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**To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board**

**On: 23 May 2023**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Regeneration Funding Bids Update 2023**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report updates the Board on progress in respect of external funding bids and delivery of key regeneration projects and presents the programmes being developed in 2023.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- (i) Approves the list of proposed RCGF bids for 2024 for Renfrewshire;
  - (ii) Notes the progress and continuing actions to deliver projects from the range of regeneration funds identified in the report.
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## **3. Background**

- 3.1 In recent years the funding of regeneration projects has been reliant on support from national government (and other external sources), often with 'match-funding' coming from the Council. A report to the Economy and Regeneration Board of 14 June 2022 outlined the range of external capital funds available and programmes under development.
- 3.2 In this context and over the past year officers have continued to progress various regeneration projects, programmes and strategies with the support of external funding from the UK and Scottish Governments as well as statutory bodies such as Visit Scotland and SEPA. This has supported our efforts to regenerate and revitalise our town centres, support our communities and promote sustainable economic growth and development across Renfrewshire.
- 3.3 This report details the various funding streams which the Council have accessed and applied to over the past 12 months.

## 4 Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (Scottish Government)

- 4.1 The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) is one of the longest running funds available to local authorities having been offered annually since 2014. Renfrewshire Council has previously secured support from this fund for the Russell Institute, Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub and Paisley Museum.
- 4.2 The RCGF has also supported projects led by community led organisations (with the grant being passed to the Council to manage), such as those promoted by Linwood Community Development Trust, Active Communities, Johnstone and most recently the PACE Youth Theatre in Paisley.
- 4.3 The RCGF is an annual competitive fund open to all 32 Scottish local authorities. The fund is always heavily subscribed, meaning that many projects that are put forward are not funded.
- 4.4 Officers are now considering applications to Stage 1 of the 2024 scheme. The projects proposed are shown below and have been identified on a similar basis to those previously reported to Board for the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP), again seeking to align with existing Council strategies and community led proposals and plans.

*Table 2 Proposed 24/25 RCGF Application Projects*

Potential RCGF Projects	Location	Summary
Erskine TC Improvements	Erskine	Creator of incubator / business space within Erskine TC.
Foxbar Community Growing Space - £240K	Foxbar, Paisley	Development of a new community growing space at the site of the former St Paul's PS site in Foxbar, supporting delivery of a key priority from the community led Foxbar Local Place Plan.  The project supports wider regeneration outcomes in relation to promoting active lifestyles, contribution to net zero targets and community food growing.
Castle Semple – Extension to visitor centre	Lochwinnoch	Applied for previously but not successful. Application to be tweaked and consider recent consultation / visioning.
Ferguslie Park – The Making Of	Ferguslie, Paisley	Development at 'Neighbourhood Centre' zone including Pump (cycle) Track, supporting delivery of a key priority from the community led 'Making of Ferguslie' Local Place Plan.

- 4.5 In addition, officers are currently progressing work to review and refresh the Council's town centre strategies, with an initial focus on Johnstone and Erskine. Officers are also continuing to work with the owner of the Paisley Centre in terms of their plans for redevelopment. Outcomes from this work will support a series of priorities, actions and projects which are anticipated to form the basis of applications to future rounds of RCGF.

## 5 Place Based Investment Programme (Scottish Government)

- 5.1 Since 2019 the Council have used funding from the PBIP (and its previous iteration, the Town Centre Regeneration Fund) to accelerate capital investment, supporting delivery of actions within our town centre strategies, community led regeneration proposals and community led place plans such as the Making of Ferguslie, to accelerate the Council's overall placeshaping agenda.
- 5.2 Through this fund the Council have supported and delivered a wide range of projects across Renfrewshire including community led projects such as the creation of a community well-being hub and bike shop, restoration of various listed buildings and vacant commercial units as well as enhancements to public realm.
- 5.3 The Council's 22/23 PBIP funding totalled £1.038m, with £720k expected for 2023/24. The following table sets out the projects allocated for 2022/23, which continue to closely align with progressing the Council's placeshaping strategy as identified above.

*Table 1 Place Based Investment Fund Projects 2022/23 awards, summary update at May 2023*

Project summary	Design	Tender	On-site	Complete
1. <b>Dunlop Crescent, Renfrew</b> – refit of vacant shop unit	✓	✓	June 2023	September 2023
2. <b>Future Paisley – Sculpture House</b> - Support for restoration of Craigielea House in Ferguslie to create an artist in residence studio and community social space	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. <b>Prominent Building Repair</b> – Urgent repairs to former Renfrew Police Station	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. <b>Lighting Programme</b> - extending work on town centre lighting - buildings, lanes and spaces using LED technology				
i. Paisley Abbey	June 2023	August 2023	September 2023	November 2023
ii. Tweedie Hall	June 2023	August 2023	September 2023	November 2023

Project summary	Design	Tender	On-site	Complete
5. <b>Houston Arcade</b> - refit of vacant shop units	✓	✓	June 2023	September 2023
6. <b>Ferguslie Park</b> – Delivery of early actions from Making of Ferguslie Local Place Plan, including development of new community growing space	✓	✓	May 2023	June 2023
7. <b>Public Realm</b> - new pavements on Paisley High Street as part of the TH CARS heritage programme	✓	✓	✓	June 2023
8. <b>PACE Youth Theatre</b> – Works to redevelop former Mannequins night club into a new community theatre	✓	✓	June 2023	September 2023

