

## High Street Task Force – Institute of Place Management- Support offered to Newquay Town Team

The High Street task force is a government backed organisation set up pre-Covid when it was recognised more support was needed for high streets and town centres. Funded until 2024, the HSTF aims to strengthen local leadership and support communities to transform their high streets and Town Centres.

They have developed **The 4 Rs framework - Route to Transformation Map** – This is a strategic approach to Town Centre Revitalisation and provides a structure for place transformation.

The 4 Rs are

**Restructuring** – putting in place the right partnerships and governance and building capacity to enable recovery and the route to transformation. The HSTF comment that town centres are complex places that need leadership and partnership management with town teams that are action oriented, establishing clear role definitions and responsibilities and creating strong partnerships.

**Repositioning**- understanding the need for change and using evidence, data and community engagement to develop an agreed vision for your town centre. Through community engagement understanding where the town is now, where you want it to be in the future, identifying issues, challenges, gaps, and opportunities to change the town centre offering to become a community hub, a gathering place that takes into account community need and reduces the dependency on retail.

**Rebranding** – engaging with people and changing the perceptions of the towns image and identity through communication. Rebranding first requires research and analysis of what makes up the town (and town centres) image from a range of users perceptions (residents, visitors, business owners, landlords, landowners to name just a few) and then following this research with activity to change peoples perceptions.

**Reinventing** – is about changing the town centre offering, making things happen. Reinventing focuses on changing the products, services and purpose in order to meet local and wider needs now and in the future to provide a sustainable future.

Newquay's Town Team has commenced the Route to Transformation and embedded the principles of the 4Rs in their place based approach to the Town Centre Revitalisation. The Town Teams work continues, whilst awaiting the funding decision on Town Vitality Funding, as there is still much that can be done on the place management journey in advance and along side any funding decisions.

The Town Team has set up a quick wins sub group to identify “meanwhile” projects and improvements that can be actioned quickly. A community engagement subgroup has been set up to develop relationships and partnerships and accelerate the community engagement.

The funding application for £150k is to support the commissioning of a multi disciplinary team to develop a strategic development framework and Investment plan. This commissioned work will encompass all 4 elements of the 4Rs framework including for example collecting data and evidence and community engagement to support the development of the town centre vision as part of the repositioning element as well as the more obvious outcomes of reinventing the town through the proposed Town Development Framework and Investment Plan which will provide “bid ready” projects in preparation for applications for the Levelling up Fund or other Government funds.

The High Street Task Force, is led by the Institute of Place Management and they have recruited 150 “experts” to help them deliver the support to local authorities across the country. The first 70 local authority areas have been identified and Cornwall is not amongst those. However the HSTF/IPM

need to train these experts to deliver their range of products and enable them to best facilitate Town Centre revitalisation.

**The HSTF/IPM offer** is for Newquay to receive a visit from the project lead organisation Institute of Place Management, who will deliver a range of their products to Newquay at no cost, in return for then using the experiences as a training case study to develop materials which can then be used for the HSTF experts who will be required to deliver these products to local authorities all across England.

The benefit for HSTF/IPM is two fold – 1) they have some current and relevant experiences to use to develop training materials to support the large number of newly recruited “expert”, 2) they can demonstrate to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) the benefit of working directly with towns, with agreement and support at local authority level.

The benefit for Newquay is that this work, which would cost many thousands of pounds if purchased, would wrap around and support the project work Newquay intends to commission using the Town Vitality funding. (HSTF has reviewed the Newquay project brief and provided very positive comments stating it was very comprehensive covered everything it needed to) This offer would add value to the commissioned work.

The benefit for Cornwall Council is that it brings forward the timetable for any such support being offered in Cornwall. (Cornwall isn't on the first list of 70 authorities so wouldn't expect any support until the next group of towns is announced in mid 2022). Cornwall Council officers can be involved in and attend the sessions and develop not just their own knowledge and skills but lessons learned from Newquay's experience can be rolled out to other towns.

Explanation of some of the products is below

#### **Unlocking Place Potential Visit –**

- A review of desk-based research into the performance and perceptions of your area.
- A three-hour workshop led by a Task Force Expert, with key stakeholders invited from your area, including those from the local authority, Councillors, and civic and business leaders. This will present and examine your plans, challenges, and feedback, to identify next steps and additional support.
- A 45-minute town/city centre site tour which will conduct a snapshot place analysis to complement the insight generated from the workshop.
- A post-Visit report, which identifies key strengths and challenges, and provides a prescription of future support from the Task Force

**The Place Making Programme Workshop** open to a wide group of stakeholders in a town and is centred around a 3-hour workshop for up to 70 people.

- Presents feedback from the [Transforming Your High Street report](#), the [Unlocking Your Place Potential visit](#), and additional desk research from the High Streets Task Force.
- Allows local stakeholders to respond to these findings and expand on issues or solutions identified, in a structured setting.
- Generates a report to help move things forward.

- Encourages local communities to take ownership of their high street, agreeing priorities for action.

This type of programme has been well established and used in over 20 locations nationally by the Task Force Lead Partner, the Institute of Place Management, as well as during significant research projects on high street transformation.