## Regeneration OSC – December 2015

1. **Risks**

**Failure to invest in growth i.e. to be ready to plan and invest on a business case basis to deliver long term growth outcomes.**

- Growth agenda progressing well
- Led by Growth Board chaired by the Leader with an Officer Group and 3 workstreams: Industry, Housing & Town Centres
- Industry/gateways Developer Day scheduled for 2 December
- Local Plan 2 declared sound by independent planning inspector with adoption at Council on 3rd December – framework for growth to 2026
- Priorities agreed with lead officers assigned
- Presentation on methodology made to the Lancs LEP
- Throughput of planning applications now increasing

**Failure to secure new service delivery partners following the capita review**

- Procurement process ongoing - competitive dialogue at week 6 – with two bidders engaged
- Led by a Programme Board chaired by the Deputy Chief Exec.
- Contingency planning in place for non-procurement

**Completion of capital schemes on time and in budget and any resulting impacts**

- Cathedral quarter – hotel and office block completed early November. Hotel performing well, office block interest good. Recent audit report opinion on project governance given as adequate assurance.
- Pennine Reach – Ewood package due to complete Dec 2015, Furthergate Feb 2016, intended to deal with any budget fluctuations within the overall £40m budget envelope. Some delay on both packages due to unmapped utilities.
- Bus station – as above, cost overruns to be managed within PR budget envelope. Completion due early 2016. Delays due to contractor issues – former contractor now in administration. Demolition of the former Exchange and use of interim bus station for car parking delayed.
- Freckleton Street – completion expected ahead of schedule (Feb 2016) and in budget. Potential for surface car parking on development sites prior to marketing and development.

2. **New Bus station**

Update to a Task Group or Committee at a more appropriate time in the new year.

3. **Capital projects/Town Centre Update**

**Budget for the Pennine Reach, still within original budget or is this expected to be an overspend**

The project's current budget is £40m. It is intended to manage any budget fluctuations in the overall programme. The Council is continuing to work to settle the final account with Thomas Barnes (currently in administration so this will be progressed with the administrators).

**Temporary bus station use**

The temporary bus station will no longer be required for this purpose once the new bus station is completed and will form part of the markets redevelopment area. Interim use will be car parking pending redevelopment as part of the markets development site

**The exchange building is to be demolished once the bus stop completed, how much will this cost and has this incorporated as part of the budget?**
Demolition cost estimate is £550,000 inclusive of fees and will be funded from the Markets development site capital budget

**No supermarket offer for Thwaites site now, is there anything currently on the table for this area?**
No firm plans as yet but likely to be a mixed use development. Discussions are continuing with Thwaites development consultant.

**Is Ainsworth Street still on target to be open for December?**
Pennine Reach public realm works to form a 3 metre walkway in front of the mall, markets, pawn brokers and betting shop are now complete.

**How much is the rental on 1 Cathedral Square; both subdivided or as a whole. Will this rent go into central pot or Resources?**
The rent is split between the offices at £15 per square foot, the small ground floor unit at £15,000 and £45,000 and will go into Resources to offset the head lease payments.

**What are the timescales and trigger points for the second phase?**
Phase 1 needs to be fully let and some interest secured in phase 2 office. Maple Grove's Development Agreement lasts to May 2023.

**Has the online data (i.e. web and social media hits) been analysed to provide an indication as to interest on the development**
There are 4 agents working on the marketing strategy and as part of that all enquiries are picked up and personally followed up.

**The Cathedral buildings are a little behind the office and retail developments, do we have a date when this may be due for completion**
January 2015 currently

**What measures/ arrangements are in place with the environment department to keep this area clean and maintained given their current and future budget efficiencies?**
The Environment Department are reorganising resources in order to deliver a focussed town centre service which picks up this additional work. The landscape contractor has a 12 month maintenance regime and they are preparing a maintenance plan for the Council going forward.

**No one has officially committed to rent either the office buildings or the retail outlets. What will the financial impact be if units are empty for a significant period of time?**
The Council has modelled the 25 year lease with a varying occupancy rate to understand the potential cost of the office and this was reported to Executive Board when the decision to take the lease was approved.

**Is it possible for the department explore ways to create a direct (and safe) link through from the new development to the cinema and bowling alley. Members felt that linking these leisure zones would be of great benefit.**
The Council has always worked closely with Network Rail and Northern Rail to seek improvements to the pedestrian environment through Blackburn Railway Station. There has recently been considerable investment to the interior and exterior of the Railway

Station through Railway Industry and Cathedral Quarter projects, and the introduction of 5 new bus stops in this location will significantly improve accessibility to the Cinema and Bowling Alley by public transport. We are also looking at improving signage and other initiatives to help integrate the leisure complex with the town centre.

**Lots of CCTV in the area, what else is being done to discourage anti-social behaviour**
The Council is working with the Community Safety Partnership, the BID and BID Ambassadors, Business against Crime and the Police on a town centre coordinated approach including the provision of Public Space Protection Orders.

4. **Car Parking**

**Free after 3** – The free after 3 was first introduced on the 21st November 2013 for a 6 week period over the festive season as in previous years. After the 6 weeks it was decided to continue until the end of the financial year. Subsequently it has been in place ever since.

Originally it was estimated that the cost of free after 3 would be in the region of £65k per year, in reality this has worked out to be in the region of £40k per year. The Mall have not seen a drop in income or vehicle levels in this period.

The main users of the free after 3 would appear to be BwD / capita staff who move their vehicles from the surrounding areas or outer car parks and out them on the car parks closest to our buildings. At weekends these spaces are largely filled by town centre employees. This in theory reduces the number of shoppers spaces resulting should these become full of forcing shoppers to park further away, which is the opposite of what we are trying to create.

We are currently reviewing demand and the impact of the initiative.

**Christmas parking** – We have no additional parking offers on over the festive period, other than what is currently in place with free parking all day at the weekend and free after 3 at weekdays.

**Blue Badges** – The parking review identified that at any one time we have 28% of all available on-street spaces being used by a blue badge holder, a blue badge holder is entitled to park for free for the duration of the stay. A vehicle with a blue badge parking in an on-street bay all day, is costing the Borough £12 per day.

BwD has in the region of 7500 blue badge holders, which per head is one of the biggest in the Country. We are exploring ways of improving their use and examining potential abuse of the system.