

Appendix 1b

Town Centre Highlight Report January 2014



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Aims & Objectives	Current Status:
<p>In the town centre we are trying to create new business and job opportunities by supporting investment in retail, but also by introducing new uses and diversifying the town centre economy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To improve the shopping experience in the town centre by ensuring that it is easy to access and that it has a clean and tidy environment 2. To enhance the retail offer by securing investment from national chains regarded as key attractors and supporting the establishment and growth of independent retailers 3. To increase footfall in the prime retail area by promoting new uses in vacant and under used property previously used for retailing in adjacent streets 	ORANGE
	Previous Status:
	ORANGE

What's going well?

Following the transfer of responsibility for town centre events to the County Council, an exciting Christmas programme was successfully delivered following the Christmas lights switch on by Brian McFadden on 28th November. The data from the camera in the High Street showed an increase in footfall on three of the four Saturdays in the run up to Christmas compared to the equivalent days in the previous year which is positive.

A task and finish group has continued its work on the development of a town centre strategy in conjunction with the development of a Town & Area Plan for Rhyl.

North Wales Police have initiated discussions about the replacement of the existing analogue radio link system with new digital equipment which could also serve Prestatyn town centre. The County Council is exploring the suitability of this project for a placement for Coleg Llandrillo Police Studies foundation degree students.

What concerns us and what are we doing about it?

Following the decision of the Minister for Housing & Regeneration not to invite a second stage application from Rhyl for funding through the Vibrant & Viable Places Framework, details of the application process for the remaining funds have yet to be publicised and these are not now expected until February at the earliest.

Traders had expressed their concern about the impact on their businesses from the enforcement of the existing Traffic Management Order which restricts cars from entering the northern most part of the High Street between 5pm and 10am. A site meeting was arranged for the traders with representatives of North Wales Police and the County Council Traffic Management & Parking section after which a door to door consultation was undertaken jointly by traders and County Council Economic & Business Development to inform a review of the existing Order.

Following the departure of the Town Centre Manager, members of the Town Centre Management Group are continuing to look at best practice from other towns to inform the development of a successor post and a meeting with the Town Centre Management Group in Colwyn Bay is expected to take place shortly.

Outlook

Whilst the Minister's decision about the Vibrant & Viable Places application was disappointing, there remains an opportunity to apply for the funding which has been ring-fenced for unsuccessful applicants and there should also be an opportunity to enhance this with match funding from the new European structural funds programme commencing in 2014 and deliver a significant investment programme in the town centre. The new arrangements for town centre management and the development of the strategy for the town centre will enable partners to work together effectively to secure a sustainable future for the town centre.

Completed Projects

Bee & Station Office Development
45 - 47 Water Street (external works only)

Committed Projects

A commitment has been made to deliver the project and the necessary funding is in place.

None at this stage

In Development

Feasibility or ongoing development of the project is underway.

Project	Lead Organisation	Comments
49 - 55 Queen Street	DCC/RCS/ DVSC	Initial feasibility for refurbishment of this WG owned property for an Enterprise Centre complete. Consideration being given to its inclusion in the bid for the funding top sliced from the Vibrant & Viable Places framework.
Rhyl Railway Station	Network Rail	Improvements to Rhyl Station currently being worked up by Network Rail. Forecast on site in early 2014.

Under Consideration

Consideration is being given to potential future priority projects for this work stream as part of the process for developing the Rhyl Town & Area Plan and details of these will be brought to the Board for further consideration in due course.