

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee: 7 May 2008

Subject **Cities Growth Fund 2008/09**

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee 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** The report details the proposed project priorities and seeks approval for 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 historically 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 on this basis.

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. 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, and 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

The Animating the Canal Strategy has been used to develop the existing project work for the Forth & Clyde Canal in Clydebank. The development of the North Canal Bank, upgraded towpath between Duntreath Avenue and Argyll Road, the new canopy for the Sylvania Way bridge, Access and Signage Strategy and public art projects are key projects from the Animating the Canal Strategy which have been implemented and make a significant improvement to the canal and its environs. Whilst the current allocation from the CGF is not on the scale of previous funds it is considered that the £200,000 allocation could assist the delivery of further key projects.

- 3.4** In discussions with Clydebank Rebuilt it is considered that an appropriate project would be 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.

3.5 A second project, if sufficient funding remains, would be canal bridge lighting at Kilbowie Road and Argyll Road. A significant programme of works has taken place to improve the canal at Clydebank town centre, enhancing the appearance of the area. Environmental and public realm improvements act as a catalyst for further private investment and it is considered important to ensure Clydebank town centre reaps the benefits of the improvement works taking place. This small programme of lighting would enhance the works nearing completion at the North Canal Bank and new bridge canopy at Sylvania Way and would serve to further enhance the economic viability of Clydebank Town Centre.

3.6 Riverside Regeneration

Within the Dumbarton Town Centre Masterplan a significant programme of development has been proposed. An emerging issue from local traders and from the public consultation events has been the provision of car-parking. 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.

3.7 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 significant 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.

3.8 There may also be an opportunity to provide additional car parking spaces at Strathleven Place, Dumbarton which would make an improvement to parking at the eastern end of the town centre and help serve the library and St Patrick's church. This location is also popular with people using train services from Dumbarton Central and therefore again fits with the sustainable transport agenda. The provision of further improved and enhanced parking facilities would enhance the environment of these areas and in turn assist with the economic viability of the town centre.

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. The projects set out in section 3 above have been developed in consultation with key partners and are known priorities.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- **note the allocation of £400,000 from the Cities Growth Fund 2008/09 for West Dunbartonshire;**
- **agree £200,000 be allocated to upgrade the Canal towpath between Clydebank town centre and Dalmuir Drop Lock and, if possible, canal bridge lighting at Kilbowie Road and Argyll Road;**
- **agree £200,000 be allocated to improving and enhancing the car-parking provision in Dumbarton town centre at Station Road and/or Strathleven Place, Dumbarton;**
- **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.**

Elaine Melrose
Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development
Date: 14 April 2008

Person to Contact: Steve Marshall - Section Head Forward Planning & Regeneration, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU, telephone: 01389 737164, e-mail: steve.marshall@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: None

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