



## Report of Councillor Elizabeth Bowen Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

### Economy Team Summary

The Economy team have been actively engaging with the business community and responding to numerous enquiries, as well as posting regular updates through the dedicated Economy social media channels and ebulletin, to ensure local businesses are kept as up to date and informed of the latest information, support and guidance available.

On 15 September 2021, the Economy team will be exhibiting at the Northamptonshire Chamber Back2 Business Expo, this event will provide the team with an opportunity to promote the services available to West Northamptonshire businesses from the Economy team and create new contacts, networking to raise the profile of the services available to businesses from the Economy team.

The Economy team are supporting the launch event of a new business networking forum. The West Northamptonshire Business Forum inaugural event takes place on 21 September in Daventry and aims to bring West Northamptonshire businesses together and create a new networking group.

The Economy team have also been working on creating new business and employment support pages on the Council's website to provide information on how to contact the team and what support is available.

### Major Projects and Regeneration

- **Vulcan Works**

Building works to transform the former Vulcan Works site in Northampton into creative businesses with studios, workshops and managed workspaces have now been completed.

The £14 million development is located in the heart of the town's Cultural Quarter and involved a combination of renovation and new build that will provide a total of 68 lettable units specifically aimed at start-ups and growing businesses within the creative industry.

Work to appoint an operator for the facility has commenced, with three bidders having been shortlisted to be taken through to the final stage of the procurement. The tender process will be completed by the end of October. After this the final fit out of the facility will be undertaken, with an opening planned early in the new year.

- **Northampton Market Square**

The professional team to take this important project have now been appointed, with the architects Gilliespies leading the design work once again. Surveys to inform the design work including ground penetrating radar and topographical surveys taken place with the results now back with the design team to be incorporated to the next stage of work.

Consultation with the market Traders over the future operation of the market will be taking place from this month as the council aims to make changes to the market to make it financially sustainable and attract more people to the town centre

- **78 Derngate**

A business case for the use of £400k of Towns Fund monies, as was set out in the Northampton Town Investment Plan, has successfully been approved by the Northampton Forward Board and is now subject to WNC Cabinet approval. Subject to this final approval the monies will be made available to the 78 Derngate Trusts project to enable the extension to the much-loved local attraction to take place.

- **Former Marks and Spencer's site**

Works to remove the asbestos from the former Marks and Spencer's Site are now complete. A business case for the site will now be developed setting out the plans in more detail, this business case will come to the Northampton Forward Board and WNC Cabinet early in the new year for approval.

- **Watermeadows**

Work on the Watermeadows in Towcester continues with Phase 1 works now almost complete and the second phase of works, which will see new footpaths created across the site well underway.

**Councillor Elizabeth Bowen**

**Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth**