmed further towns fund announcements will now be made after the election period.

Other funding opportunities

We have now had confirmation of our boroughs involvement with the levelling up fund and community renewal fund. The community renewal fund is a revenue based initiative and is asking for innovative projects this will form part of a longer shared prosperity fund.

We are currently in progress to press the green button on the town centre, public realm improvements that will take 5-6 weeks, whilst we do understand this is going to clash with town centre re-opening the funding has a tight deadline so we can not delay this project, we will communicate with business in the high street to unsure minimal disruption.

Bench's are being brought by the council to increase seating around the town over the summer months to assist our hospitality business , more on this to follow

2 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Cabinet sifting
BID meeting
Portfolio sessions
Cabinet
Portfolio session with various officers (throughout the month)
Towns board