

Minute of Meeting Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 23 May 2023	10:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Alison Ann-Dowling, Councillor Stephen Burns, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Graeme Clark, Councillor Andy Doig, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Jamie McGuire, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor Iain McMillan, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Andy Steel

Chair

Councillor Steel, Convener presided.

In Attendance

A Morrison, Head of Economy & Development, E Shearer, Senior Manager for Regeneration and Place, J Mackie, Principal Regeneration & Place Officer (Funding, Contracts & Commercial Development) and D Christie, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executive's); and D Pole, End User Technician, V Howie, Finance Business Partner, R Devine and E Gray, both Senior Committee Services Officers and D Cunningham, Assistant Committee Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Policy Board would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 **Green/Freeports - update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the bid by Glasgow City Region (GCR) partners to gain a Green/Freeport designation from the Scottish and UK Governments.

The report intimated that an announcement on two Green/Freeport designations in Scotland was made in early 2023 confirming the selected locations as Firth of Forth (Edinburgh/Grangemouth) and Moray Firth (Inverness/Black Isle). The report highlighted that since the announcement further discussions had taken place with both governments about the potential for an Investment Zone designation within GCR as part of an allocation of such designations in Scotland and that a decision on Scottish Investment Zones was awaited.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the outcome of the decision by the Scottish and UK Governments on Green/Freeport designations in Scotland be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that there was the potential for an Investment Zone designation being confirmed within Glasgow City Region during 2023; and
- (c) That it be noted that the implications of any such decision would be the subject of a future report to this Policy Board.

2 **Levelling Up Fund Bid 2022 – Renfrew Community Hub Update**

Under reference to item 2 of the Minute of the meeting of this Policy Board held on 14 June 2022 there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to feedback received in connection with the Council's unsuccessful bid to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to deliver a community hub within Renfrew town centre focussed on the Renfrew Victory Baths and former Police Chambers.

The application had been submitted on 28 July 2022 with the outcome of the Round 2 LUF process being announced on 19 January 2023 when the Council had received confirmation that the bid had been unsuccessful. The UK Government subsequently provided feedback during March 2023, a summary of which was provided within Appendix 2 of the report. The assessment and decision-making process used by the UK Government was based on a sequential approach which took account of other investment in local areas, including grants awarded from the first round of the Fund, to encourage a spread of funding. In this context no local authority in Scotland which had received funding for projects in Round 1, including Renfrewshire Council, had been successful in Round 2. Appendix 1 to the report listed all the Scottish local authorities that had received LUF funding from either Round 1 or 2.

DECIDED: That the report and associated appendices be noted.

3 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Year 1 Report**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the first official year of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) in Renfrewshire.

The report advised that the UK SPF was a UK wide programme to replace EU funded programmes and help the levelling up of the UK economy. The report referred to the decision taken at the meeting of this Policy Board held on 23 August 2022 that the SPF Regional Investment Plan be developed as a Glasgow City Region (GCR) plan in conjunction with eight member authorities and with all necessary approvals at both regional and local levels being in place prior to final submission at the end of August 2022; and to approve an outline set of SPF funded proposals at Renfrewshire level which met the Fund's objectives. Funding for 2022/25 had been announced and Renfrewshire Council had been awarded £6,290,987, of which £1,086,395 was specifically allocated to the Multiply Programme, phased over the three-year period. Approval of the GCR plan had been received during December 2022 and funding released to Glasgow City Council, on behalf of the City Region. As part of the conditions of grant, a report would be submitted on activity and finance to the end of financial year 2022/23 together with details of a 'credible plan'.

Renfrewshire Council had commenced activity in all four thematic areas, Local Business and Multiply, during January 2023 and Communities and Place and People and Skills, during April 2023. During the first quarter, £57,046 had been spent and claimed from SPF with the balance requested to be accrued and spent in the 2023/24 financial year. The report summarised the UK Shared Prosperity Fund activity to the end of financial year 2022/23 and provided details of the 'credible plan' submitted to the UK Government requesting the carry forward of the 2022/23 underspent budget into 2023/24.

The report also referred to the Clyde Climate Forest (CCF) project which would see 18 million trees planted in both urban and rural parts of Glasgow City Region over the next decade. The project would connect and enhance the woodland network across local authority boundaries benefiting people, wildlife and climate. Options had been developed for UKSPF to fund the ongoing delivery of the CCF project, with the £200,000 budget allocated on a pro-rata basis across the member authorities. Update reports on the progress of the UK SPF would be submitted to future meetings of this Policy Board as the delivery plan proceeded.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the request to carry forward the 2022/23 underspent budget into 2023/24 be noted;
- (b) That the request to move £220,000 from Multiply underspends in 2022/23 to People and Skills in 2023/24 be noted;
- (c) That the new requirements to support the Clyde Climate Forest project at the sum of £19,400 over two years (2023-25) be noted; and
- (d) That otherwise the report be noted.

4 **Making of Ferguslie – Update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress made in terms of the delivery of the 'Making of Ferguslie Park' framework and Place Plan, including preparation of the Ferguslie 'Green Line' study which further developed the future place vision for the neighbourhood.

