

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by Chief Officer (Regulatory & Regeneration)****Infrastructure, Regeneration & Economic Development Committee****6 November 2024**

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**Subject: Clydebank: Long Term Plan for Towns Fund****1 Purpose**

- 1.1** This report sets out progress on the development of the Clydebank Long-Term Plan and Investment Plan to fulfil the requirements of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that Committee:
- (i) notes the progress achieved in preparing the 10 year Long Term Plan and accompanying 3-year Investment Plan and the proposals and interventions contained within them.
  - (ii) notes that the 10 year Long Term Plan and accompanying 3-year Investment Plan were submitted to the UK Government on 11 October 2024.
  - (iii) notes that following the recent General Election and the change of the Government, we have not yet received a confirmation of funding

**3 Background**

- 3.1** In October 2023 Clydebank was selected as one of seven Scottish towns to receive up to £20m of Long-Term Plan for Towns (LTPT) grant funding from UK Government (75% capital funding with the remaining 25% revenue funding). The purpose of the Fund is to invest in and rejuvenate the town based on the priorities of local people and to make a range of improvements under three broad investment themes - 1. High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration; 2. Transport and Connectivity; and 3. Safety and Security.
- 3.2** In accordance with the funding guidance, and following approval by IRED Committee on 7 February 2024, a Town Board was established to administer the funding and to develop the 10 year Long-Term Plan in collaboration with the local community. The Board is chaired by Liz Connolly, the Principal of the West College Scotland, and the first meeting took place on 10 May 2024. The role of the Town Board is to deliver change through realising the long-term vision for the town. The Council is a Member of the Town Board and remains the accountable body for funding. According to the guidance, where an intervention would commit the local authority to future expenditure beyond the

Fund (for example ongoing maintenance of new infrastructure), Town Boards must engage with local authorities and ensure that this is agreed.

- 3.3** The General Election and change in UK Government has delayed decisions on the future of LTPT funding. No formal communication has been received so far to confirm that the funding will be continued, and whether any requirements will change. The Town Board and the Council have been working on the premise that there will be no significant change to the funding.
- 3.4** The Long-Term Plan is to include a 10-year vision which clearly identifies the long-term priorities for the town and a 3-year Investment Plan which sets out how the funding will be allocated and spent over the next 3 years. According to the last version of the guidance, the first tranche of the funding would be released on approval of the Long Term Plan by the UK Government. The original deadline for submission of the Long-Term Plan was 1 August 2024, it was suspended by the UK Government following the General Election, and no new date was set.
- 3.5** Capacity funding of £250,000 has already been received to support governance of the fund. This has been used for the administration and management costs of setting up the Town Board and to cover consultancy fees for a team of design and community engagement consultants to support the Board with the development of the Long-Term Plan.

## **4 Main Issues**

- 4.1** The Long-Term Plan recognises and builds on the good work that is already underway or has been undertaken in the town. In 2021 the Clydebank Town Centre Development Framework was approved. The framework was built on an understanding of Scottish Government guidance and what is working in other towns but is importantly a Clydebank specific solution grounded in a depth of analysis and extensive community engagement including:
  - Clydebank Can (2018) – a detailed vision for a vibrant and dynamic Clydebank Town Centre developed through a series engaging workshops with the local community and stakeholders.
  - Clydebank Town Centre Charrette (2015) – long term vision developed by the public, designers and specialists working together.
- 4.2** The framework demonstrates a vision of Clydebank Town Centre in 15 years' time, transforming it from retail dominance to a vibrant mixed-use and resilient town centre that meets the needs of the whole community. The Town Board agreed that the Framework should be used as a basis for the Long-Term Plan, and, with further consultation, it be developed and updated to ensure that the Long-Term Plan best reflects current local priorities and long-term community aspirations.

- 4.3** A key difference between the 2021 Framework and the Long-Term Plan is the plan boundary. The 2021 Framework was tightly focused on the town centre whereas the Long-Term Plan boundary is much wider taking in Clydebanks residential neighbourhoods such as Dalmuir, Radnor Park, Linnvale and Whitecrook as it is based on the settlements used by the National Records of Scotland.
- 4.4** As part of the creation of the Long-Term Plan, the Town Board were keen for the consultation and engagement to have a wide reach reflecting the boundary of the plan. This was undertaken in two ways: -
- a)** A questionnaire based around the three key investment themes was developed by West Dunbartonshire Community & Volunteering Services. All registered groups within the Long Term Plan boundary were given opportunity to complete the questionnaire and provide information on their priorities for Clydebanks. The questionnaires were issued to 37 registered groups within the Clydebanks area which expressed interest, of which 19 groups returned completed questionnaires..
  - b)** Public engagement events were held on the 25th and 26th July in the Clyde Shopping Centre to highlight the Long-Term Plan programme and ascertain the opinions of the local community. Over the two days 111 people attended. The display boards remained on display for a further 2 weeks. People were given an opportunity to complete a paper questionnaire during the consultation event or an online survey. In total 308 responses were received.
- 4.5** The combined feedback based on responses from both the questionnaire and the public engagement events identified desired projects/interventions across the 3 investment themes which the community would like to see included within the Long-Term Plan. There is a consistency of responses across all community engagement undertaken, including the earlier events that influenced the Clydebanks Development Framework in 2021. Focusing on the town centre was a strong message received, as people felt it was where the funding could have the biggest long-term impact and would be the most visible. In order of preference, creating New Parks/Green Spaces came out top under the High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration theme; Better Maintenance of Roads/Pavements was top under the Transport and Connectivity theme; and Diversionary Activities for Young People under the theme of Safety and Security
- 4.6** Following the consultation, a 'long list' of potential projects/interventions deemed to meet the criteria for funding across the three investment themes was developed in conjunction with the Town Board. 16 potential projects/interventions were identified which were organised in terms of ease of deliverability and formed the basis of the Long-Term Plan. (Refer Appendix 1, pages 26 -33).
- 4.7** Members of the Town Board then selected their top 4 potential projects/interventions from the 'long list' to form the basis of the 3 Year Investment Plan (refer Appendix 2). It identifies how the Town Board intend to

