

Economic Prosperity Sub Committee

25th January 2022.

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Review.

The Future of Retail and Town Centres

- **Introduction**
- The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report 2019
- Covid 19 Town Centre Response and Recovery
- Our Ambition
- North Shields Masterplan
- North West, Wallsend and Whitley Bay Masterplans

The Future Of Retail and Town Centres Report

- **A sub group appointed in 2019 .**
- To investigate if the Council were to regenerate its town and retail centres, how could it develop sustainable retail models in the light of growth of online shopping.
- **The report was published October 2019**
- It examined the future of North Tyneside retail and Town centres and formulated recommendations as to how the Council might shape its regeneration plans to develop and support sustainable retail models in the light of online shopping.

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

- **Key challenges identified by the sub group were;**
- Adaptation –too much retail space
- Wrong type, size and configuration of retail space
- Need Broader offer
- Activity based community gathering spaces needed

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

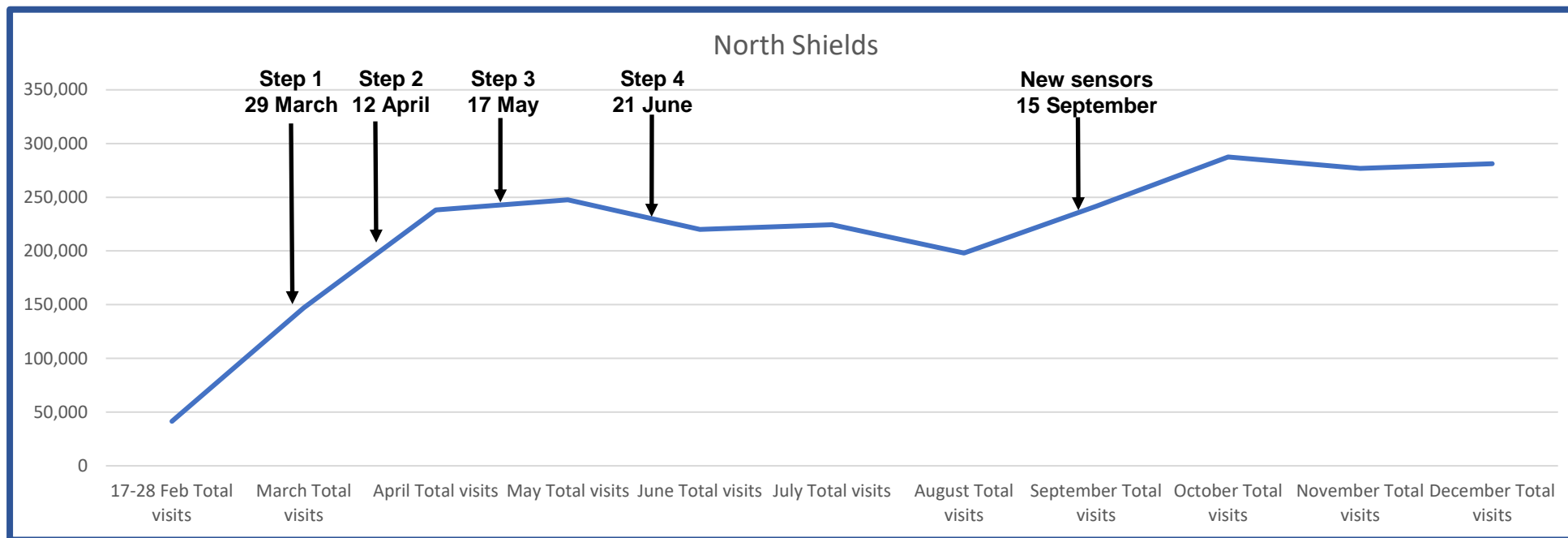
- Connect to attractions – Fish Quay, Spanish City, Segedunum
- Strategies for land assembly
- Create Investment opportunities.
- Mixed use commercial, leisure, health, cultural, employment, residential.
- Pop up events, clusters of activity

