

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of Meeting:** 8 July 2019

**Report Title:** Central St Leonards Renewal Area – Exit Review

**Report By:** Andrew Palmer, Assistant Director Housing and Built Environment

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### **Purpose of Report**

To present, for information, the results of the exit review for the St Leonards Renewal Area

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### **Recommendation(s)**

- 1. That the contents of the report are noted**

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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

Following the end of the 15 year St Leonards Renewal Area an exit review has been undertaken. The results of this review are presented as an appendix to the report.

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## Introduction

1. Following a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA) in 2003 Cabinet declared the Central St Leonards Renewal Area on the 18 December 2003. The original objectives for the Renewal Area (of which there were 20) focussed on improving the housing conditions and environmental quality in the area as well as seeking to create long term employment for local residents.
2. A review of the area in 2013 identified that significant progress had been made over the 10 years of its operation in regenerating the area, however more work was required. At that time Cabinet decided to extend the area for a further five years to November 2018.
3. In the past when funding for housing renewal was more readily available, the additional powers made available by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for use in a renewal area were of benefit to the Council. In particular these were regarding the compulsory purchase of long term empty properties. During the past five years however funding has significantly decreased at the same time as other legislative powers to deal with rogue landlords have increased meaning the advantages to having a declared renewal area are less.
4. There is no requirement to formally terminate a renewal area; as such it ended at the end of the five year extension (4 November 2018). Also, whilst there is no requirement to finally report on the delivery of a renewal area, it is considered best practice to undertake an exit review in order to highlight the success of the area.
5. An exit review has therefore been undertaken for the Central St Leonards Renewal Area by RJFP Resourcing (who also undertook the review in 2013). A copy of the review is included at appendix 1.

## Renewal area successes

6. The renewal area provided a focus for the Council's activities in an area which was significantly deprived and even though the area is still one of the most deprived in the borough the renewal area has seen some significant success in a number of areas;
  - £ 32 million investment from public and private sources
  - 459 formal enforcement notices to improve housing standards contributing to improvements in 1,326 dwellings
  - 9 compulsory purchase orders made in respect of long term empty properties
  - 381 local residents involved in skills and learning projects
  - Downward trend in all reported crime in the area

## Ongoing activity

7. Whilst the tools available for housing renewal in a formally declared renewal area are not now available to the council there is still significant activity in St Leonards in relation to improving the housing conditions of tenants. This includes;
- The Selective Licensing Scheme requires all privately rented accommodation in 7 wards (including Central St Leonards) to be licenced
  - The Additional HMO Licensing Scheme requires all HMO's in 4 wards (including St Leonards) to be licenced
  - Enforcement work in housing renewal continues and full use of the new powers introduced by the Housing and Planning Act is being made. To date 21 financial penalties have been issued for various non-compliance
  - Coastal Space 2 has recently delivered 26 new units of affordable rent accommodation in the refurbished Winchester House school building
  - Coastal Space 3 is on site at Leolyn House to deliver additional affordable rent accommodation in partnership with Optivo
  - The East Sussex Public Health commissioned Warm Homes Check Service is being administered from Citizens Advice 1066 out of St Leonards for the whole of Sussex.
  - The EU Interreg SHINE project continues to improve the thermal comfort of the most fuel poor residents in St Leonards.

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### Wards Affected

Central St Leonards

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### Implications

Relevant project tools applied? N/A

Have you checked this report for plain English and readability? Yes (Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level 13.5)

Climate change implications considered? Yes (none)

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness – N/A

Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17) – N/A

Risk Management – N/A

Environmental Issues – N/A

Economic/Financial Implications – N/A

Human Rights Act – N/A

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Organisational Consequences – N/A  
Local People’s Views – N/A  
Anti-Poverty – N/A

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**Additional Information**

Appendix 1 – Central St Leonards Renewal Area Exit Review

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**Officer to Contact**

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