

11TH AUGUST 2020

KEY DECISION? NO

CIVIC QUARTER PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report proposes a set of placemaking principles for the purposes of inputting into the Rushmoor Development Partnership's (RDP) RIBA Stage 2 masterplanning process for the Civic Quarter development.

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve the Civic Quarter placemaking principles that have been established as a result of input from Members and the Policy and Projects Advisory Board (PPAB) to be passed on to the RDP so that they may inform the next stage of masterplanning for the Civic Quarter;
2. Note the next steps to further developing the Council's policy position on the key principles that will go on to define the Civic Quarter, particularly in terms of sustainable regeneration.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In May 2020 the Regeneration team invited Members to a virtual placemaking workshop which was designed to provide them the opportunity to further develop key principles for the Civic Quarter that will be taken forward into RIBA Stage 2 of the masterplanning work.
- 1.2. A set of 16 placemaking principles was established (see appendix 1) covering matters related to topics including creating a community heart, connecting the town and improving health and wellbeing. The outputs from the workshop were subsequently considered by the Policy and Projects Advisory Board (PPAB) at its meeting on the 15th July 2020, where it was proposed to further refine the principles into 5 themes as set out in Appendix 2. This report provides a summary of the background and context to the workshop, the results of the exercise completed by members, the subsequent review by PPAB and officer recommendations.
- 1.3. It also sets out next steps, by way of four learning seminars, to further develop the Council's policy position on key principles that will go on to define the Civic Quarter.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. In January 2019, the Rushmoor Development Partnership (RDP) commissioned GT3 architects to carry out a programme of public and stakeholder engagement in order to formulate a 'Masterplan Strategic Briefing Document' that would go on to inform the early stages of the Civic Quarter masterplan. This document set out an over-arching vision, eight strategic objectives and themes through to design principles and methodology moving forward.
- 2.2. Members of the public and stakeholders were given the opportunity to consider the Civic Quarter site and express how they felt about it in its current form. Groups were also invited to express and articulate their vision, values, objectives and aspirations for the future of the site. Over 600 people provided responses online and at drop-in events and 70 people participated in vision workshops, and of them, 26 were councillors.
- 2.3. Following the conclusion of the GT3 engagement exercise, the RDP appointed LDA Design to progress the masterplan for the redevelopment of the Civic Quarter. Using the feedback from the public, in RIBA Stage 1 the RDP explored placemaking options and undertook capacity testing to better understand what could be possible in terms of development scale and mix on the site. LDA articulated the 8 strategic objectives identified in the GT3 report in their own 6 placemaking principles ensuring a continuity of approach.
- 2.4. LDA concluded the work needed to satisfy RIBA Stage 1 in November 2019. The RIBA Stage 2 work will see the architects take forward the proposals through concept design and start to detail proposals that will go forward as part of an outline/hybrid planning application in early 2021.

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

General

- 3.1. As stated above, in May 2020 the Regeneration team invited all members to a virtual placemaking workshop.
- 3.2. The workshop was presentation based and set out the background to this process alongside work completed to date. The presentation then explored the next stage of the masterplan and invited members to complete an exercise which sought to capture their views and to prioritise key emerging principles across the following topics:
 - Create community heart
 - Green agenda

- Identity and profile of the town
- Community cohesion
- Health and wellbeing
- Connecting the town
- Participation in facilities
- Increasing visitor numbers, footfall and spend
- Developing arts and culture/heritage

3.3. The results can be broken down into two distinct parts as below.

Green Agenda Prioritisation

- 3.4. Since the last iteration of work completed by LDA, the 'Green Agenda' has arisen as a top priority for the Council typified in the declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' on the 20th June 2019. As such, it was notably absent from the strategic objectives formulated by GT3 or the placemaking principles further developed by LDA.
- 3.5. Officers' proposed that the 'Green Agenda' should be embedded within the placemaking principles for the Civic Quarter moving forward and so the question was posed to members as to what priority it should be given.
- 3.6. The 'Green Agenda' was rated a gold priority by an overwhelming majority of those engaged in the workshop and therefore considered as one of two gold principles that the RDP/LDA should prioritise (alongside creating a community heart) in their scheme development.

Emerging Priorities

- 3.7. The other significant outcome of the exercise was the identification of 16 emerging priorities that are intended to be used to articulate member aspirations for the Civic Quarter site going forward into RIBA Stage 2 of the masterplanning process.
- 3.8. These 16 priorities were formulated through a number of questions which asked members to rank, in terms of importance, different items / aspects that could assist in realising the 8 key principles determined through the GT3 and LDA work undertaken previously.
- 3.9. In an effort to reflect the different weighting given to these strategic objectives, that being gold, silver and bronze, officers compiled the top three most popular choices from the gold principles, the top two from the silver principles, and the top one from the bronze principles. This enabled a clear distinction to be made in the categorisation of the principles and assisted in better articulating member sentiments. The outcomes of the exercise are collated within Appendix 1.

Consultation

3.10. The outputs from the Member Workshop were brought before the Policy and Projects Advisory Board on the 15th July 2020 for review.