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

- **The Sub Group studied the following areas in detail.**
- Town Planning
- Cultural Events
- Place Branding
- Public realm
- Technology
- Funding

North Shields

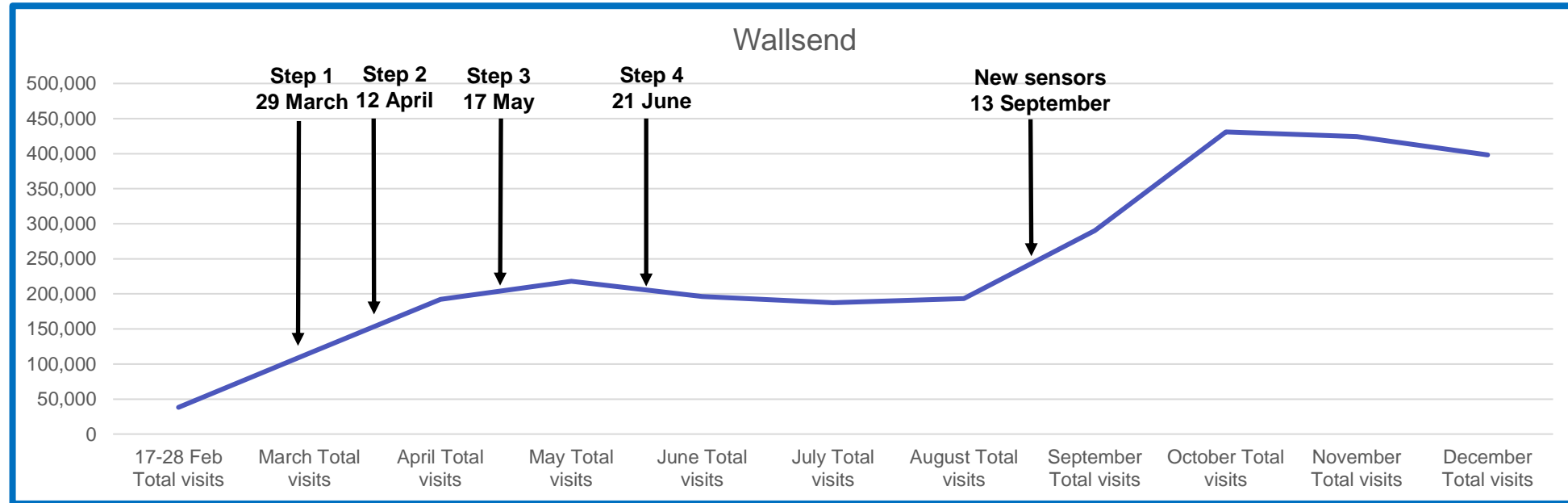
Footfall monitoring results



- North Tyneside Council has invested in leading footfall monitoring technology to help monitor customers' return to town post-pandemic and guide long-term improvements that help them get more out of visits. The Proximity Futures' GEO-Sense system gives a day-to-day picture of footfall peaks and troughs as well foot-flow patterns of how visitors are moving around town.
- The graph highlights the footfall variations when the lockdown restrictions steps were lifted. With the extra funding received through the Welcome Back Fund we were able to install additional footfall counters during September to help with our monitoring.
- The increase during September to December were aided by a series of events that were held to encourage people back to the Town Centre. Some of these included a Multicultural Event, Crossing the Tyne Event, Coastal Run, Big Halloween Pumpkin Trail, Christmas Market and Santa's Grotto.

