

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Acting Executive Director of Housing, Environment and Economic Development (Housing and Regeneration Services)

**Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
5 September 2007**

Subject: Civic Quarter Development, Clydebank

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of progress with proposals for the creation of a civic quarter within Clydebank.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Town Hall, the former Bruce Street swimming baths and library located on Dumbarton Road, are situated in a strategic location with respect to the regeneration proposals for Clydebank as a whole and their future role needs to be considered.
- 2.2** The town hall building currently adjoins, but is not internally connected to, the Bruce Street Baths complex which opened in 1932 and is located along the southern edge of this urban block. The baths complex has not been in operation since 1994 when the Playdrome was built.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** The Civic Quarter Development project aims to explore and realise the future potential of both the Town Hall and Baths complex as one unified block. This could involve their re-connection through the re-modelling of internal spaces, thereby creating a series of contemporary and economically sustainable spaces and functions within. The southern elevations of the former baths complex also presents opportunities to open up the façade, and to create visual and physical connections to newly defined public spaces around the block. A series of public realm works are also being considered within the surrounding area. Proposals concerning the library building could also be considered.

- 3.2** In order to progress the creation of a civic quarter within Clydebank a working group has been established, comprised of Council officers along with Clydebank Re-built, to give consideration to the issues raised above. The working group is currently in the process of identifying a number of appropriate uses which would be proposed to be incorporated within the buildings to form the civic quarter. It is proposed for this information should be included within a feasibility study, which will ask consultants to assess the ability of the buildings to accommodate these proposed uses and any constraints that may result from their layout. Funding and project management for the production of the feasibility study is to be provided by Clydebank Re-built.
- 3.3** Along with necessary Council functions already operational within the complex of buildings, primarily those in the Town Hall and library, the working group is giving consideration to additional proposed uses. As part of the remit of the group, it is necessary to ensure that consideration is given in the feasibility study to a number of points. These include:
- the incorporation of a financially viable draw that will ensure the long term success of the development and the economic sustainability of the development;
 - arriving at appropriate proposed uses for the existing buildings that relate to one another in terms of space and function and that are sustainable in the long term;
 - consideration is to be given of the best method of improving connections and the public realm within the surrounding area with particular regard to connections between the Civic Quarter and the proposed residential development of the former John Brown shipyard, as well as with the existing town centre;
 - an assessment of fitness for purpose of the buildings; and
 - options concerning the Bruce Street baths complex, bearing in mind its present state of disrepair.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** Clydebank Rebuilt have funds available to meet the costs of the proposed feasibility study.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There are no known risks

7. Conclusion

- 7.1** The development of a Civic Quarter within Clydebank would assist the cultural development of the town and ensure the integration of the complex of historically significant buildings into the redevelopment area of the Clydeside waterfront.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1** The Committee is invited to note the progress with the proposals for the creation of a civic quarter development in Clydebank and note that the outcome of the initial feasibility study proposals will be submitted to a future meeting of Committee for consideration.

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Date: 8 August 2007

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: 6