3.11. The Board concluded that the emerging priorities should be organised under five key themes in order to reduce the amount of overlapping and better focus the inputs into the RDP Stage 2 masterplanning work. The five themes/priorities were defined as follows and further detail including commentary can be found in Appendix 2:

- Leisure, Health and Civic Hub
 - Combine community/civic uses in a hub building
 - Provide space for indoor leisure facilities
 - Library
 - Improve health and wellbeing
- Housing Need and Design
 - Homes for increased town centre living
 - A variety of homes provided as part of the development
- Transport and Accessibility
 - Ensure the site is well integrated with the wider town centre/business parks (access routes and wayfinding)
 - Improving pedestrian connections to the business park
- Environmental Sustainability
 - Landscape – soft informal green approach
 - Maximise energy efficiency of buildings (where possible)
- Increasing footfall
 - A wide mix of uses that appeals to different groups and encourages people from all ages and backgrounds to use the Civic Quarter.
 - A mix of places to eat and drink
 - An evening economy

3.12. PPAB also approved a proposed way forward in regard to further developing the Council's policy position on the key principles that will go on to define the Civic Quarter, particularly in terms of sustainable regeneration.

3.13. Following discussion with the Chairs of both the Climate Change Working Group and the Members group overseeing recovery from Covid-19, and after being given formal approval by the PPAB, it has been agreed that four learning seminars open to all members of the Council will be held which seek to analyse in more depth the following:

1. Sustainable design options and changing sustainability requirements – a look at viable and deliverable design options alongside a review of the standards and guidelines around sustainable builds.
2. Housing led developments and reinventing the town – an exploration of successful case study schemes accompanied by an in-depth

analysis of how both sustainable homes and sustainable living were best achieved.

3. Sustainable transport – an appraisal of key issues surrounding improving access but reducing CO₂, touching on areas such as parking, cycle and pedestrian routes, integrated transport hubs, public transport and EV charging provision.
4. The Green Agenda – a discussion on how the green environment can be brought into a place to help support sustainability with a focus on biodiversity and sustainable living solutions.

- 3.14. These seminars will feature a presentation from a guest speaker who would be an industry lead in the given topic and best placed to help in advancing the discussion and furthering members' understanding.
- 3.15. Key learning points and findings would be brought together by officers in a single policy paper to be considered by PPAB and the Climate Change and Recovery Task and Finish Groups. Recommendations would then go on to inform a final report that would be brought before Cabinet for approval in due course.
- 3.16. Outputs from this work will be required to inform detailed phases of the Civic Quarter development and so should aim to be completed within 3 months so these priorities can be successfully embedded in the design process.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 4.1. It is important that the Council seeks to establish its position on placemaking principles early within the design process to ensure that they are embedded and considered from the outset. State any risks to the delivery of the proposal or associated with the implementation of the report recommendations.

Legal Implications

- 4.2. There are no known legal implications arising from this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.3. There are no known financial/resource implications arising from this report.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.4. There are no known equalities impact implications arising from this report.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. Members have had the opportunity to input into establishing a series of placemaking principles that will be embedded within the RDP's RIBA Stage 2 masterplanning work.
- 5.2. A set of 16 placemaking principles established from the initial workshop in May 2020 have been further refined into five key themes/priorities following consideration by PPAB in July 2020. Cabinet is asked to consider/approve these proposed themes/priorities to be passed on to the RDP so that they may inform the next stage of masterplanning for the Civic Quarter.
- 5.3. Cabinet is also asked to note the next steps, by way of four learning seminars, to further develop the Council's policy position on the key principles that will go on to define the Civic Quarter.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Outcomes of Placemaking Workshop

Appendix 2 – PPAB key themes/priorities

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author

Nick Irvine nick.irvine@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398739

Head of Service

Paul Brooks paul.brooks@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398544

Executive Director

Karen Edwards karen.edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk 07584 490562

Civic Quarter Member Workshop

Results

Summary

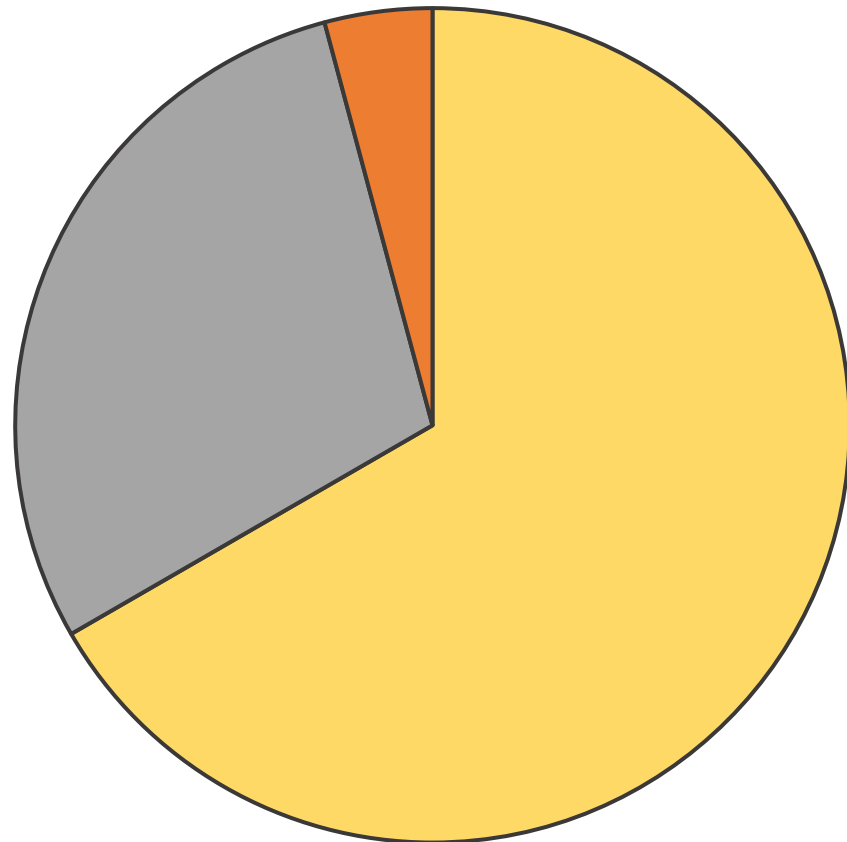
- 24 Responses
- Green Agenda given **Gold** priority.
- Identified 16 emerging priorities to be considered by PPAB to inform the next stage of the masterplan.

