

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Council: 28 May 2008

Subject **Cities Growth Fund 2008/2009**

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To inform Members of a proposal from Glasgow City Council to allocate £400,000 from their Scottish Government Capital Grant towards the implementation of the main priorities within the revised Metropolitan City Vision for area regeneration projects within the Canal Corridor and Riverside Regeneration.
- 1.2** Members are asked to agree the project priorities identified within this report and that the Council enter into contractual arrangements with Glasgow City Council to ensure appropriate audit trail and performance reporting.

2. Background

- 2.1** In 2003, the Scottish Cities Review was launched, requiring City Councils to take the lead in preparing 'City Visions' which reflected the role of cities in their wider metropolitan regions. Implementation of the city region strategies was facilitated through the introduction of the Cities Growth Fund (CGF).
- 2.2** Following the adoption of the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategy in 2003, an agreed programme of projects which supported the strategy was funded through the Cities Growth Fund from 2003 until 2008. The CGF has undoubtedly brought significant benefits to the Glasgow city region including West Dunbartonshire; however its future has been in doubt as a result of the Government's public spending review. Therefore although no specific allocation has been made for the Cities Growth Fund for 2008/09, Glasgow has received an additional capital grant of £18M, which although not ring fenced for any purpose does equate to the annual value of the CGF. Glasgow City Council has agreed to use this additional allocation to continue the implementation of the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategy.
- 2.3** The City Growth Fund allocated 75% of funds to projects in Glasgow with the remaining funds distributed around neighbouring authorities under particular project themes. The current round of funding would continue to be distributed at this level.

3. Main Issues

3.1 It is accepted that the resources available through the CGF are modest in relation to the challenges set out in the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategy, and therefore it is necessary to prioritise their use and use this money to lever external sources of funding. There are clear criteria which must be met:

- The funds made through the CGF are restricted to capital expenditure and must demonstrate clear cross boundary fit or Metropolitan Glasgow Strategy fit.
- The fund will also only contribute to projects to which other funders are contributing and cannot be used for existing committed or programmed expenditure.
- All projects must be implemented and completed in 2008/09.

3.2 The Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership has agreed a series of project themes and for West Dunbartonshire the two relevant themes for which projects would be eligible for funding under the CGF are: the Canal Corridor and Riverside Regeneration. The allocation is £200,000 for each of these themes.

3.3 Canal Corridor

Under the Canal Corridor theme the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee agreed to allocate funds for the improvement of the towpath between Clydebank Town Centre and Dalmuir Drop Lock. This section of the towpath is in poor condition and forms part of National Cycle Route 7, the Glasgow to Balloch cycle path and is identified as a Core Path within the West Dunbartonshire Draft Core Paths Plan. The route is a well used cycling and walking route by residents and visitors, and its use offers health and well being benefits. The cycle path links to a wider network of paths in both Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire and therefore its improvement has wide cross boundary benefits. Additionally the Committee agreed that if funds still remained after this project is implemented then a project to improve canal bridge lighting at Kilbowie Road and Argyll Road should be delivered through the City Growth Fund.

3.4 Riverside Regeneration

At the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee on 7 May, it was agreed that officers should consider a range of options for the £200,000 to be allocated to Riverside Regeneration and undertake an appraisal of these for Members' consideration.

- 3.5** Appendix A to this report sets out a list of potential projects and an appraisal of these as assessed against the requirements of the City Growth Funds as referred to in paragraph 3.1 above. From the projects listed it is suggested that the Feasibility Study to illuminate Dumbarton Castle may not be considered a capital project, although it should be recognised that the study will set a programme of works for capital investment to the Castle and Rock. The back courts improvement scheme would not fit with the Glasgow Metropolitan Strategy or be considered as offering cross boundary benefits, whilst the proposed roundabout at High Street/Glasgow Road would be unlikely to be delivered within the required timescale, and indications are that it would cost substantially more than the budget available.
- 3.6** Therefore from the projects identified in Appendix A, the following fit with the requirements of the City Growth Fund: Dumbarton town centre car-parking; infilling underpass and provision of at grade crossing at Glasgow Road, Dumbarton; lighting Dumbarton Bridge; improvements to Woodyard Road, Dumbarton; demolition of toilet block, Quay Street, Dumbarton; and cycle path improvements, Dumbarton.
- 3.7** The works to infill the underpass at Glasgow Road and create an at grade crossing would be affected by the recently consented scheme at the former Allied Distillers site, and considerable work would require to take place to widen the central reservation to allow a suitable crossing to be provided. There is also concern that this would further impact upon traffic flows in this area. It is therefore recommended that this project should not be pursued at this time.
- 3.8** The works to improve Woodyard Road would enhance the approach to Levensgrove Park, however a schedule of works has not been prepared to date therefore the costs associated with this scheme cannot be determined.
- 3.9** Sustrans have committed funds to improve the cycle path from Dumbarton town centre to the A82 and an additional £60,000 is required to implement the improvement works. This programme of works would enhance the entrance to Dumbarton along the cycle path. The cycle path is identified as a Core Path within the West Dunbartonshire Draft Core Paths Plan. The route is a well used cycling and walking route by residents and visitors, and its use offers health and well being benefits. The cycle path links to a wider network of paths in both Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire and therefore its improvement has wide cross boundary benefits.

