

Agenda



Special Meeting of Cultural Committee

Date: Friday, 11 February 2022

Time: 14:00

Format: Hybrid meeting

Contact: Email: committee.admin@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Dear Member

Please attend a special meeting of the **Cultural Committee** as detailed above.

The Convener has directed that the powers contained in Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 will be used and Members will have the option to attend the meeting remotely or in person at the Civic Space, Church Street, Dumbarton

The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Bailie Denis Agnew (Chair)
Provost William Hendrie
Councillor Jonathan McColl (Vice Chair)
Councillor John Millar
Councillor Brian Walker

Chief Executive
Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property
Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities

Date of issue: 7 February 2022

CULTURAL COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2022

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have any interests in the items of business on this agenda and the reasons for such declarations.

3 RECORDING OF VOTES

The Committee is asked to agree that all votes taken during the meeting be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

4 OPEN FORUM

The Committee is asked to note that no open forum questions have been submitted by members of the public.

5 TOWN TWINNING AND 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLYDEBANK BLITZ **5 – 8**

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration providing an update on Town Twinning and the 80th Anniversary of the Clydebanks Blitz.

6 DENNY CIVIC THEATRE **‘To Follow’**

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities

7 GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART - RICHMOND STREET PROJECT **9 – 15**

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property advising members on discussions with the Glasgow School of Art around a proposal to develop a facility at Richmond Street in Clydebanks which will provide studio space / incubator facilities and seeks approval to commit funding to the project subject to the successful negotiation of a Minute of Agreement between the Council and the Art School.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration****Special Meeting of the Cultural Committee: 11 February 2022**

Subject: Town Twinning and 80th Anniversary of Clydebank Blitz - Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To provide the Committee with an update on Town Twinning and the 80th Anniversary of the Clydebank Blitz.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is asked:
- (a) to note that the planned trip to meet of the Mayor of Letterkenny to discuss the friendship agreement in February 2022 has been postponed and, if feasible, should now be held in March/April;
 - (b) to approve the recommendations of the Clydebank Blitz Working Group as detailed in paragraph 4.5 below; and
 - (c) to approve the additional costs involved in the purchase of Tom McKendrick's book on the Clydebank Blitz.

Background

- 3.1** At its meetings on 29 November 2021 and 20 December 2021, the Cultural Committee received updates on town twinning and on progress being made with the planning of commemorations of the 80th anniversary of the Clydebank Blitz. This report provides a further update on these issues and asks the Committee to consider the recommendations from the Clydebank Blitz Working Group which met on 14th January 2022.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The Mayor of Letterkenny has requested that the proposed visit to Letterkenny in February be postponed and be rescheduled to take place in March/April once Covid -19 restrictions have been relaxed in Ireland. The Committee is asked to approve this change to the plans.
- 4.2** The Convener and Manager of Democratic and Registration Services met with the Polish Consul General on 1 February 2022 to discuss the proposed friendship agreement with Gdynia and also took the opportunity to present the commemorative medal to the Polish Consul General in recognition of the bravery shown by the crew of the ORP Piorun during the Clydebank Blitz.

- 4.3** The estimated cost of Tom McKendrick's book on the Clydebank Blitz is higher than originally estimated and will now cost approximately £3250 for 250 copies compared with the original estimate of £2500. The Committee is requested to agree that these additional costs be met from the revenue Cultural Fund.
- 4.4** The Committee is asked to note that permission has been sought from Clydebank Property Company to bury a time capsule in the grounds of Solidarity Plaza.
- 4.5** The Clydebank Blitz Working Group met on 14th January 2022 and made the undernoted recommendations:
- (a) that a plaque to commemorate the bombing of Dumbarton during World War II should be laid in a suitable location within the grounds of the Municipal Buildings;
 - (b) that the Council should not proceed with the proposed church service in Our Holy Redeemers Church on Sunday, 13 March 2022, in view of the news that Kilbowie/St. Andrew's Church, Clydebank, intended to hold a service, very similar to what the Council had been planning, at 2 p.m. on that date and had invited Bailie Agnew to speak and would also play the commemorative music 'Clydebank 41' performed by the RSNO from the CD; and
 - (c) that a presentation of the commemorative medals should not be held, but instead the medals should be sent, by courier or hand delivered to the recipients along with a letter from the Provost.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications arising from the content of this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** At its meeting in March 2021, the Committee agreed that the remaining balance of funds within the Cultural budget for 2020/21, £13,074 be earmarked for any further expenditure in relation to the Clydebank Blitz i.e. RSNO concerts, CDs, books, etc.
- 6.2** It is estimated that approximately £17,750 of expenditure has still to be incurred/paid in relation to the commemorations (includes all committed expenditure to date and the additional cost of the books, if approved) which will leave the sum of £11,018 to be funded from the 2021/22 Cultural fund. However, the Committee has also committed a further £600 towards the cost of the Jubilee beacon which means that the balance of unallocated funds is now estimated to be £13,982. It should be noted that this calculation assumes that the full £10,000, agreed by the Committee in December 2021 towards the final costs of the commemorations, will be spent.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 There are no risks arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 There are no impacts on any equality groups arising from the recommendations of this report.