What priority would you give to the 'Green Agenda'?

Gold – 16

Silver – 7

Bronze – 1



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



Create community heart



Green Agenda



Develop strong identity & raise profile



Encourage community cohesion



Improve health and wellbeing



Connect the town



Increase participation in facilities



Increase visitor numbers, footfall & spend

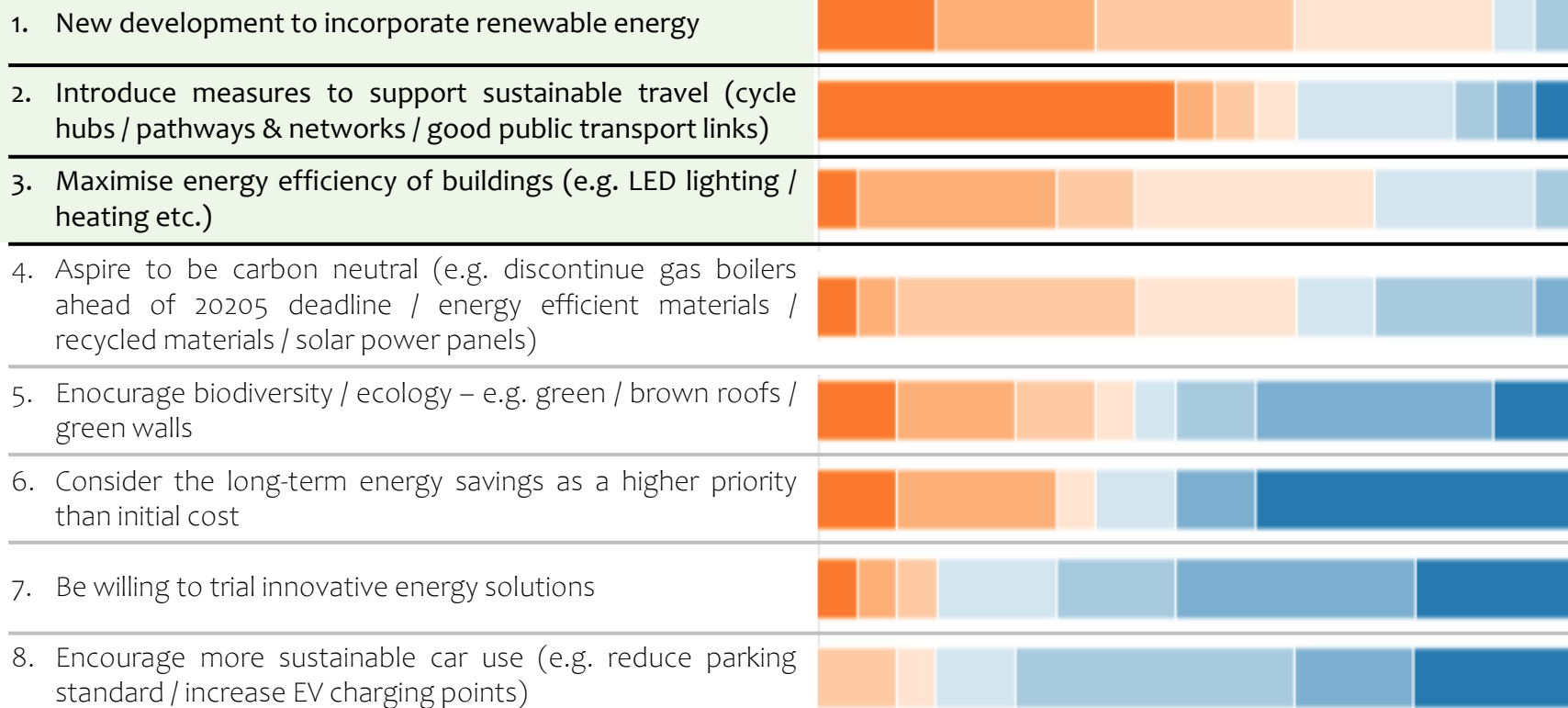


Develop Arts & Culture facilities / heritage

What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter promotes the ‘Green Agenda’?