The report referred to the decision taken at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board held on 30 October 2018 to approve the preparation of a development framework for Ferguslie Park, supporting wider housing investment within the area. As a result, the 'Making of Ferguslie' framework and Place Plan was subsequently developed in partnership with the local community and stakeholders through a series of consultation workshops and events, with the finalised document approved at the meeting of the Leadership Board held on 1 December 2021.

The Plan provided the basis for collaborative action by local residents, community groups and stakeholders, supported by the Council and Community Planning Partners, to deliver aspirations for Ferguslie Park over the next five to ten years and outlined a vision for Ferguslie Park as a '20' minute neighbourhood - well connected with a variety of local greenspaces, facilities and activities which supported a healthy and sustainable place.

The Green Line was the key placemaking intervention within the Making Of Ferguslie framework, providing a multi-functional space and green corridor. a key role of the Green Line was to support the reuse of vacant and derelict land within the neighbourhood, providing for high quality public realm and a focal point for activities. The Green Line would also support active travel routes enhancing connections within the neighbourhood and beyond. Initial proposals for the Green Line had been developed to progress this key intervention and to further develop the place vision for the neighbourhood. This aligned with the outcomes of the Making of Ferguslie framework in tackling long term areas of vacant and underused land within the neighbourhood.

The report anticipated that a bid would be submitted for funding in June 2023 to support the delivery of projects identified within the Green Line Study. The Council's 2022/23 Place Based Investment Fund allocation had supported the delivery of these early actions and an indicative budget of £100,000 from the Council's 2023/24 Shared Prosperity Fund allocation had been identified to further support the positive outcomes achieved to date.

Further progress reports on the delivery of the framework and Plan would be submitted to future meetings of this Policy on a rolling basis together with details of proposed future projects for the Board's consideration.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the strong progress in 'early win' actions supporting delivery of the Making of Ferguslie framework, as set out in section 4 of the report, be noted;
- (b) That the Ferguslie 'Green Line' study be approved as the basis for further development and delivery of the Plan, including the preparation of bids for major

capital funding streams;

(c) That the Head of Economy & Development be authorised to undertake appropriate consultation and publicity with the local community and stakeholders to support further delivery of the Plan; and

(d) That it be noted that progress on delivery of the Plan would be reported to the Policy Board as appropriate.

5 **Scotland Loves Local Update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the take-up and spend in terms of the Scotland Loves Local gift card scheme in Renfrewshire since its launch in 2021 and the decision to fund the scheme for financial year 2023/24.

The report advised that the Scotland Loves Local gift card campaign was a national initiative conceived as a way of ensuring that money in Scottish communities stayed local for longer. Like other gift cards, users could choose the amount of money to load on the card with the difference with the Scotland Loves Local scheme being that it could only be spent within the recipient's own local authority area. Businesses in the local area need to sign up to be eligible for the scheme.

The report provided details of the progress made since Renfrewshire Council signed up to the scheme in May 2021 and highlighted that £31,873 had been spent within Renfrewshire as a result of the scheme. A breakdown of spend per retailer was included within Appendix 2 of the report. Funding would be utilised from the existing Economic Development budget allocations to enable the scheme to continue to operate in Renfrewshire during 2023/24. An update report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board regarding uptake and spend for 2023/24 and whether there was deemed to be value in continuing the scheme into 2024/25.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

6 **Town Centre Vacancy Taskforce - update**

Under reference to item 2 of the Minute of the meeting of this Policy Board held on 24 January 2023 there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the establishment of a Town Centre Vacancy Taskforce.

The report detailed the planning policy allocations, within the Renfrewshire adopted Local Plan, used to define town centres, made reference to the scale of vacant properties in Renfrewshire, funding made available to invest in local vacant town centre properties, outlined the proposed remit and objectives for the Town Centre Vacancy Taskforce together with details of proposed future action.

The report indicated that a further report would be submitted to the meeting of this Policy Board to be held on 29 August 2023 to seek approval of the proposed strategy and the recommendations for the proposed incentivisation process and to provide an update on the outcome of the stakeholder consultation together with an up-to-date position regarding the vacancies for each centre.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Taskforce scope and remit, as outlined in the report, be approved and the next steps, as set out in section 8 of the report, be agreed; and

(b) That it be noted that the recommendations of the Taskforce would be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board.

7 Proposed 2023/24 Regeneration funding bids

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress in respect of external funding bids, delivery of key regeneration projects and the programmes being developed in 2023.

The report advised that in recent years the funding of regeneration projects had been reliant on support from national government and other external sources, often 'matchfunded' by funds from the Council. The report detailed the various specific projects and the funding streams which the Council had accessed and applied to over the past 12 months.

The report stated that the range of projects and funding applications identified within the report would be progressed to support the Council's wider placeshaping agenda and associated strategies, plans and community-led regeneration activity and that additional sources of external funding would be investigated as they became available. Regular progress reports regarding funding applications and the delivery of associated actions would be submitted to future meetings of this Policy Board as appropriate.

DECIDED:

(a) That the list of proposed Regeneration Capital Grant Fund bids for 2024 for Renfrewshire be approved; and

(b) That the progress and continuing actions to deliver projects from the range of regeneration funds identified in the report be noted.