Wallsend

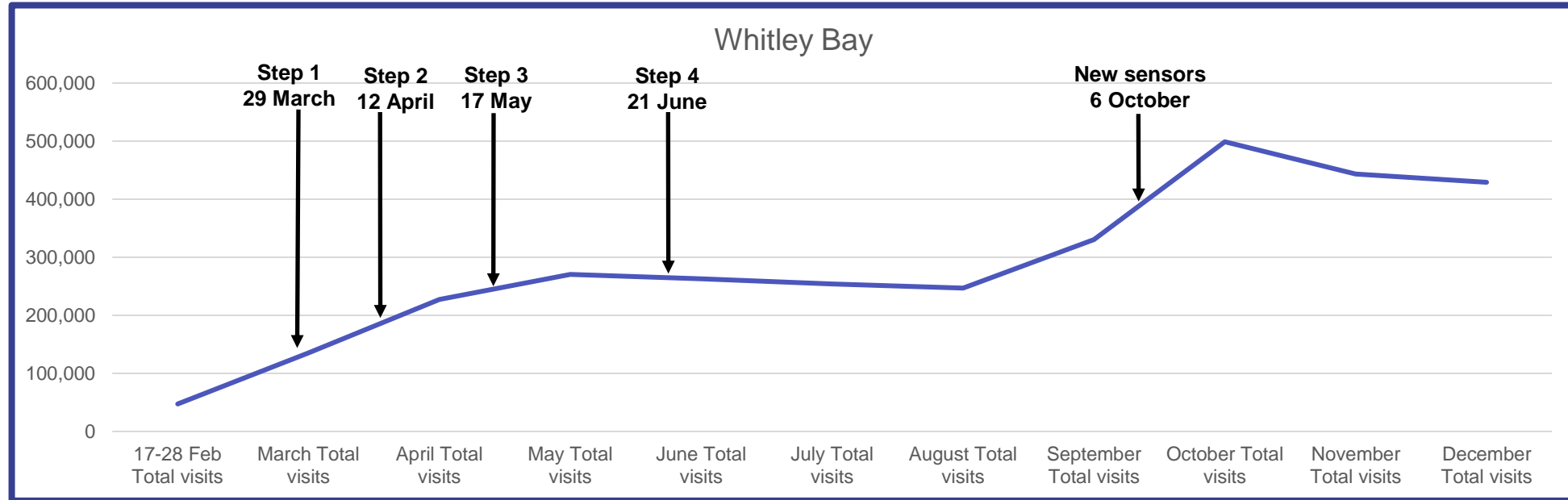
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- The increase during September to December were aided by a series of events that were held to encourage people back to the Town Centre. Some of these included a Wallsend Fun Event, Childers Favourite Characters – Peter Rabbit The Gruffalo and Paddington Visits, Big Halloween Pumpkin Trail.

Whitley Bay

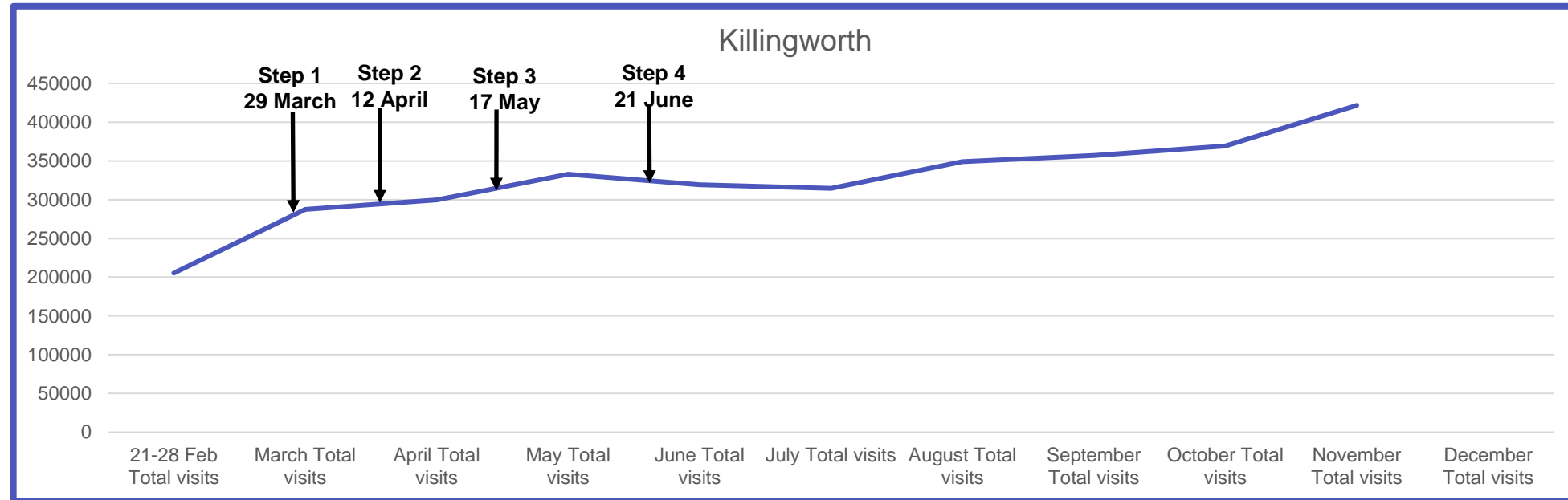
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- The graph highlights the footfall variations when the lockdown restrictions steps were lifted. With the extra funding received through the Welcome Back Fund we were able to install additional footfall counters during October to help with our monitoring.
- The increase during September to December were aided by a series of events were held to encourage people back to the Town Centres These included the Coastal Run Event, Fireworks Display, Big Halloween Pumpkin Trail and St Mary's Santa's Grotto.