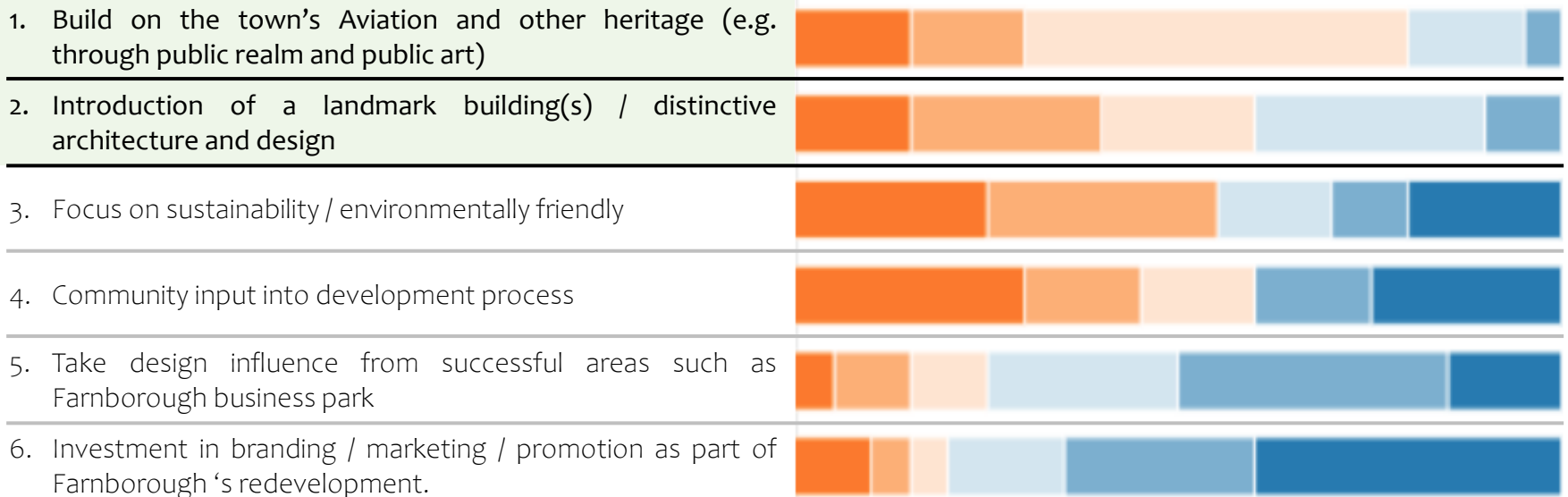
First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice



What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter develops a strong identity and raised profile?



First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice



What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter encourages community cohesion?



First choice      Last choice

1. Flexible community space to accommodate a variety of activities and groups



2. A wide mix of uses that appeals to different groups and encourages people from all ages and backgrounds to use the Civic Quarter



3. Affordable space to rent e.g. for start-up business / community groups



4. A programme of community events focused around the Civic Quarter and the wider town.



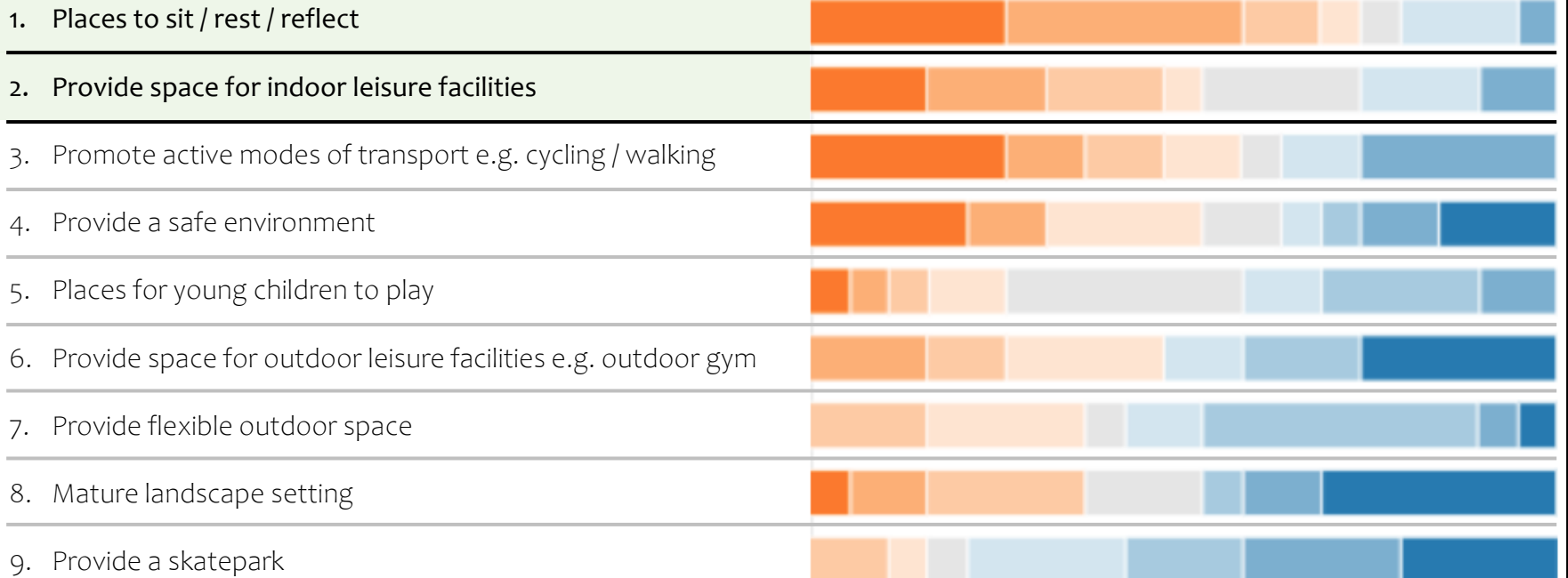
5. Easily accessible and navigable for all the community.



