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### 1. Overview:

Regeneration, particularly in the current national, european and world economic climate, continues to be challenging. Here in Stoke-on- Trent we are making very significant progress in delivering major multi-million pound regeneration schemes across the city. These include improved public realm, the Central Business District, high quality housing developments, town centre improvements, Building Schools for the Future and Extra Care for the elderly in delivery, using a combination of public and private funds.

### 2. Stoke Town - The vision:

Stoke Town has the potential to develop as a vibrant quarter of the city centre, connecting the activity of the train station, UniQ and colleges with the town centre and using the catalyst of the former Spode Works to make a new identity for itself as the western quarter of the 'city centre spine'.

Stoke Town as a link in the city centre spine offers the opportunity to successfully regenerate the town, linking its natural assets to the core city centre, in line with our 'One City' vision. We will continue to support this town centre activity with high quality housing developments, public realm improvements and other projects which will drive additional footfall into the town centre.

Stoke Town Centre can provide a complementary offer to the core city centre and develop its niche role through the promotion of its heritage and contemporary development of the built environment.



## 3. Regeneration in action

### West End Village

The successful sale of 20 new homes in a partnership between Staffordshire Housing Association and Keepmoat, following the completion of their 18 Million extra care development, gives us great confidence in our aim to deliver quality new build housing for sale in the town, to increase town centre footfall



### Boundary Wall Schemes

90% of Campbell Road residents signed up for the boundary wall scheme, which aimed to improve the aesthetics of the gateway into Stoke Town.



### British Ceramics Biennial (BCB)

A major six week exhibition and celebration of the international ceramics industry was held in the China Hall area on the Former Spode Works. This exhibition saw over 25,000 people visit Stoke Town and surrounding areas. The BCB are looking at holding the next BCB exhibition on the former Spode site.

### Former Spode Works Church Street entrance

We are currently looking at costings to carry out restoration work to the sign and gates. We are also looking at painting the exterior as well as soft landscaping of the court yard.



### Glebe Street Bridge

The aim of this project is to create a more pleasing environment for both motorists or pedestrians.

### Prince's Regeneration Trust

The Princes Regeneration Trust will occupy the Meadow area of the Former Spode site for a period of three years. During this time they will be cleaning and cataloguing 19,000 moulds and artefacts from the ceramics industry.

### Spode Museum Trust

After securing funding from The Heritage Lottery Fund, the Spode Museum Trust will be occupying the Former Spode Visitor Centre. They will deliver a two year temporary exhibition centre. Stoke Town Centre's natural, cultural, social and historic assets will continue to be developed and enhanced as part of delivering the Stoke Town masterplan which in turn will develop a strong and unique image that encourages activity and investment whilst benefiting from its strong links to the city centre.



## 4. Central Business District - the impact on Stoke Town

### A response from Councillor Mohammed Pervez - Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council

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There is clear evidence to suggest that the residents of Stoke-on-Trent have identified the need for jobs as a major priority within the City. This is the basis of our Mandate for Change programme. A successful city needs a successful city centre - but we currently have an underperforming city centre - we are fully committed to putting this right. The completion of the state of the art bus station later this year is the start of a journey that will transform our city centre and make it into something we can all be proud of.

Our strategy for the development of the city centre is clear. The completion of the bus station later this year will be closely followed by the development of the £350m shopping complex, providing high quality shops, restaurants and leisure facilities which will complement the Potteries Shopping Centre. We have also invested and will continue to invest in improving city centre gateways and public realm. We also need a clear strategy to create high quality white collar jobs. The Central Business District (CBD) is the missing jigsaw piece that we are now progressing at pace. This will help to diversify our economic base and help us to become more resilient in the face of future economic challenges.

Our decision to become the first anchor tenants in the new Central Business District is a bold one, but it is one that will have a huge positive impact on our city. It will boost private sector confidence, not only in the later phases of the Central Business District, but also across the city centre, including the £350 million City Sentral shopping and leisure complex, which will benefit from increased spending power.

By occupying the first two buildings in the Central Business District, the council will have the opportunity to rationalise its current assets and operate from fewer buildings, this in turn will lead to efficiency savings. The new buildings will be energy efficient thereby allowing us to save on energy costs, which we all know are continually increasing. The bringing together of officers from different disciplines will allow more integrated ways of working which will improve the way services are delivered to our citizens and thereby increasing the customer experience.

We want the best for our residents in the city, for them to have good quality jobs, better housing and a better quality of life. We are doing everything possible to deliver on this promise. However, we are aware that people will naturally be concerned about some of the decisions we make and it is important that we communicate effectively to allay any concerns. The major issues surrounding the council's decision to move into the Central Business District is the impact it will have on Stoke town centre and the costs involved. We hope the answers below go some way to clarifying these important issues.