9. Consultation

9.1 Officers from Legal and Finance Services have been consulted on the contents of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 The involvement of local churches and communities is an important element of the Clydebank Blitz commemorations which fits well with the Council's strategy on community involvement and engagement.

Name: Peter Hessett
Designation Chief Officer - Regulatory and Regeneration
Date: 03 February 2022

Person to Contact: George Hawthorn, Manager of Democratic and Registration Services, Municipal Buildings, College Street, Dumbarton. Telephone 07903010404 or email: george.hawthorn@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: None.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property

Cultural Committee: 11th February 2022

Subject: Glasgow School of Art – Richmond Street Project

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report advises members on discussions with the Glasgow School of Art around a proposal to develop a facility at Richmond Street in Clydebank which will provide studio space / incubator facilities and seeks approval to commit funding to the project subject to the successful negotiation of a Minute of Agreement between the Council and the Art School.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is requested to:

- note the contents of this report;
- approve in principle the disposal of the facility at Richmond Street by lease to the Art School subject to the final proposal meeting the requirements for disposal of land at less than market value;
- approve the commitment of £500,000 from the Cultural Capital Fund (the Heritage Capital Fund) to the creation of studios and workspaces, subject to appropriate legal and financial due diligence and a Minute of Agreement on terms acceptable to both parties being entered into; and
- agree that relevant officers, in consultation with the Convenor of Cultural Committee, negotiate the full terms and remit of the project with a report being submitted to a future Committee for final approval.

3. Background

- 3.1** Members will recall that the Minute of the meeting of the Cultural Committee on the 27th January 2020 noted that an item entitled “Richmond Street Premises” would be carried forward to a future committee.
- 3.2** This item related to a project which had been initiated through discussions between the Convenor of the Committee and representatives of the Glasgow School of Art and related a disused site which the Council owns at Richmond Street, Clydebank (see annexed plan).

- 3.3 The site itself is part of the Council's non operational property portfolio but has been disused since 2016.
- 3.4 Since January 2020 discussions have been proceeding with the Art School, Council Officers and the Convenor with a view to developing a vision for the facility which would address not only the desire to create an artistic hub within West Dunbartonshire, but would in turn have the opportunity to improve economic opportunities and health outcomes through a variety of engagements in the wider community. These delays have been delayed by the impact of the pandemic however circumstances are such that both parties are now in a position to progress.
- 3.5 In 2021 the Chief Executive of West Dunbartonshire Council and the Chair of the Academic Council of Glasgow School of Art agreed terms of a Memorandum of Understanding – seeking opportunities to work together on a range of outcomes focussed on the redevelopment of the Richmond Street premises. While this agreement did not bind any party to a specific action, it provided a statement of intent to look for opportunities to co-operate on a project centred around Richmond Street.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1 With the agreement in principle established there is now the opportunity to begin to progress to develop concrete proposals around the first stage of the project; the physical redevelopment of the Richmond Street Site.

The Art School have broadly identified the aims of what they term the “Impact Lab” project as:-

- To provide and equip a site where students and graduates of Glasgow School of Art Innovation School may be offered working accommodation (studio), while undertaking projects in the West Dunbartonshire area;
- To provide opportunities for graduate employability, business start-up and incubation within West Dunbartonshire through collaborative working and creative engagement;
- To develop new ways of working, create innovation and service delivery for the long-term interests of the wider community of Clydebank and West Dunbartonshire and beyond;
- To identify opportunities for collaborative working with the local Health and Social Care Partnership through specific project activity;
- To identify, evaluate and disseminate emergent approaches to value creation, social enterprise and collaborative working through academic research and publication.

Subject to Committee approval, officers will, along with the Art School, seek to refine the proposal to address the Council's Cultural and wider service objectives including in particular wellbeing and mental health objectives.