utilise the first 3 years of available funding, underpinned by evidence from the community consultation. The priority interventions selected by the Town Board and contained within the 3 Year Investment Plan are: -

- **Priority Intervention 1:** Develop a series of new walking and cycling trails which could link with existing squares and spaces within the town.
- **Priority Intervention 2:** Introduce a series of improvements and activation to Three Queens Square including a new urban activity park next to the canal and a new Canalside Activity Centre.
- **Priority Intervention 3:** Develop new all ages multi-functional greenspace at the heart of the town centre, along the north side of the canal. It would incorporate new areas of seating and shelter, a sensory garden and raised community planters.
- **Priority Intervention 4:** Strengthen connectivity and accessibility to and from the town centre for surrounding communities, Queens Quay and the Golden Jubilee Hospital.

**4.7** Initial design concepts for each of the priority interventions have been developed and contained within the 3 Year Investment Plan together with high level cost estimates, a preliminary programme, potential project risks and approval considerations. Expected outcomes and benefits of each intervention have also been included.

**4.8** The 10 year Long Term Plan and accompanying 3-year Investment Plan were discussed by the Town Board at their meeting on 30 August 2024. The final 10 year Long Term Plan and accompanying 3-year Investment Plan incorporating comments from the Board members were submitted to the UK Government on 11 October 2024

**4.9** To deliver the priority interventions, the Town Board will require to identify project leads and partners, establish a working group(s) to support definition and delivery of the projects, agree governance arrangements and financial monitoring regime. These aspects can be advanced in the coming months in parallel with the UK Government Approval process.

## **5 People Implications**

**5.1** It is likely that some projects will be implemented by or supported by existing staff within Regeneration, Business Support, Roads and Greenspace in consultation with the Town Board. As with the Levelling Up Fund in Dumbarton, consideration will be given in future to using some of the Long-Term Fund for Towns to meet the costs of staff required to deliver the programme of work. The programme and secretariat support to the Town Board will continue to have some demands on staff time across Council Services including Legal, Procurement, Finance, Communities, Planning, Asset Management, Greenspace and Roads.

## **6 Financial & Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** £250,000 of capacity funding has been received to support establishment of the Town Board, the preparation of the Long-Term Plan and the associated community engagement.
- 6.2** It is envisaged that funding to deliver interventions from the 3 Year Investment Plan will be released following approval of the Long Term Plan and 3 Year investment Plan by the UK Government. The recent General Election and change in UK Government may have an impact on the funding and it has not been confirmed yet whether the funding will be continued.
- 6.3** The revenue part of the fund can be used to support the capital investment for the duration of the long-term plan for towns fund and the Council's support to the Town Board decision making processes and wider administration. Where an intervention would commit the local authority to future expenditure beyond the fund (for example ongoing maintenance), Town Boards must engage with local authorities and ensure that this is agreed. There is provision made in the 3 Year Investment Plan for ongoing maintenance costs of the selected projects.

## **7 Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** A risk remains that the Long-Term Plan will not be approved, and funding not allocated following the Autumn budget. Potential risks for each of the priority inventions together with mitigation measures to address these have been identified in the 3 year Investment Plan.

## **8 Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 8.1** An EIA has been carried out. This was appended to the previous IRED Committee report on 7 February 2024.

## **9 Environmental Sustainability**

- 9.1** A 'zero carbon' approach has been taken to project selection and to reflect the aims of the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

## **10 Consultation**

- 10.1** The Long-Term Plan and 3-year Investment Plan has been developed by the Town Board in consultation with the local community and it reflects their priorities. Previous engagements with the community from the Development Framework and charrette processes have been taken on board.

## **11 Strategic Assessment**

- 11.1** The Council has agreed its five main strategic priorities for 2022 –

2027. The Long-Term Plan for Towns is consistent with the following objectives:

- Our neighbourhoods are sustainable and attractive.
- Our area has the infrastructure for sustainable and inclusive growth where businesses can flourish.
- Our residents are engaged and empowered.

**Alan Douglas**

**Chief Officer - Regulatory & Regeneration**

**6 November 2024**

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**Person to Contact:** Gillian McNamara

**Appendices:** Appendix 1: Clydebank Long Term Plan: Ten Year Vision  
Appendix 2: Clydebank LTP: Three Year Investment Plan

**Background Papers:** Clydebank Town Centre Development Framework,  
September 2021

**Wards Affected:** Clydebank Wards