

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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meeting date: THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022  
title: WELCOME BACK FUND- RETAIL CENTRE REPORT  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING  
principal author: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To update Members on the next steps in respect of our retail centres following the production of the retail centre report, which was funded by the Welcome Back Fund (<https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/welcome-back-fund-1/welcome-back-fund> )

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Ambitions-
  - To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley
  - To help make people's lives safer and healthier
- Corporate Objectives –
  - To work with our partners to ensure that the infrastructure in the Ribble Valley is improved
  - To promote stronger, more confident, and more active communities throughout the borough

### 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In March 2022 Members of this Committee were updated on the Welcome Back Fund and the actions undertaken as part of the fund. One of the actions was the appointment of Ark Consultancy to develop actions plans for the main three retail areas. The report is available to view online and was provided to Members of this Committee at the meeting in March.

2.2 Members will note that the report includes an Action Plan with numerous suggestions for our retail areas with some of the identified actions already being undertaken including:

- 2.2.1 Two pop-up market events to promote our existing markets undertaken
- 2.2.2 New bins purchased
- 2.2.3 Promotional films commissioned to showcase our retail areas

### 3 WAY FORWARD

3.1 The intention is for the suggestions identified within the Action Plans to feed into the Service Centre Action Plans which will be developed by the Economic Development Team for our three main retail areas. Work has already commenced on the Plan for Longridge.

3.2 Additionally, the Action Plans will feed into the review of the Council's Economic Plan, the first workshop event as part of that review has been arranged in October.

3.3 Members will also be aware of UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Once DLHUC confirms whether our investment plan is acceptable, Members of Policy and Finance Committee

will decide on how they wish to utilise this funding over the life of the fund. Work already undertaken, such as the retail centre Action Plans, may feed into projects which Members wish to support.

#### **4 RISK ASSESSMENT**

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources**- the Council's Economic Development Team have progressed work on the Service Centre Action Plans, a review of the Economic Plan and will be involved in delivering projects identified by members for the UKSPF
- Technical, Environmental and Legal**- None
- Political**- None
- Reputation**- developing plans for the medium to long term impact of COVID19 on our local economies is a benefit to the Borough as a whole. Work to progress the actions identified in ongoing.
- Equality & Diversity** – None.

#### **5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Note the work being undertaken by the Economic Development team in respect of the Plans produced.



NICOLA HOPKINS  
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING