

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

Planning Committee: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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**Subject: Developer contributions**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek the agreement of the Committee for a process to report and allocate developer contributions received through the planning system.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree the proposed procedures for managing developer contributions set out in Appendix 1 and the criteria for the allocation developer contributions towards green network and green infrastructure projects/enhancement as set out in Appendix 2.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council's Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance sets out standards for the provision of new open space and other green infrastructure within new developments. For new residential development the option exists, in prescribed circumstances, for a financial contribution to be made towards open space, or other green network, provision/enhancement in an off-site location rather than providing on site.
- 3.2 Developer contributions can also be received for other reasons such as for off-site car parking provision or sustainable access measures.

### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1 Whilst the Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Guidance on Green Network and Green Infrastructure sets out the circumstances under which developer contributions will be collected as well as the level of developer contributions, these documents do not set out the procedures for how these funds will be managed and reported, or the types of projects that the funds will be allocated towards. The reason for this is that these are matters that may need to be more frequently reviewed than the Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance.

## Procedures for monitoring, requesting and allocating developer contributions

- 4.2** The proposed procedures are attached as Appendix 1. These set out that the Council will maintain a database recording the development sites from which developer contributions have been received and what projects the contributions have been spent on or allocated to. After the end of each financial year a report will be brought to the next appropriate Planning Committee detailing funds received and how these have been spent/allocated. Council service areas wanting to make use of developer contribution funds will complete and submit a pro-forma to the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager or representative who will consider the request. On completion of an approved project, a project completion pro-forma will be submitted setting out how developer contribution funds have been used.

## Allocation of developer contributions towards green network and green infrastructure projects

- 4.3** The proposed allocation process is attached as Appendix 2. This sets out three considerations the Planning Service will take into account in allocating developer contribution funding. These are:
- Proximity to the site from which the developer contribution has been received;
  - Deliverability of project;
  - Eligible project types – this section includes the details of strategic and local green network and green infrastructure projects that may be suitable for contributions.
- 4.4** With regard to proximity, the first considerations will be the distance of the project from the development site, with the first preference for the project site to be within 250 metres of the development site as this aligns with the accessibility standard set out in the Green Network and Green Infrastructure Supplementary Guidance. Second preference will for the project site to be within 800 metres of the development site as this aligns with the 20 minute neighbourhood approach. Beyond these preferences the Planning Service will consider projects within the same community council area, then the same electoral ward, then the same locality planning area as the development site. The option also exists for any projects within the West Dunbartonshire Council area to be considered. All projects funded by developer contributions should be of benefit to the residents of the site from which the contribution has been received, meaning that the further the project site is from the development site, the more strategic in nature the project or the location of the project should be.

- 4.5** With regards to deliverability, it is important for the operation of the developer contribution process that contributions are spent and projects are delivered. For this reason projects will be delivered by the Council or in close partnership with the Council (including through the Participatory Budgeting process), or by the developer from which the contribution has been received. Also, any contribution received from April 2022 will be required to be spent within 10 years from the date the contribution is received, after which the contribution will be returned to the developer.

Eligible project types

- 4.6** The Local Development Plan (LDP2) sets out the types of green network/ green infrastructure projects towards which developer contributions will be directed. These are:
- Playparks and sports pitches
  - Allotments and community gardens
  - Biodiversity improvements
  - Environmental improvements
  - Path and access improvements
  - Woodland management and planting
  - Strategic green network projects
- 4.7** Appendix 2 identifies some specific projects that would fall within these categories and would be suitable for receiving developer contributions.

Status of developer contributions at 31 March 2022

- 4.8** In line with the procedures set out in Appendix 1 (and previously approved procedures), information is provided below in relation to developer contributions received and spent. For completeness and to provide a baseline record, all transactions through the developer contribution fund since 2007 are summarised below. In future years, reporting will cover contributions received and spent/allocated in the previous financial year.

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Contributions received</b>	<b>Contributions spent</b>
2007-March 2017	£620,882.23	£363,798.24
April 2017-March 2018	£40,480	£0
April 2018-March 2019	£22,382.91	£0
April 2019-March 2020	£34,876.44	£12,000
April 2020-March 2021	£267,595.00	£50,000
April 2021-March 2022	£24,289.23	£0
Current balance	£584,706.87	

- 4.9** Of the current balance £325,000 is allocated or earmarked as follows:

- £200,000 for sustainable access improvements for the Golden Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank
  - £50,000 for pocket park at Dumbarton Waterfront (already delivered)
  - £50,000 for improvements to Christie Park, Alexandria
  - £25,000 for green network improvements at Faifley Knowes, Clydebank
  - In principle support for eligible participatory budgeting projects
- 4.10** Previously supported projects include improvements to East End Park and Posties Park in Dumbarton, and Goldenhill Park and Melfort Park in Clydebank.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no people implications associated with this report.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** The proposed procedures will ensure that developer contributions received are managed, reported and spent in an orderly and transparent manner. Local government procurement rules will be followed for any projects being delivered by the Council using developer contributions funds.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** There are no risks associated with this report.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** The policy requires that equality issues should be considered in the identification and design of projects making use of developer contribution funding.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** No consultation is required in relation to this matter.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1** This report has no direct impact on the Council's strategic priorities.

**Peter Hessett**

**Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration**

**Date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

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**Appendix:**

1. Procedures for monitoring, requesting and allocating developer contributions
2. Allocation of developer contributions towards green network and green infrastructure projects
3. Equalities impact assessment

**Background Papers:** West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (2020)  
Green Network and Green Infrastructure  
Supplementary Guidance (2022)

**Wards Affected:** All