## 6 Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (Visit Scotland)

- 6.1 In March 2022, the Council successfully applied to Visit Scotland to receive funding from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) to produce an infrastructure plan for Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. The plan focuses primarily on Castle Semple but also includes Muirshiel Country Park and strategic linkages to Renfrewshire's towns and villages.
- 6.2 The plan (expected to be completed in May 2023) will be used as the basis for funding applications and delivery of future infrastructure to alleviate visitor pressure points, enhance experience and bolster Renfrewshire's rural destination offer. Key projects within the plan include potential new bike hub and changing space at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre and a play space at the Muirshiel Country Park Visitor Centre.

## 7 Water Environment Fund (SEPA)

- 7.1 SEPA have identified Candren Burn within Ferguslie Park as a water body which could offer potential for improvement and are keen to work with the Council to develop an initial feasibility study, with financial support from their Water Environment Fund (WEF). The role of the Regeneration and Place team in supporting development of such a study was noted by the Board on 14 June 2022.
- 7.2 The feasibility study aligns strongly with the place making aspirations of the 'Making of Ferguslie' Local Place Plan and outcomes could provide multiple benefits, including improvements to the physical and ecological condition of water body and enhanced climate resilience. The study is anticipated to commence later this year and will be subject to consultation with local residents.

## **8 Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (Scottish Government)**

- 8.1 The Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP) is a multi-year Scottish Government fund which supports the transformation and reuse of long term vacant and derelict sites.
- 8.2 A report to Board of 14 June 2022 noted the opportunity for the submission of a bid to the fund to support delivery of the Making of Ferguslie Local Place Plan, in view of the significant areas of vacant and underused land within the Ferguslie Park area.
- 8.3 A separate paper to the 23 May 2023 Economy and Regeneration Board provides an update on the Making of Ferguslie and in this context it is anticipated that a bid will be submitted to the next round of the fund in June 2023 to support delivery of the plan.

## **9 Levelling Up Fund (UK Government)**

- 9.1 Last year the Council submitted a Round 2 bid to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to develop a community hub in Renfrew. This was ultimately unsuccessful and further details on the bid and next steps can be found in the Levelling Up Fund Bid 2022 – Renfrew Community Hub Update paper which has been submitted under separate cover to the Economy & Regeneration Board.

## **10 Heritage funding (Historic Environment Scotland, National Lottery Heritage Fund)**

- 10.1 Last year the Council submitted applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to fund the development phase of the '*Renfrewshire Villages Loop: Kilbarchan to Johnstone. Reviving Dynamic Heritage*' project. Unfortunately, these applications were unsuccessful with the funders having concerns over the scale and deliverability of a two-centre vision for the project.
- 10.2 Officers have subsequently held discussions with both funders, who have indicated that Johnstone could benefit from an area-based scheme to complement the emerging review and refresh of the Johnstone Centre Strategy. In this context HES have encouraged the Council to consider submitting an Expression of Interest for Johnstone to the next round of Heritage & Place Programme funding, the dates of which are due to be announced in May 2023.
- 10.3 In Kilbarchan, subject to further investigation of the works required and a sustainable end use for the building being identified, HES have indicated scope for the Council to submit an Expression of Interest for the Steeple Buildings to their newly launched Historic Environment Grants Programme.

This would potentially align with the recent Council motion to investigate further the feasibility of the transformation of the Steeple Hall into an outreach Museum linked to Paisley Museum which will complement activities at the Weavers Cottage.

## **11 Shared Prosperity Fund (UK Government)**

- 11.1 The Council have received funding from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). Further details can be found in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Year 1 Report paper which is dealt with in a separate Board report.
- 11.2 The Regeneration and Place Team are leading on the Communities and Place element of the fund, and it is planned to use funding to supplement the Council's new Sustainable Communities Fund; to fund strategy and feasibility work; and help deliver elements of projects such as the Ferguslie "Making Of" neighbourhood plan.

## **12 Next Steps**

- 12.1 The range of projects and funding applications identified within this report will be progressed by officers to support the Council's wider placeshaping agenda and associated strategies, plans and community led regeneration activity, as set out above. Additional sources of external funding will also continue to be investigated as they become available.
- 12.2 Progress on funding applications and delivery of associated actions will be reported to Board at regular intervals and as appropriate.

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## **Implications of the Report**

- 1. **Financial** – No additional finance is sought. All funding is accounted for within existing Council budgets and external funding.
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
- 3. **Community/Council Planning** –  
Creating a Sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy – delivery of projects and submission of funding applications supports the Council's wider placeshaping agenda, improving quality of place, our neighbourhoods and town centres.
- 4. **Legal** – None.
- 5. **Property/Assets** – None.
- 6. **Information Technology** – None.

## **7. Equality & Human Rights**

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights

have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

- 8. **Health & Safety** – None.
- 9. **Procurement** – None.
- 10. **Risk** – None.
- 11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
- 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.
- 13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

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#### **List of Background Papers**

- (a) Regeneration Funding Bids Update 2022. Economy and Regeneration Policy Board, 14 June 2022.

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