

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee: 4 August 2010

Subject: Town Centre Regeneration Fund and Projects Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF) projects in Dumbarton and Clydebank and for projects in Alexandria town centre, and to confirm that the Council has successfully secured the previously allocated £350,000 of TCRF funding for Jermon led projects, for projects in Dumbarton town centre led by WDC.

2. Background

- 2.1** This report follows previous detailed reports listed below under Background Papers and a recent Briefing Note issued to all Members on 1 July 2010. The TCRF from the Scottish Government in 2009/2010 had allocated £1,825,493 for substantial public realm improvements on the south bank of the canal in Clydebank and £450,000 for a variety of projects in Dumbarton town centre (£100,000 of which was WDC led and £350,000 to be led by Jermon). Projects are also progressing in Alexandria with capital funding.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** An update on projects is provided below, based on progress at the time of writing this report.

Clydebank Progress

- 3.2** Contractors QTS commenced public realm works on 1 March. The works involve hard and soft landscaping along the southern bank of the Canal, including Three Queens Square and provision of new lighting, street furniture, CCTV cameras and the relocation and refurbishment of the bandstand. In addition, feature lighting has been installed to the Kilbowie Road underpass and will be installed to the Asda underpass at the end of July. The public realm works were originally scheduled to be completed by 30 June 2010. However the need to divert a gas service pipeline that was not shown on service drawings and delays in excess of 8 weeks for the delivery of quantities of granite from China has extended the contract period. The current date for project completion is now mid to late August. An updated programme from the contractors is to be submitted W/C 5 July 2010.

Dumbarton Progress

- 3.3** The majority of Council managed projects part funded by £100,000 of TCRF are completed. This includes the new 50 space car park at Church Court, lighting improvements in Dumbarton High Street, heritage plaques and interpretation boards. New lights at Dumbarton Quayside and CCTV cameras have been installed but await utility companies undertaking connection works. Columns for the finger post signs have been installed and await the signs.
- 3.4** The remaining £350,000 from the TCRF originally allocated to Jermon for works in the Artizan Centre has been the subject of further discussions with the Scottish Government. This followed Jermon's confirmation that they would be unable to commit to the works within the required timescale. Members will be aware of press coverage regarding Jermon and receivership issues. The Artizan Centre is not affected currently and the Council is monitoring the situation.
- 3.5** An alternative funding application and supporting information was presented to the Scottish Government on 8 June. Proposals contained in the application were based on a recently produced Town Centre Improvement Plan, developed by the Dumbarton Town Centre Forum. Members will recall that the Forum was established following a 'Save Dumbarton High Street' Facebook Campaign. The Forum consists of the Facebook campaigners, Business for Dumbarton, Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce, Dumbarton North, Dumbarton East & Central, and Silverton and Overtoun Community Councils, Strathclyde Police, Dumbarton Councillors, Jackie Baillie MSP, Jermon Developments and relevant Council officers. The Forum has met twice and has agreed to set up two focus groups to progress 'Pride in Our Town' and 'Shop Local' initiatives.
- 3.6** The Council has now received confirmation from the Scottish Government that the funds can be redirected to this project, which consists of the following works:
- Vacant unit refurbishment and 'shop jackets' project (to improve the appearance of vacant units and attract new occupiers);
 - Shop local, marketing and promotion initiative (promoting local facilities and businesses);
 - Strategic access improvements (to improve pedestrian access into the town centre);
 - Listed building enhancements (Glencairn House and the Old Academy Building);
 - Riverside Enhancements (improving the rear edge of businesses); and
 - Streetscape Enhancements (general cleaning, repainting of street furniture, and planting projects).
- 3.7** The proposals include a contribution of £100,000 from previously identified Council budgets and the timescales for each of the project programmes are ambitious with completions expected prior to Christmas 2010.

Alexandria Progress

- 3.8** The key focus of projects in Alexandria this year relates to the Mitchell Way Development site, identified in the Alexandria Town Centre Masterplan and the preparation of a development brief as a first stage, to gauge developer interest. This has been the subject of a Members' Briefing and Information Day for the public. Currently a tender has been issued seeking property advisory services to assist with the production of the brief. It is anticipated that a preferred bidder for the site would be selected by 31 March 2011. There is also continuing dialogue through the Alexandria Regeneration Forum. The demolition of the Bank Street pedestrian bridge earlier in the year has removed a major eyesore from a main gateway into the town. In addition the re-development of the Kippen Dairy Site and Leven Cottage site is being progressed by Cordale Housing Association in conjunction with Central Alexandria Tenants and Residents Association (CATRA), Dunbritton Housing Association and Council representatives. Dunbritton Housing Association is progressing with development proposals for the Leven Street site.

4. People Implications

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues associated with this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** None. Projects in Dumbarton will be undertaken using a combination of TCRF, and capital spend for 2010/11. Projects in Alexandria will be undertaken using capital spend for 2010/2011. The ongoing works in Clydebank are funded by TCRF.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** The additional projects in Dumbarton against which the £350,000 TCRF funding will be spent require an ambitious programme of actions in order to meet the Scottish Government's timescales. In addition a number of statutory consents may also be required. However, every effort will be made to ensure that there is good progress.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1** No significant issues were identified in a screening for any potential equality impacts of this report.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** It is recommended that the Committee note progress made with regeneration projects in our town centres and note that whilst TCRF funded works will no longer take place within the Artizan Centre, the Council has successfully managed to secure the funding for a number of key projects in the town centre which have wide support from the local community and businesses.

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Date: 5 July 2010

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Appendix: None

Background Papers: Report to Housing, Environment and Economic
Development Committee, 5 May 2010, entitled, "Town
Centre Regeneration Fund and Projects 2009 - 2010."

Report to Housing, Environment and Economic
Development Committee, 6 January 2010, entitled, "Town
Centre Regeneration Fund and Projects 2009 - 2010."

Report to Housing, Environment and Economic
Development Committee, 4 November 2009, entitled,
"Town Centre Regeneration Fund and Projects 2009 -
2010."

Report to Housing, Environment and Economic
Development Committee, 3 June 2009, entitled, "Town
Centre Regeneration Fund and Town Centre Projects
2009 - 2010."

Wards Affected: 1, 2, 3 and 6