Killingworth – White Swan Centre

Footfall monitoring results



- The White Swan Centre is part of this project and will be surveyed in the coming months.
- The graph with the information provided by the centre's management highlights the footfall variations when the lockdown restrictions steps were lifted.
- The White Swan has a total of 32 units
- During the timescale of the graph they were completely let until September 2021 when Poundland vacated. This unit is now going through a refit in preparation for My Dentist to open during February 2022

North Shields

Town Centre Vacancy updates from April 2021 post lockdown

	Vacancies	Units	Vacancies %
April	74	378	20%
May	70	378	19%
June	70	378	19%
July	73	379	19%
August	71	378	19%
September	75	377	20%
December	73	377	19%

- The Town Centres survey's are a manual count to monitor changes in the high streets vacancies, and they are cross referenced with colleagues in Business Rates Team
- These were carried out from April monthly to monitor variations of the vacancies when the lockdown restrictions steps were lifted.
- With the final restriction being lifted in June, the monthly surveys continued until September. The surveys highlighted no major impact on the vacancies and they have now returned to quarterly surveys

Wallsend

Town Centre Vacancy updates from April 2021 post lockdown

	Vacancies	Units	Vacancies %
April	38	275	14%
May	33	272	12%
June	32	273	12%
July	32	272	12%
August	31	272	11%
September	31	272	11%
December	36	272	13%

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Whitley Bay

Town Centre Vacancy updates from April 2021 post lockdown

	Vacancies	Units	Vacancies %
April	62	486	13%
May	54	483	11%
June	51	483	11%
July	49	481	10%
August	49	481	10%
September	49	480	10%
December	49	480	10%

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People & Places Survey snapshot – North Shields

Positives

Businesses appear most positive about the town's

- public transport
- road links
- geographical location.

Customers were very positive about North Shields'

- convenience and ease of use
- ease of walking around town
- access to services

Negative

Businesses appear to be most negative about

- car parking
- town's prosperity
- town's physical appearance

Customers further expressed negative views about

- centre's convenience retail offer
- markets
- cultural activities and events

Future Priorities

Top priority for businesses was

- parking issues,
- improving public transport
- pedestrianisation

The Customers most comments concerned

- hospitality and business mix
- town's general appearance
- public amenities

People & Places Survey snapshot – Wallsend

Positives

Businesses appear most positive about the town's

- public transport
- road links
- geographical location.