What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter improves health and wellbeing?



First choice  Last choice



What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter connects the town?



First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice

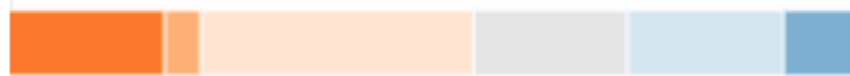
1. Improve pedestrian connections to the business park



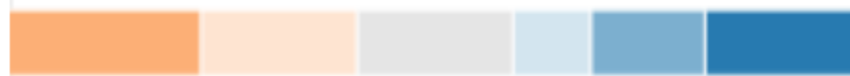
2. Improve pedestrian connections to the east of the town (beyond the A325)



3. Improved cycle links



4. Improved wayfinding / signposting



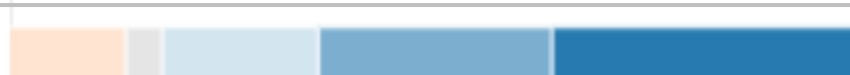
5. Improved public transport



6. Provide a cycle hub / car club / electric bike charging



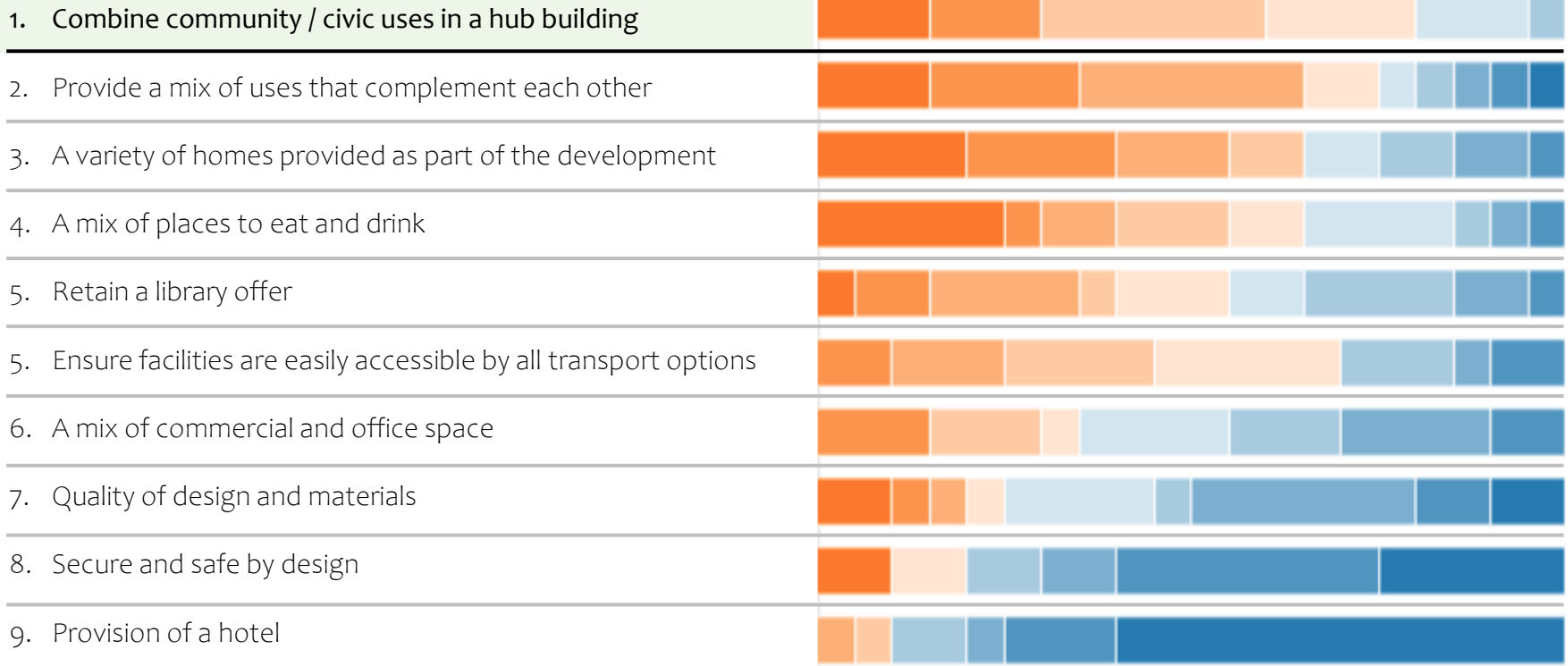
7. Rationalise parking e.g. multi-storey car park to serve development



What options do you consider the most important in increasing participation in facilities on the Civic Quarter?