- 4.2 Understandably, as with any academic body, there is a reluctance to acquire premises for an untried and as yet unproven project which may ultimately

prove to be a long term burden on limited estates resources. Similarly for the Council, it would wish to ensure that any premises which it provides for a purpose are utilised and do not slip into disuse. Accordingly it has been determined that rather than dispose of the premises by sale, it would be appropriate to proceed by way of a lease for an initial period of five years with an option to extend for another period of 5 years. Thereafter the arrangement may either continue on the same or amended terms, or the premises may be used for another purpose.

- 4.3 In order to bring the current yard and derelict buildings into productive use it will be necessary to expend capital funds on the creation of studio and supporting spaces. The proposal is therefore to earmark £500,000 of the Cultural Capital Fund for this purpose with the sums being likely to be expended in 2022/23 and possibly 2023/24. These details will require to be confirmed but it will be necessary to make some initial commitment to the Art School to fund works in order for them to be able to apply staff and other resources and to begin to formulate a business plan. Accordingly if the recommendations were approved, it would be intended that the Council would write to the Art School to confirm this commitment in principle subject to the Legal and Financial hurdles referred to in the following paragraphs being addressed and subject to the terms of a Minute of Agreement and Lease being successfully negotiated.
- 4.4 As noted above, the project remains at an early stage of development and it is anticipated that as the details are developed a number of challenges will require to be addressed. Some of those identified to date are:-
- 4.4.1 The lease, although not a full disposal of land for sale will still need to meet the criteria for a "Proposal To Dispose Of Land For Less Than Best Consideration That Can Reasonably Be Obtained" in terms of the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010. As such the Council would require to consider whether the project contributes sufficiently to one or more of Those purposes are the promotion or improvement of—
- (a) economic development or regeneration;
 - (b) health;
 - (c) social well-being; or
 - (d) environmental well-being.
- Initial observations are that the project has the potential to meet a number of these criteria but this will be assessed further when the final scope of the project has been established and outcomes agreed.
- 4.4.2 While the disposal by lease means that property remains in the Council's ownership, the Council will require to consider whether the project would be caught by Subsidy Control (formerly State Aid) rules. Again, as the project

develops, it is anticipated that the position around Subsidy Control will crystallise and the project will be able to be adapted to avoid any detrimental impact. Nevertheless it is worth noting that in addressing these issues the risk position for both parties may ultimately make the project challenging or even untenable.

- 4.4.3 Questions of governance remain. Whilst the Art School and the Council are agreed that the Art School will require maximum flexibility to be able to successfully operate the facility and so will not be directly participating in the operation of the facility, it is recognised that the Council has a long term interest in the site and the aims and objectives of the project and so long term governance issues will require to be addressed in any agreement.
- 4.4.4 The revenue model for the operation of the facility will require to be considered. This will include questions of rates and rental of the facility, costs of repair, charges to users and operational expenses. It is not envisaged that that the Council will seek to charge a commercial rental, however depending on the extent of any revenue commitment which the Council subsequently approve, and subject to Subsidy requirements etc., it may be necessary to make a nominal charge to cover costs and it may also be necessary to make a charge to users though this will be primarily for the Art School to assess and to determine. These matters will be covered in subsequent reports to Committee

5. People Implications

- 5.1 There are no people implications arising from this report

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1 The only direct financial impact of this report is the commitment of the sum of £500,000 from the Cultural Capital Fund to the project. These sums are not otherwise committed. If agreed a letter confirming the earmarking of such sums would be issued to the Art School to provide assurance as to the commitment of the Council.
- 6.2 Further reports to committee will address the Revenue implications of the project.
- 6.2 Advice and guidance will be sought from the Corporate Procurement Unit, as required, to ensure due process is followed at all stages of the project.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1 There is a risk that the issues identified in Paragraph 4.4 cannot be adequately addressed with the project as currently envisaged. It is however anticipated that detailed discussions between the Art School and the Council will identify a means to progress with a viable project which addresses its principal aims and objectives.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An EIA screening has been completed and no impacts were identified. Once the proposed project has been further developed further Equalities Impact Assessments will be accompany future reports.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** The proposal and this report have been subject to consultation and review by Legal, Corporate Asset Management and Finance Officers. No objections or observations not reflected in the report were raised.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** The proposals within this report contributes to the development of a strong local economy and improved employment opportunities.

Angela Wilson
Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property
11 January 2022

Person to Contact:	Alan Douglas – Manager of Legal Services Email: alan.douglas@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
Appendices:	Plan of Richmond Street Premises.
Background Papers:	Minute of Cultural Services Committee on 27th January 2020. EIA Screening
Wards Affected:	All