Customers were very positive about

- convenience and ease of use
- ease of walking around town
- Access to banks or ATM

Negative

Businesses appear to be most negative about

- car parking
- marketing and promotion
- events/activities

Customers further expressed negative views about

- centre's convenience retail offer
- markets
- town centres evening economy

Future Priorities

Top priority for businesses was

- town centre appearance
- parking management and permits
- signage

The Customers most comments concerned

- hospitality and business mix
- the town's general appearance
- local leadership and social issues

People & Places Survey snapshot – Whitley Bay

Positives

Businesses appear most positive about the town's

- geographical location
- road links
- physical appearance

Customers were very positive about

- cafes/restaurants
- pubs/bars
- independent shops

Negative

Businesses appear to be most negative about

- car parking
- marketing and promotion
- events and activities

Customers further expressed negative views about

- centre's markets
- lack of national chain shops
- physical appearance and cleanliness

Future Priorities

Top priority for businesses was

- parking issues
- vehicle access and pedestrianisation issues
- business promotion and town events

The Customers most comments concerned

- parking and the towns travel arrangements
- retail, hospitality and general business mix
- general appearance and public amenities

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report.

1. Planning

- Some control through the Local Plan and Development management but limited.
- Most Control for uses and types of retail in private sector control
- Property owners have significant control and influence.
- New Strategic Housing developments identified in the Local Plan will support economic growth and retail and town centres.

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

2. Cultural Events

- Victorian Xmas Markets North Shields
- Better event and gathering spaces in town Centres
- Support to private and community partners to deliver events

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

3. Place Branding and Marketing

- People more readily identify with towns
- Chambers of Trade best placed to lead
- Market town centre experience and offer
- Town Centres as destinations of choice.

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

4. Public Realm

- People want attractive, healthy, safe places to go
- Invest in infrastructure
- Roads, Paving, lighting, street furniture
- Attractive places to socialise
- Signage and cleansing
- Toilets

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report.

5. Technology

- Technological infrastructure and connectivity
- Business market online
- Develop web sites
- Social Media
- Click and Collect.
- Council support 5G, Fibre, training

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report.

6. Funding

Future High Streets Fund

Transforming Cities Fund

Getting Building Fund

North of Tyne Combined Authority

S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy.

The Future of Retail and Town Centres Report

- **Summary of Expectations and Business Community**
- Council has limited scope for intervention
- Shops and Services are private enterprises.
- Council will work with operators to;
- Adapt to customer demands
- Develop excellent customer care.
- Embrace new technology.
- Support cultural events held in town centres
- Connect marketing to overall marketing strategy for town centre.

Ambition For North Tyneside

- Approved November 2018
- Framework for the Regeneration of the Borough in line with the Our North Tyneside Plan.

- 3 Themes
 - Our people
 - Our place
 - Our economy
- Masterplans for Retail and Town Centres

North Shields Masterplan

- Cabinet approve January 2021.
- Significant TCF, HAZ and other funding secured for:
- Town Centre Gateway improvements
- Transport Interchange and New Town Square
- Bedford/Saville Street Environmental Improvements.
- Howard Street Cultural Quarter
- Riverside Embankment Walkway
- Tyne Brand and Unicorn House
- Relocation of Ferry Landing

Wallsend, North West and Whitley Bay

- Wallsend, North west and Whitley Bay
- Early work and Scoping of Masterplans
- ADF secured for Wallsend MP.
- Wallsend – Town Centre and Segedunum
- North West – Settlements, Waggon Way, Strategic Development Sites
- Whitley Bay – Town Centre, visitor experience.

Summary and Scrutiny

- Has the Retail and Town Centre Report 2019 been delivered?
- Proposals developed in the Ambition update reports to Cabinet.
- Covid 19 recovery work ongoing
- North Shields Masterplan approved by Cabinet January 2021 and on site being delivered.
- Funding secured to Progress the Wallsend Masterplan
- North West Masterplan to be commenced
- Whitley Bay Masterplan to be commenced
- Ward Members and this sub Committee to be engaged on new Masterplans.