

## Report of the Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Asset Management

**High Street Retail Auctions Eastwood Extension and Update**1. Purpose of Report

This is a noting report to update Members on the work that has now commenced in bringing in this new pilot measure into Eastwood.

2. Recommendation

**Cabinet is asked to NOTE the report.**

3. Detail

This report details the progress of the Eastwood High Street Rental Auctions (HSRA) as indicated above. The **appendix** is the planned Eastwood Designated Area and a summary of the key points on the new process. The Stapleford HSRA initiative is moving significantly forward in the process and it is thought timely to use the new powers for the improvement of Eastwood. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) recommends the minimum vacancy rate for HSRA is 7% and Eastwood town centre meets that need with a vacancy rate of over 12%. Approval has already been gained from MHCLG to start the process of establishing an HSRA Designated Area in Eastwood. A Vacancy Register will be outsourced to a surveyor (to be refunded by MHCLG) taking around 21 days. Quotes are being sought. The 'Vacancy Condition' (i.e. a property is unoccupied continuously for 12 months or for at least 366 days non-continuously within a 24-month period) will need to be met and officers anticipate around 12 premises will be included.

A 28-day minimum Community Engagement Period on the Eastwood HSRA Designated Area will be conducted. The launch of the Community Engagement Period is at the Eastwood Town Council meeting on Monday 28 July. After the Community Engagement Period, the Notice Period will be 12 weeks, followed by an Auction Period of 12 weeks. New Burdens Grant and Refurbishment Costs can be drawn down from MHCLG during Notice and Auction Periods.

4. Key Decision

This report is not a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

This report has not been through Policy Overview Working Group or Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Assistant Director Finance Services were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications for the Council at this stage with any costs being contained within existing budgets. New Burdens Funding grants can be claimed from MHCLG during Notice Periods and Auction Periods. Any significant budget implications in the future, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

There are legal aspects in relation to the preparation of legal documentation. MHCLG has produced a toolkit of document templates to support this process and the New Burden payment to cover costs incurred on issuing notices and to gain access to premises, where needed.

8. Human Resources Implications

The comments from the Human Resources Manager were as follows:

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

The Union comments were as follows:

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

The climate change implications are contained within the report.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

13. Background Papers

Nil.