

To: Community Planning Partnership Board

On: 21 September 2016

**Report by
Director of Development and Housing Services**

Paisley Town Centre – 10 Year Action Plan

1 Summary

- 1.1. The regeneration of Renfrewshire's Town Centre remains one of the key priorities of the Renfrewshire Council Plan.
- 1.2. Whilst a number of Action Plans and Masterplans have been prepared in the past for Paisley Town Centre these do not reflect the current context in relation to the investment in the three Renfrewshire City Deal projects or the preparation of our bid for UK City of Culture 2021.
- 1.3. The Action Plan aims to achieve two things in particular. Firstly, an identification of the key priorities for Paisley Town Centre in the current context, and secondly, having identified these priority locations to outline a series of short, medium and longer term objectives for each area.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the board notes the draft Paisley Town Centre Action Plan and the intention for it to be subject to consultation during autumn 2016.

3 Background

- 3.1 As Paisley prepares to bid for UK City of Culture in 2017 and the business cases are developed for the three Renfrewshire City Deal infrastructure projects with a total investment of £274m, Paisley is on the cusp of a "step change". So often overlooked during the last 20 years, Paisley now has an opportunity to place itself on a different footing and become a destination of choice for investment, and visitors, and a key player in the Glasgow City Region.
- 3.2 Paisley is Scotland's largest town centre. It has the fourth busiest railway station in Scotland at its heart and has one of the highest concentrations of listed buildings and significant built heritage of anywhere in the country. This is reflected in the approved Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy from 2014.

- 3.3 During late 2015 work commenced on developing a new Action Plan for Paisley Town Centre to reflect the emerging context of the City Deal projects, particularly the Airport Access Project and the Airport Investment Area, as well as the bid for UK City of Culture 2021. The intention was to create a framework which could help to shape the investment decisions of both the Council and other parties, including private sector landowners and investors. It was not intended to be a “blueprint” of definitive actions but instead wished to retain flexibility to allow other parties to bring ideas to inform the final Action Plan.
- 3.4 The draft Action Plan has been developed following a series of workshops and sets out a number of short, medium and longer priorities for 4 different Activity Areas viewed as crucial to the future success of the town centre.
- 3.5 Building on the award winning Paisley Town Centre Asset Strategy (The Untold Story) the purpose of an agreed Town Centre Action Plan is to demonstrate how all the relevant elements of proposed change come together and to illustrate to potential funders and investors that a clear strategy is in place to direct change in the locations that bring about the “step change”.
- 3.6 The Action Plan takes its lead from the draft Renfrewshire Economic Framework (approved in draft by Board in June 2016) which identifies priorities for Paisley Town Centre as a focus on economic activity and investment over the next 3 years.

The Action Plan (2016 – 2026)

- 3.7 The draft Action Plan is attached for the Board’s consideration. The Action Plan contains a number of elements (summarised below):
- (i) Vision for Town Centre
 - (ii) Vision Goals
 - 4 Activity Areas – each with specific short, medium and long term actions against which progress can be monitored over time
 - **Gilmour Street Gateway** – focused on the potential of the fourth busiest station in Scotland which with the addition of the direct Airport link has scope to become a key driver for the area’s regeneration;
 - **High Street and UWS Campus** – deliberately co-joined with the objective of closer integration between “town” and “gown” which has commenced with the Strategic Partnership between Council and UWS and which the University Masterplan will embrace by connecting to the other nearby initiatives such as TCMC, the new Museum complex, the TA Building, etc;
 - **Abbey and River Precinct** – this Area takes two of Paisley’s key physical assets and seeks to increase activity around them and also enhance the environment to encourage high levels of investment in the vicinity of both;

- **Improving Connections** –workshop sessions identified the “disconnect” between the town centre and its residential catchment. This element focuses on how to overcome physical barriers to more Paisley residents using the town centre;

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 CPP Board is asked for any comments on the draft Action Plan prior or during its public consultation during the late part of 2016. Following this consultation and engagement officers will bring back the agreed 10 year Action Plan for Paisley Town Centre to a subsequent meeting of the Board
- 4.2 The consultation will take a number of formats with the specific details still being worked up. As a minimum this will include:
 - Publicity of the draft Action Plan’s existence via the usual digital channels as well as traditional media coverage highlighting where copies of the Action Plan can be accessed by interested parties and how they can submit comments;
 - A public event where interested parties can “drop-in” and engage with officers to offer comments on the Action Plan and to entice views / ideas on the future of the Town Centre and where officers can update attendees on the latest development and proposals;
 - Specific consultation meetings with key stakeholders, including Paisley First, UWS, WCS, Scotrail, Paisley 2021 Trust, Piazza Centre, Paisley Centre, etc to begin to understand and define what role they can play role in the regeneration of Paisley Town Centre

