

# SCRUTINY REPORT

**MEETING: OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY**

**DATE: 5<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: MILL GATE JOINT VENTURE**

**REPORT FROM: BGI (MAJOR PROJECTS)**

**CONTACT OFFICER: ROBERT SUMMERFIELD**

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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Cabinet provided approval in July 2023 for the Mill Gate Joint Venture (JV) to undertake public engagement activity over Summer 2023 along with providing approval to procure and develop a Strategic Regeneration Framework for the medium/long term re-development of the Mill Gate Estate. This report provides an update following this decision and further information around the timescales for delivering the Strategic Regeneration Framework.

## **2.0 COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT**

- 2.1 Following an initial 'Meet the developer / owner' event in November 2022 held in the Mill Gate, officers from Bury Council and Bruntwood undertook a further 3 day, in person, stakeholder engagement event at the Mill Gate. The event took feedback on the current operation of the estate and facilities therein, and also canvassed the opinions of customers and members of the community and what they would like to see within the heart of the town centre. Surveys were issued both physically and on-line via:

<https://futuremillgatebury.commonplace.is/>

The engagement survey runs online until 11<sup>th</sup> August. Following this feedback is to be analysed and reported back to the Joint Venture.

- 2.1 Prior to the event a comprehensive leaflet drop was undertaken with flyers distributed across the borough. In addition to this an online campaign was used to drive traffic to the engagement survey.
- 2.2 Final response numbers are not confirmed as yet however earlier this week the following activity had been recorded:
- 1169 visits to the website.
  - 310 forms completed online.
  - 30 printed forms returned.

- 2.3 The joint venture will continue to fully engage with key stakeholders and community groups with a further period of formal public consultation to take place before the end of 2023 (see programme below).
- 2.4 Mill Gate JV continue to engage on a regular basis with stakeholders through Bury BID, and the Town Centre Advisory Board. Further engagement sessions are being arranged with various community groups such as VCFA, LGBTQIA+, Age UK Bury, Bury Blind, ADAB, Schools and others. Bruntwood also hosted an employer forum with Bury College with support from the Council and BID.

### 3.0 STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

- 3.1 Following JV and cabinet approval to move forward with a Strategic Regeneration Framework, a consultant team to deliver this alongside the joint venture partners Bruntwood, has been assembled by the JV including Architecture, Town Planning, Highways, Landscape architecture, structures and utilities trades. The team are currently working at pace to achieve the timescales articulated within the July Cabinet paper.

The timescale is as follows:

Task Name	Proposed Programme Timing
<b>Cabinet #1</b> Approval to progress with development of Mill Gate SRF	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 <b>Approved</b>
Public and stakeholder Engagement re: emerging Mill Gate vision and masterplan. <i>This will involve sessions with all relevant stakeholders including elected Members. Format TBC.</i>	July 2023 – September 2023 <b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Cabinet #2</b> Request to release Draft SRF prior to public consultation	October 2023
Public / Stakeholder Consultation period (6 weeks) – statutory timescale.	November / December 2023
<b>Cabinet #3</b> Request for endorsement of final SRF- following stakeholder feedback/review and amendments including further design development.	March 2024

- 3.2 The JV is on programme to bring the draft SRF document to Cabinet for approval at the October meeting prior to a proposed 6 week public consultation of the draft.
- 3.3 There is therefore a window of opportunity for further input on the Mill Gate SRF following this feedback and to allow discussions to take place at senior level to ensure the SRF encompasses policy and aspirations across the council.
- 3.4 All work being undertaken for the SRF is being funded from the Mill Gate Joint Venture and no further council funds have been required to date following initial investment at acquisition.

### 4.0 SOCIAL VALUE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

- 4.1 The Mill Gate joint venture fully recognises the importance of social value and inclusive growth both in terms as a successful retail centre but also a large scale regeneration project moving forward. Social Value strategies are currently being drafted to ensure the JV captures the wider council aspirations and that of our partners.

- 4.2 Inclusive growth is at the forefront of the SRF process encapsulating the Let's Strategy, Bury 2020, Bury 2030 Vision, Places for Everyone, Bury Local Transport Strategy, Bury Town Centre Masterplan etc.
- 4.3 Discussions are taking place with key partners to look at diversification of the uses within the Mill Gate to provide a much greater offer to residents and visitors.

## **5.0 Mill Gate Shopping Centre Performance**

- 5.1 Footfall within the Mill Gate continues to outperform regional and national comparatives and the year to date is within 0.5% of pre-covid levels. This compares to a national average of minus 15%.

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### **List of Background Papers:**

Cabinet – July 2023: Mill Gate Shopping Centre & Estate: Joint Venture update and development principles

Cabinet March 2022 - Bury Town Centre Masterplan

Cabinet November 2021 - Acquisition of the Mill Gate Estate Bury

### **Contact Details:-**

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Executive Director sign off Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Team Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_