Councillor Mohammed Pervez  
Leader of the Council



Councillor Ruth Rosenau  
Cabinet Member for Regeneration

## 5. Your questions answered

### **Q. How will the Council fund the buildings at the Central Business District?**

**A.** If we assume that the Council needs to borrow all or some of the monies to pay for the build, then it will be part funded from Capital receipts from the sale of existing land and property, and any shortfall will, most likely, be borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board. The interest rates for this are around half that of commercial borrowing which makes borrowing to purchase a cheaper option than renting.

### **Q. How long will it take to repay any monies borrowed?**

**A.** Until the exact borrowing amount is known, there is not a straight forward answer. Repayments could take up to 25 years but, depending on capital receipts, could be as little as 5 years. We are currently anticipating a 10-year payback period. However, by stimulating private sector investment, the council will bring in new business rates which will reduce net costs to the council and the council will save on the amount it spends on maintenance and running costs on older buildings.

### **Q. What about the cost of empty buildings in Stoke Town whilst waiting for a buyer?**

**A.** The buildings in Stoke Town will be marketed in parallel to the new buildings in the Central Business District. Any costs incurred would be around security but with interest already shown we do not envisage the buildings in Stoke Town being empty for long.

### **Q. Should the construction of the new buildings not be delivered in the time expected will the budget need to be increased?**

**A.** The new buildings will be contracted at a fixed price, so any risk will be with the developer.

### **Q. Why would a major employer want to buy a large office complex in Stoke Town?**

**A.** There is already considerable commercial interest in this site, and let us not forget the unique selling points of Stoke Town from a business perspective, it has excellent connectivity with roads, rail links and a University on the doorstep. The new HQ for Seddons will be built within the town, confirming its attractiveness and unique position.

As a result of these advantages, the former Spode site has the potential for many exciting development opportunities.

### **Q. Will the council focus its attention on Stoke town after staff have moved away to the city centre?**

**A.** We are serious about having short, medium, and long term proposals for the town and we will be pursuing these to demonstrate our commitment to the community and existing businesses, for example, we shall be seeing major new housing development within the next 12 months.

### **Q. If so much money is being spent on reshaping Stoke-on-Trent, shouldn't we ask the public how to spend it?**

**A.** If we look at the same 25 year period, the City Council will spend over £2 billion on public services for the people of our great City. The money spent on the two new office buildings is an investment to improve the delivery of these services and it is also money that would have to be spent maintaining older less economical buildings. Furthermore, it is money that will stimulate private sector confidence in our city which will bring more businesses to the City. The re-location also provides essential footfall to sustain existing city centre functions and to attract new brand names which will be of regional and national significance.

There is ample evidence to suggest that the residents of Stoke-on-Trent see employment as a key priority, highlighting the need to make Stoke-on-Trent an attractive place to bring employment and business. Our Mandate for Change is all about making Stoke-on-Trent a great working city with its four pillars:

- Make Stoke-on-Trent the place to bring business
- Support and develop existing business
- Work with people to promote independence and healthy lives
- Make Stoke-on-Trent a great City to live

The Central Business District has the potential to create 4500 new jobs for the people of Stoke-on-Trent and bring money into our economy. The additional increase in income generated through business rates will allow vital services to be protected; it will also improve access to services linked to locality working. We need to act now to secure the future of our City.

# Stoke Town Newsletter - Autumn 2012

## Q. Isn't this just another mistake like the Unity House?

No. The Central Business District is not a stand-alone project. The current proposals provide the opportunity for a brand new retail and cinema complex, new bus station, as well as new office space. This is part of a major regeneration programme and therefore offers greater sustainability and benefits for existing and new businesses.



## 6. What's next?

### The Former Spode Site / Civic Centre / Kings Hall

The city council has made its commitment to relocate 2,000 staff to the Central Business District. This will mean that several buildings will become surplus to requirements including Swann House, Gordon House and the Civic Centre. Clearly this can have an impact on the economy of Stoke Town, but this needs to be considered in relation to the opportunities that were evidenced during the soft market testing for the former Spode Works, a 10 acre town centre site.

An enhanced site (Civic Centre, Gordon House and Swann House) would also present further opportunities which were not previously considered viable as they did not fit onto the cleared area. Accelerating the marketing of the Former Spode Works Site in conjunction with the other buildings to be vacated is part of the process of relocating to the Central Business District. This marketing will start over the coming months.

Our aim is that the regeneration of the town goes forward in partnership with the local residents and business communities. With this in mind, local businesses and traders are encouraged to develop a Stoke Town business group, to act as advocates from the town and the opportunity it represents and work together, alongside the city council, to improve the existing retail and business offer.