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Paisley Town Centre

Action Plan 2016-2026

June 2016



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1. Paisley Town Centre: Vision for 2026

Centred on its world class cultural and heritage assets, Paisley Town Centre has begun to see an increase in regeneration activity and investment. Set within the context of the approved Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy as the regeneration strategy for the next 20 years, this activity contributes to re-establishing Paisley as Renfrewshire's primary town centre for the benefit of local people and businesses as well as the national and international community. There is much still to do and a clear vision for the future of the Town Centre will provide the essential framework for further activity and investment.

The vision for Paisley Town Centre for the next 10 years can be summarised as:



The vision is defined by a series of goals and an Action Plan which sets out strategic activity areas to deliver transformation change. The activity areas (detailed in Section 3) are:

- Gilmour Street Gateway
- High Street & University Campus
- Abbey & River Precinct
- Improving Connections

2. VISION GOALS

The vision goals are to create:

- **an international culture & heritage destination**
- **a smart business place**
- **a centre for education & innovation**
- **a liveable, attractive & green place**
- **a connected & accessible place**
- **resilient, strong partnerships**

The Council is supporting the process of regeneration to put Paisley back on the map and recognises that the town centre is at the heart of this. Leading Paisley's bid to become UK City of Culture in 2021, there are a number of key buildings being regenerated to provide the platform for activity - the Russell Institute and the Arnotts building are being brought back into active use, plans are well advanced for major improvements to Paisley Museum and the Museum Store and a number of other key buildings are under consideration for investment (the former TA building, Coats Memorial Church and the former Liberal Club). Resources are aligned to deliver current regeneration initiatives and future project resources will be identified and secured as projects develop. The recent and current regeneration activity in the town centre is summarised in Appendix 1: Regeneration Activity, Platform for Change.

The revival of Paisley town centre as a whole will however require a collaborative partnership approach involving the public and private sector and the wider community working together to achieve shared long term goals by 2026.

This Action Plan provides the platform for activity and investment for all potential stakeholders and partners to reach these goals. With the Council commitment to the Action Plan, other investors and stakeholders will be encouraged to contribute to its delivery. Using its own investment as a catalyst, the Council will work with businesses, education and cultural organisations as well as the wider Renfrewshire community to use the Action Plan as a tool to facilitate the delivery of the change in perception, function and vision.

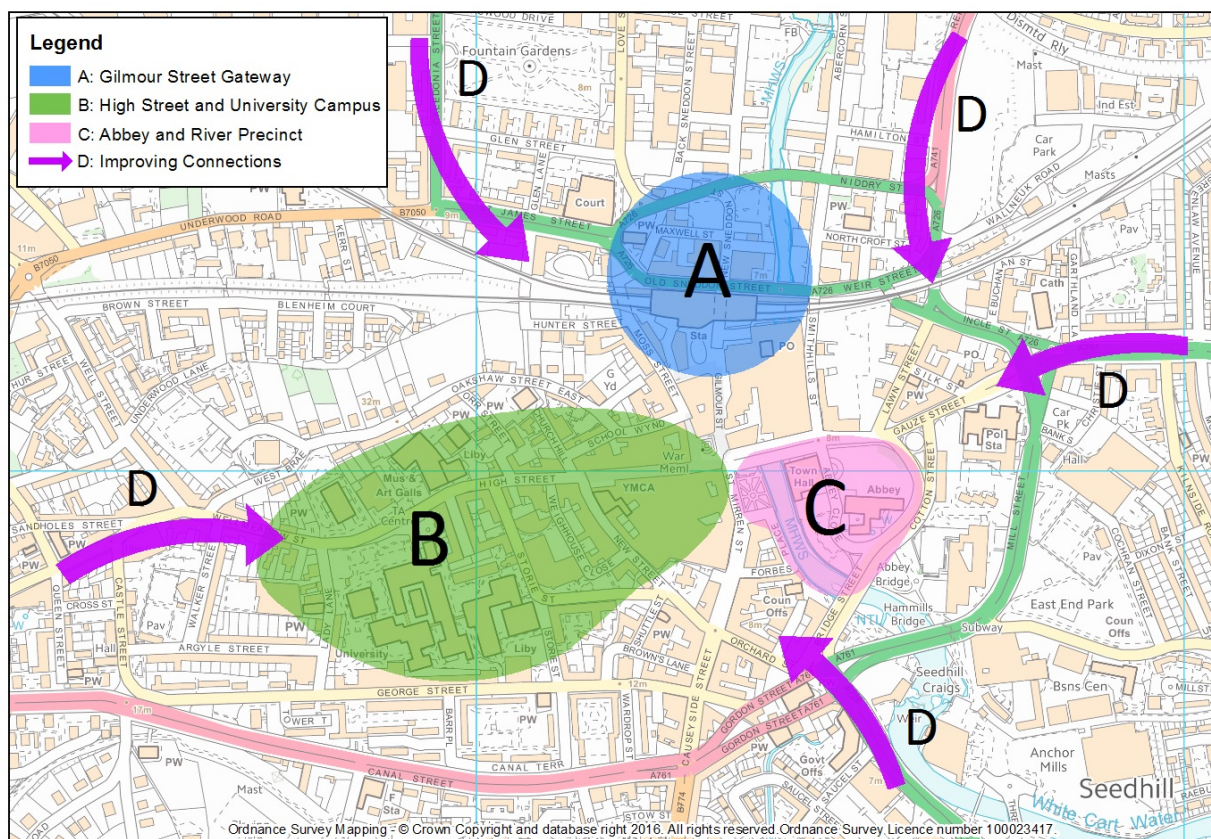
The Action Plan will deliver a step change through a collaborative approach to the town centre's regeneration. Over the next 10 years the Council will support and work with others to deliver this and develop a town centre that re-establishes Paisley as a vibrant, cultural and business centre, a centre that its residents are rightly proud of, and a centre that attracts national and international business and attention.