- 3.10** As Members will be aware Dumbarton Bridge has recently been upgraded and improved, but to date no lighting has been installed. Initial indications are that appropriate lighting can be installed for around £40,000. Discussions will require to take place with Historic Scotland as the bridge is a category B listed building and an application for listed building consent would require to be made, however it is considered that this project offers benefits to the town centre by enhancing the appearance of the bridge and town centre generally and improving this important gateway.
- 3.11** From the recent consultation event for the Dumbarton Master Plan, car parking emerged as an issue from local traders and from the public consultation events. Through the Masterplan and the previous Town Centre Action Plan the provision of additional car parking and introduction of measures to restrict long term car-parking in certain locations to assist regeneration efforts have been recognised. It is considered the package of measures the Council has implemented within the town centre makes a positive contribution towards improving the vitality and viability of the town centre. The car-park at Station Road, Dumbarton, which is well used by visitors to the town centre, contributes a significant number of spaces. This car-park, if improved, would make a material improvement to parking at the western end of the town centre. This location is also popular with people using train services from Dumbarton Central and thus fits with the sustainable transport agenda set out in the Council's Local Transport Strategy. It is estimated that this work would cost in the region of £40,000.
- 3.12** The former toilet block in Quay Street, Dumbarton is unused and does not enhance the appearance of this core area of Dumbarton. Significant public realm improvements have taken place in the surrounding area and it is considered that if the toilet block was to be removed the site could be redeveloped for appropriate town centre uses. This site is identified as a redevelopment opportunity in the Draft Master Plan and this scheme would assist in the delivery of this site for commercial and residential use. It is considered that this project could be delivered for around £20,000.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no known personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The allocation of funds from the CGF represents additional funds to West Dunbartonshire within which projects under the Canal Corridor and Riverside Regeneration can be taken forward. This will be used wherever possible to lever in external sources of funding.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** It is necessary for projects to be implemented and completed by 31 March 2009. It is therefore necessary to ensure the project priorities can be delivered within this tight timescale.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** The allocation of £400,000 to deliver projects in West Dunbartonshire is to be welcomed. It allows projects to be delivered that otherwise could not be funded from existing sources. The timescale for implementing and completing any project is particularly tight and therefore it is important that the projects to which funds are allocated can be certain of being completed by 31 March 2009.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Members are invited to:

- **note the allocation of £400,000 from the Cities Growth Fund 2008/09 for West Dunbartonshire;**
- **agree £200,000 be allocated under the Riverside Regeneration theme for the following projects;**
 - **cycle path improvements, Dumbarton;**
 - **lighting Dumbarton Bridge;**
 - **improvements to Station Road car-park, Dumbarton; and**
 - **demolition of the former toilet block at Quay Street, Dumbarton and subsequent marketing of the development site.**
- **any remaining funds after the above projects have been implemented be used to improve Woodyard Road, as entrance to Levensgrove Park;**
- **delegate authority to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to enter into contractual arrangements with Glasgow City Council to ensure appropriate audit trail and performance reporting.**

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Date: 19 May 2008

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Appendices: Appendix A

Background Papers: Report to Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership entitled Cities Growth Fund 2008/09, 26 February 2008.

Dumbarton Town Centre Draft Master Plan

Dumbarton Town Centre Action Plan

Wards Affected: 3 and 6