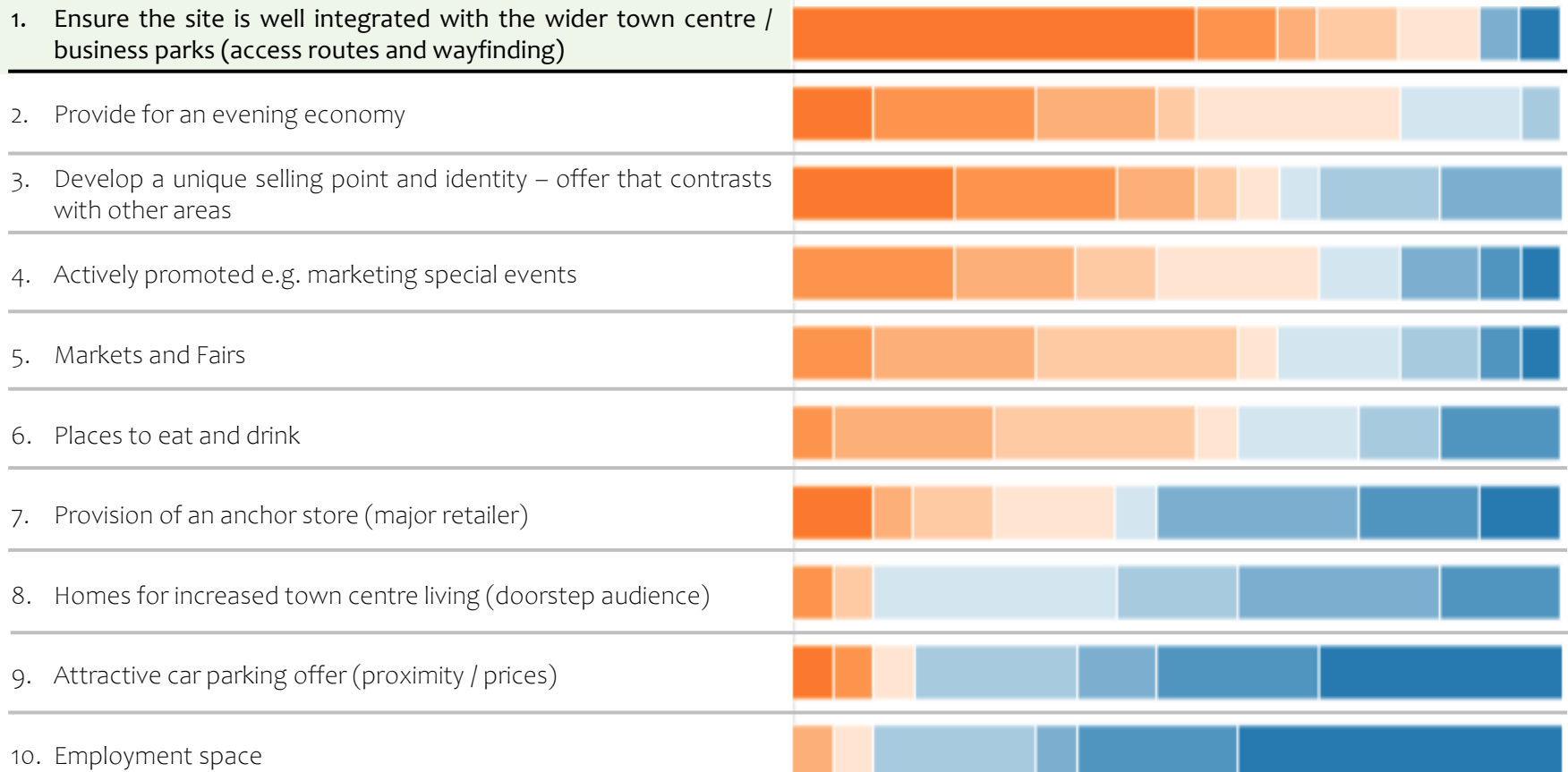
First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice



What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter increases visitor numbers, footfall and spend in Farnborough?



First choice Last choice



What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter enables a stronger arts & culture scene for Farnborough?



First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice

1. Regular cultural events

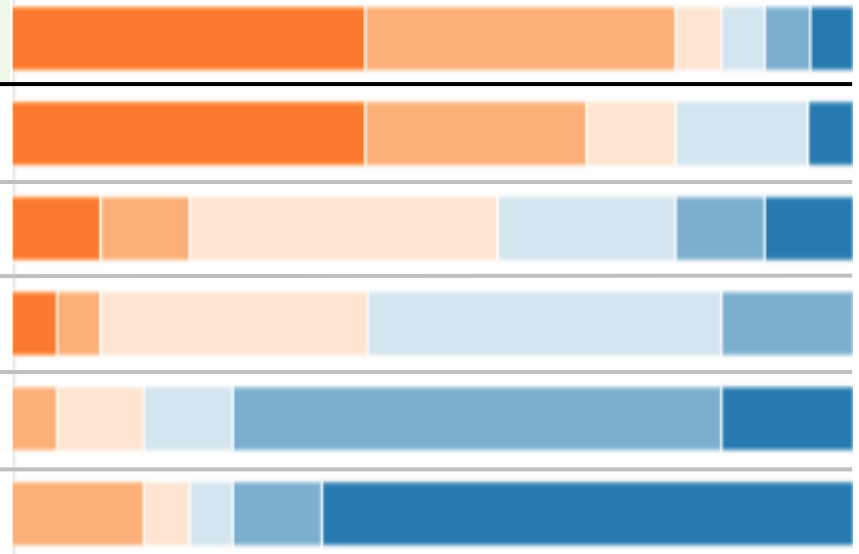
2. Flexible indoor and outdoor spaces that can be used for music and theatre