3. ACTIVITY AREAS

To focus investment and delivery, strategic town centre activity areas have been identified. Through active engagement with all town centre stakeholders, these enabling activities will be further developed to become the regeneration prospectus for Paisley Town Centre.

The activity areas are shown in the diagram below:

- Gilmour Street Gateway
- High Street and University Campus
- Abbey and River Precinct
- Improving connections



The activity areas provide an umbrella for short, medium and long term actions which will deliver transformational change. Combining physical projects, measures to boost access to work, training and learning opportunities as well as promotional and marketing initiatives, they will attract more people and activity to the town centre. Resources for the delivery of the Action Plan will be identified as projects develop.

The following tables show the objectives and short / medium / long term actions for each of the four activity areas.

ACTIVITY AREA 1: Gilmour Street Gateway			
Objectives	Short Term (by 2018)	Medium Term (by 2021)	Long Term (by 2026)
RAILWAY STATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong sense of arrival and positive image Modern, integrated rail station providing a busy 21st century transport hub 	Develop a masterplan for Paisley Gilmour Street station and the surrounding area Promote town centre events and regeneration achievements within station premises	Phased delivery of Gilmour Street Gateway Masterplan Provide clear signage, tourist information, wayfinding to improve sense of arrival Increased visitor and passenger numbers	
CONNECTIVITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient transfer between different modes of transport (rail, cycle, bus, taxi and private car) Swift, direct connections to the airport and to Glasgow city 	Examine potential for relocation and enhancement of access to and from Gilmour Street Station (inc. taxis, buses, car parking, cycling, etc)	Begin to implement enhancements and relocation of transport access points	Deliver fixed public transport connection between Glasgow Airport and Gilmour Street station
RAILWAY ARCHES / COUNTY SQUARE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thriving commercial activity in & around station/arches Improve the contribution of County Square as a key public space in the town centre Breakdown barrier that the arches create 	Gathering information on ownership, floorspace capacity and constraints to future alternative uses of the arches	Develop options for redevelopment of land and property in and around Gilmour Street Station	
SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT SITES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of commercial and residential opportunities to the north and south of the station 	Examine area in vicinity of Camegies nightclub and New Sneddon Street for new development	Phased delivery of Gilmour Street Gateway Masterplan	

