

Local Needs Shopping Overview & Scrutiny Review Terms of Reference

1 Title of Review

Local Needs Shopping Overview & Scrutiny Review

2 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this Overview & Scrutiny review is to make recommendations as to what the Council should do to help meet any identified shortfall in the supply of local needs shopping and shopping opportunities in the centre of Bath.

This will involve first defining what is meant by “Local Needs Shopping” for the purposes of this review; identifying the demand for local needs shopping in the centre of Bath, if any; and considering the supply of local needs shops & shopping opportunities.

3 Background

There is no current policy statement relating to local needs shopping but a range of support measures that seek to support independent traders.

These support measures have largely concentrated on Cheap Street and Westgate Street.

These include;

- restricted lease uses (i.e. local needs shops) on council owned properties in these streets
- member approval sought on planning applications in these two streets

Additional support is also provided through promotion of the Guildhall Market.

Elsewhere the issue of local needs shopping is raised but little practical support offered. For example, the local plan accepts the council should adopt a positive role in encouraging local convenience shops but also recognises the difficulty of retaining local convenience shops whilst hardship relief on business rates is restricted to rural communities.

4 Scope

Review to specifically include:

- a) Determining which “needs” are to be considered within the definition of “Local Needs”
- b) Considering what the Council is trying to achieve by supporting local needs shopping and who the intended beneficiaries are
- c) Agreeing which types of retailer are deemed to be meeting these local needs
- d) Determining which area of Bath will be considered
- e) Determine the demand for local needs shopping in the centre of Bath, using existing data wherever possible
- f) Identify what current provision exists, whether in the Council's Commercial Estate or elsewhere

- g) Examine what the Council could do to help support the provision of any shortfall, with specific reference to (but not restricted to) its own commercial properties
- h) Make recommendations on how any shortfall can be met

Excluded from this review:

- i) Developing a model for local needs shopping in areas other than Bath City Centre
- j) Examining feasibility i.e. feasibility of establishing transport links would not be considered

5 Constraints

- This will be a medium sized review and will therefore be constrained so that completion is achievable within 4 months
- Resources available to this review will include:
 - ◆ The O&S panel members
 - ◆ One O&S Project Officer (Joe Duncan) at up to 1 day per week to oversee the activities of virtual teams established from Sustainability & Economic Development and Property & Legal Services
 - ◆ Services' resource

Sustainability & Economic Development

Damien Wilson, Policy & Project Manager
 Finlay McNab, Policy & Project Officer

Property & Legal Services

Andy Nash, Valuation Services Manager
 (includes co-ordinating other Property & Legal Services input)

- ◆ Steering Group

Cllr Brian Barrett, Panel Convenor
 PTES O&S Panel members
 Bill Cotton, Head of Sustainability & Economic Development
 Tom McBain, Head of Property & Legal Services
 Joe Duncan, Overview & Scrutiny Project Officer
 Damien Wilson, Policy & Project Manager
 Finlay McNab, Policy & Project Officer
 Andy Nash, Valuation Services Manager

- This review must be managed within budget
- This review will be carried out in accordance with the Bath & North East Somerset Council O&S toolkit and O&S project management processes.

6 Outline Plan

- Agree review objectives and terms of reference
- Produce research / consultation summary
- Analyse to determine if there is a shortfall in local needs shopping
- Decide whether to proceed with looking at what the Council can do to meet any shortfall (may include further research, interviewing expert witnesses etc)
- Interim report to Panel
- Final report to Panel

7 Key Risks

- Slipping timescales. This review has begun later than originally intended due to the need to reconsider the outline Terms of Reference and for Overview & Scrutiny Management Board to allocate the review to a Panel.

8 Deliverables

Item	Date	Time	Venue
Purpose & Objectives	7 Nov	9.30	Guildhall, Bath
Terms of Reference	7 Nov	9.30	Guildhall, Bath
Research / consultation Summary	Nov / Dec	To be confirmed	

Depending upon the results of the research and consultation and any identified shortfall in meeting specified local needs, the review may go on to examine what the Council can do to meet this shortfall. This could include the following, to be completed by the end of February 2003:

- Further research / consultation
- Witness session / witness summary
- Interim report
- Final report

9 Structure and Organisation

O&S Panel: Planning, Transportation, Economy & Sustainability
 Convenor: Cllr Brian Barrett
 Co-Optees to Panel: None

O&S Project Officer: Joe Duncan

Director: Clive Thomas, Strategic Director
 Heads of Service: Bill Cotton, Head of Sustainability & Economic Development
 Tom McBain, Head of Property & Legal Services

Service Areas contributing: Sustainability & Economic Development
 Property & Legal Services