3. Gallery / Exhibition / Museum space

4. Library

5. A heritage trail / link with local heritage sites

6. Public art



16 Emerging Priorities

Places for community events / gathering		Flexible community space to accommodate a variety of activities / groups	
Places for rest / relaxation		A wide mix of uses that appeals to different groups and encourages people from all ages and backgrounds to use the Civic Quarter	
Landscape – informal green approach (soft landscaping)		Places to sit / rest / reflect	
New development to incorporate renewable energy		Provide space for indoor leisure facilities	
Introduce measures to support sustainable travel		Improving pedestrian connections to the business park	
Maximise energy efficiency of buildings		Combine community / civic uses in a hub building	
Build on the town's aviation and other heritage (e.g. through public realm / public art)		Ensure the site is well integrated with the wider town centre / business parks (access routes and wayfinding)	
Introduction of a landmark building(s) / distinctive architecture and design.		Regular cultural events	

Additional Comments

- Question 9. The options given in my view don't really give a long term growth for culture within the town. We have hundreds of students on the doorstep and a facility/building for performance inside for public to buy a ticket to view would be top of my list. A room in the leisure centre doesn't do it for me. I think post covid an anchor store would be one that draws the public due to a need (not a want) ie. GP Surgery, Leisure facility, Council office etc and then they double up the visit with a shop / restaurant etc. (Anchor store is listed as a retail store above) Although difficult as still early stages, but I would have liked to have seen a Covid-19 question of how members feel due to this, perhaps what they foresee priorities are for the town - e.g. More/less commuting, more/less open space, (inside and outside) - sure other ideas..etc I think this is an excellent way of getting feedback, thank you for implementing.
- It's import to encourage people to our town, we must not be afraid to bring in new concepts that may be costly at first but will allow us to have sustainability in the future. A big retailer will help and a more open atmosphere to eat and drink and relax. We must ensure we cater for all ages
- Taking into account the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the UK and locally, I would establish new priorities for the Civic Quarter that are not so much concerned with physical structures and site allocations, but focus on the human needs of our communities. These priorities would take into account the lessons learned already in the COVID-10 pandemic - the huge increase in need for social housing to eradicate homelessness; provision for the vulnerable and the isolated in our communities; social enterprises with services that reach out into the community; bases for health and social care; and, disabled access and support. Only a local-authority driven regeneration project can meet these basic human needs.
- I cannot see any mention specifically under Theme 4 (What options do you consider the most important in ensuring the Civic Quarter encourages community cohesion?) of accessibility for those with disabilities eg physical, vision, mental.
- The heritage of flight is so important in Farnborough. This theme should definitely be included within the quarter. There could events such as air fairs, e.g. perhaps a twice a year market specifically aimed at aircraft, both real and models, to attract people from around the country. There are items such as this for cars and railways, so why not for aircraft and associated items too. I also would like to see a 'sweep' through from Queensmead/The Meads to the new quarter. This should have some continuity of design - e.g. bigger, more attractive paving, similar facades etc.. The idea of a better link with the east of the A325 is very important. The A325 is actually seen as a barrier in the Knellwood area. In the hard surface central area, if there is one, I would like to see within the paving, an attractive area for big games, such as chess, draughts, perhaps even hopscotch (!) that could be played in the open air. It may be a crazy idea, but worth a thought. This is an architect issue, but beware of too many blocks of buildings creating an element of 'windy city' when the wind blows.
- To ensure that the whole area is a decent design front and back and a safe and welcoming place to live.
- Without a doubt a mix of businesses and places to eat and entertain. Easy access for everyone walking or in pushchairs etc. A few 'wow' points! The assurance that the layout for open areas will be maintained!
- The hole discussion needs to be community led and owned
- Relocate a smaller, modern adapted for flexible working new RBC HQ.

Additional Comments

- I would also, as suggested during the Workshop, like to see us draw on the work of the Vision 2030 engagement too - as I think it may provide some useful steers, and perhaps confirm/challenge some of the conclusions of the specific work done through GT3 etc.
- The demand for office space is very likely to decline as businesses ask workers to continue working remotely and put together longer phased returns. I think the trend in many white-collar industries will be permanent, with businesses will be looking for more flexible meeting/storage space and to reduce their assets. I think the Games Hub that is being pioneered in Aldershot Town Hall could be a good model for any commercial development on the Civic Quarter site.

Residential development will be even more vital to maintaining the viability of the Civic Quarter sites following COVID-19. There remains good demand for private rented sector accommodation and this is important for ensuring we can attract/retain "Young Urban Residents" identified in the EM3's Strategic Economic Plan. This will not be popular with local residents but we could secure some buy in with attractive design that either reflects historical character of buildings in Farnborough or incorporates green design. The recommendations contained in Roger Scruton's report to Government on beauty in design may be helpful for ideas in how to embed this in the Civic Quarter design: <https://bit.ly/2TmAnfo>

Soft landscaping and embedding biodiversity in design (i.e. through green roofs) is probably the most viable way of incorporating environmentally-friendly measures in the development. This outward facing design will contribute strongly to the sense of place that people can see, even if it is in a residential development. This is a good example of green roofs from the University of Warsaw Library complex in Poland: <https://www.greenroofs.com/projects/warsaw-university-library/>

Road traffic forecasts from the Department of Transport suggests that levels of car ownership are unlikely to change substantially, although over time the type of car people drive is projected to change to low carbon options. Modal shift into the town centre is going to be hard to achieve even with better cycling and walking routes, when a substantial number of residents in wards like Cherrywood, Fernhill, St John's and Cove & Southwood live up to 4 miles away with limited public transport options in some areas. Therefore, car parking space will remain an important consideration. My own preference would be for a multi-storey facility that concentrates car parking and provides some options (where practical) for additional electric vehicle charging points.

