
TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor John Williams, Economy Portfolio
Responsible Director - Richard Alty, Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to spend £16,000.00 capital monies for a series of initiatives to improve Darlington town centre, from the town centre allocation of £100,000.

Summary

2. Darlington Town Centre Board have suggested the following initiatives to further improve and enhance the town centre:
 - (a) new wall-mounted signage and updates to existing hanging signage to promote businesses in Buckton's and Clark's Yards
 - (b) the purchase of additional blue and white Christmas lights for Duke Street, to match the rest of the town centre Christmas light provision and replacement lights for the Yards and Post House Wynd
 - (c) new wall mounted cigarette bins, to match the current street furniture, to encourage the public to discard stubs in the appropriate place. It is proposed to purchase 20 extra bins
 - (d) plaques naming and describing the: Water Feature, Joseph Pease Place and the Life Pulse

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the release of £16,000 from the £100,000 town centre capital allocation.

Reasons

4. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To achieve key aims within the Darlington Town Centre Business Plan 2008-11 and in line with priorities in the prosperous theme 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'
 - (b) To continue to enhance and maintain the quality of Darlington town centre's physical environment, promote it to attract additional visitors and revenue to town centre businesses and to compete regionally with other destinations and town centres.

Richard Alty
Assistant Chief Executive - Regeneration

Background Papers

Darlington Town Centre Business Plan 2008-11

Christine Kavanagh : Extension 2470

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S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no direct implications for crime and disorder.
Health and Wellbeing	The proposed schemes will contribute to community wellbeing.
Sustainability	The individual schemes have been designed having regard to sustainability issues.
Diversity	N/A
Wards Affected	The proposals relate solely to the town centre.
Groups Affected	All those visiting and experiencing the Town Centre.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This report does not require an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The proposed schemes will contribute to delivering the Prosperous Darlington and Safer Darlington themes.

MAIN REPORT

Background

5. The Town Centre Board has suggested projects to further improve the town centre and authorisation is sought to spend capital monies to achieve these objectives. The initiatives arising from discussions with the Board and businesses include:
- (a) **Yards Signage:** to replace existing signage at Buckton's and Clark's Yards (High Row and Skinnergate ends) and update hanging signage to match. The signage will comply with all Health and Safety conditions and Highway Regulations and will be of a design sympathetic to existing hanging signage. The signs have been designed to allow for retail name changes thereby making them sustainable.
 - (b) **Christmas Lights:** the purchase of new blue and white Christmas light decorations, specifically for Duke Street. The lights will be harmonious with those used in the rest of the town centre and will further enhance Darlington's festive decorations. The new lights conform with all health and safety requirements and are produced with low energy efficient bulbs.
 - (c) **Wall mounted cigarette bins:** Increase the amount of wall mounted cigarette bins in order to combat the amount of discarded cigarette stubs in the town centre.
 - (d) **Name Plaques:** Name Plaques for the Water Feature, Joseph Pease Place and the Life Pulse.

Information and Analysis

6. Quotations have been obtained for the works described above and details are given in the table below.

Yards Signage		
New wall-mounted signage for Clark's and Buckton's Yards and replacement panels.	£10,000.00	
Amendments to existing hanging signage for Clark's Buckton's and Mechanic's Yards.	£500.00	
COST		£10,500.00
Christmas Lights		
Purchase new street lights for Duke Street to bring it in line with the new pedestrian heart lights. Also to replace existing lights in the Yards	£3,500.00	
COST		£3,500.00
Wall Mounted Cigarette Bins		
Purchase wall mounted cigarette bins to be distributed throughout the town.	£1,500.00	
COST		£1,500.00
Name Plaques		
Purchase and install plaques in the locations of the Joseph Pease Place, The Water Feature, The Life Pulse	£500.00	
COST		£500.00
TOTAL COST		£16,000.00

Outcome of Consultation

7. The proposals arise from discussions with businesses and the Town Centre Board.
8. The town centre businesses in Clark's and Buckton's Yard have been consulted with by the Town Centre Manager and welcome new signage to replace the existing signage which is no longer fit for purpose.
9. The Town Centre Management team have worked with the Development Section to ensure all of the correct applications for Listed Building and Express Advertisement Consents have been submitted.
10. Preliminary consultation has taken place with Highways, Planning, Urban Design, Street Lighting and Street Scene to ensure new street furniture is properly located.