I think that Health and Wellbeing elements are better focused on the Farnborough Leisure Centre when it is eventually rebuilt, rather than the Civic Quarter itself. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for North Hampshire and Farnham CCG shows that long-term conditions like arthritis, diabetes and COPD are a key risk factor across the area. As part of the procurement for the new operator, I would encourage us to consider how we can build on the numbers of people referred into the existing Leisure Centre for exercise classes and rehabilitation - increasing physical activity among the least active in our community.

On nurturing a night-time economy, let's draw on what works elsewhere in the town. For example, I think that the Village Hotel works well because it offers a variety of options that draws in a range of demographics/footfall throughout the day and can be sustained into the evening - a Starbucks where you can work remotely, a bar with live Sport and food options, some accommodation, meeting and leisure space. It provides a distinctive, higher quality offer and feel from the identikit, tired pubs in the town that tend to attract an older demographic and are more limited. I think those elements could work well in a Hotel based in the Civic Quarter.

PRINCIPLES FOR FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

ACTION: PPAB to consider and agree a proposed set of priorities arising from the consultation with members to be submitted to Cabinet for approval. The intention is for the finalised document to be presented to the RDP so it may inform the early stages of the RIBA Stage 2 work.

SUGGESTED THEMES/PRIORITIES

	Theme/Priorities	Commentary
1	<p>LEISURE, HEALTH AND CIVIC HUB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combine community/civic uses in a hub building - Provide space for indoor leisure facilities - Library - Improve health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the main way the “Community Heart” theme can be delivered, bringing a number of community uses under one roof. • Flexibility is key with the commercial, office and meeting space in this building so that we can adapt to changing market demand and the needs of our local voluntary sector. • The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for North Hampshire and Farnham CCG shows that long-term conditions like arthritis, diabetes and COPD are a key risk factor across the area. This is an opportunity to improve outcomes such as gym/leisure membership and increasing physical activity among the least active in our community. • We need to consider opportunities for local health providers to be included in this building to allow more accessible health facilities in the town centre. • This building would also offer enormous potential for saving energy costs and greater energy efficiency.
2	<p>HOUSING NEED AND DESIGN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes for increased town centre living - A variety of homes provided as part of the development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Civic Quarter is important for meeting the housing need identified in the Rushmoor Local Plan. • Quality and design of buildings that reflect historical character of buildings in Farnborough or incorporates green design will help to secure community buy-in. • We should make use of BREEAM ratings that will ensure building quality that can future proof and sustain the buildings for future generations. • The recommendations contained in Roger Scruton's report to Government on beauty in design may be helpful for ideas in how to embed this in the Civic Quarter design: https://bit.ly/2TmAnfo • We need to consider the provision of housing for key workers to ensure we can retain them within the Borough.
3	<p>TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the site is well integrated with the wider town centre/business parks (access routes and wayfinding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening up the public realm to connect Farnborough Town Centre with the Civic Quarter and Business Park is critical to the success of the redevelopment • This is a good opportunity to improve pedestrian links and we can learn from the Union Street East application in Aldershot about opening up diff parts of Farnborough Town Centre (Meads through to town centre to business park).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving pedestrian connections to the business park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Civic Quarter Masterplan needs to link to emerging RBC/HCC plans for walking and cycling. • At the same time, whilst working patterns may change due to COVID-19, the evidence shows that car usage will not decline but that the type of car people use will change over time. Therefore we need to consider alternative car parking provision such as EV charging.
4	<p>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscape – soft informal green approach - Maximise energy efficiency of buildings (where possible) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft landscaping and embedding biodiversity in design (i.e. through green roofs) is probably the most viable way of incorporating environmentally-friendly measures in the development. • This outward facing design will contribute strongly to the sense of place that people can see, even if it is in a residential development.
5	<p>INCREASING FOOTFALL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A wide mix of uses that appeals to different groups and encourages people from all ages and backgrounds to use the Civic Quarter. - A mix of places to eat and drink - An evening economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a need for flexible commercial units that can provide a variety of uses as the market changes and help increase the numbers of visitors to the Town Centre. • In particular, we should prioritise uses that will keep people in that area after using major facilities like the Leisure Centre and facilitate an evening economy – such as places to eat/relax.

References

- Cabinet Proposal for Leisure Centre and Civic Hub (14th July): <https://bit.ly/3fiies1>
- Report to Wednesday's PPAB (15th July): <https://bit.ly/2DvhNMR>
- Appendix to PPAB Report (15th July): <https://bit.ly/32aZTcM>

16 Emerging Priorities from Workshop

Places for community events/gathering	Flexible community space to accommodate a variety of activities/groups
Places for rest/relaxation	A wide mix of uses that appeals to different groups and encourages people from all ages and backgrounds to use the Civic Quarter
Landscape – informal green approach (soft landscaping)	Places to sit/rest/reflect
New development to incorporate renewable energy	Provide space for indoor leisure facilities
Introduce measures to support sustainable travel	Improving pedestrian connections to the business park
Maximise energy efficiency of buildings	Combine community/civic uses in a hub building
Build on the town's aviation and other heritage (e.g. through public realm/public art)	Ensure the site is well integrated with the wider town centre/business parks (access routes and wayfinding)
Introduction of a landmark building(s)/distinctive architecture and design.	Regular cultural events