ACTIVITY AREA 2: High Street and University Campus			
Objectives	Short Term (by 2018)	Medium Term (by 2021)	Long Term (by 2026)
HIGH STREET VIBRANCY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased footfall in the town centre Create a vibrant and attractive High Street in which people want to spend time A vibrant evening economy Deliver Museum / Library and Museum Store projects 	<p>Widen the promotion and marketing of town centre events</p> <p>Extend the range, frequency & quality of town centre events</p> <p>Deliver the Library relocation project</p> <p>Deliver the Museum Store project</p> <p>Develop initiatives for both pop-ups and stalled spaces</p> <p>Achieve Purple Flag status for town centre</p>	<p>Enhancements to potential venues and spaces to dwell</p> <p>Deliver pop-ups and stalled spaces initiatives</p> <p>Deliver requirements of Purple Flag status</p> <p>Identify development opportunities for evening activities</p>	<p>Deliver the new Paisley Museum project</p>
IMPROVING THE BUILT FABRIC AND PUBLIC REALM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the TH/CARS2 project Reduce the number of vacant properties in and around High Street 	<p>Deliver Yr1 & Yr2 of the TH/CARS2 project</p> <p>Continued discussion with property owners on potential floorspace demands</p> <p>Deliver "Developer Day" initiative</p>	<p>Deliver Yr3, Yr4 & Yr5 of the TH/CARS2 project</p> <p>Participate in Government revaluation of town centre business rates</p> <p>Design and implement a lighting and public realm strategy</p> <p>Enhancements to potential venues and spaces to dwell</p>	

ACTIVITY AREA 2 (cont.): High Street and University Campus			
Objectives	Short Term (by 2018)	Medium Term (by 2021)	Long Term (by 2026)
OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOWN CENTRE LIVING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of students and residents living in the town centre 	Identifying residential development opportunities Discussion with Scot. Govt on potential funding sources for new residential development	Develop and deliver residential development opportunities	
OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment opportunities for the High Street The High Street is a focal point for innovation and design Promote creative / cultural / entrepreneurial activity on the High Street Integration of UWS campus and High Street business 	Support University campus masterplan 2021 Bid Office open in High St Develop proposals for innovation & design centre on High St	Deliver innovation & design centre on High St	

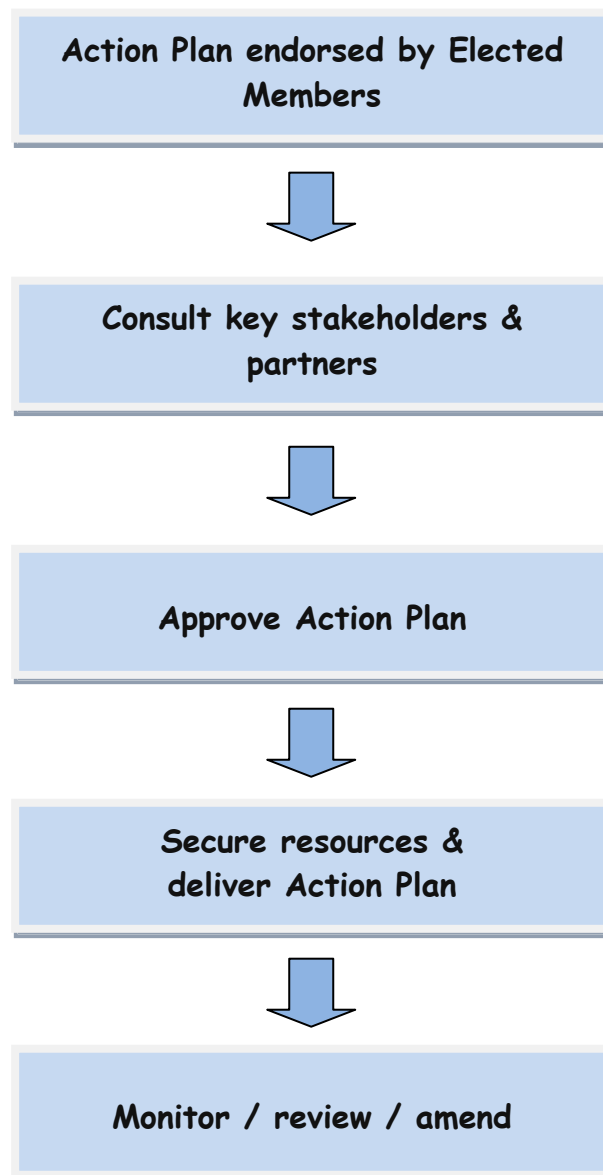
ACTIVITY AREA 3: Abbey and River Precinct				
Objectives	Short Term (by 2018)	Medium Term (by 2021)	Long Term (by 2026)	
INCREASED ACTIVITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visitor numbers to key attractions by creating a destination of national significance focussed around the Abbey, Abbey Drain and Town Hall • Improve Dunn Square as a key public space to increase use • Attract a range of different uses to the area including water-based activities and visitor facilities 	<p>Prepare a public space masterplan and activity programme for the town centre focussing on the riverside, Dunn Square and Abbey Close</p> <p>Develop the Abbey Drain, Fourth Cloister and visitor experience projects</p>	<p>Deliver riverside/Abbey Close public space improvements and activity programme</p> <p>Develop improvement proposal for Dunn Square and secure required funding</p> <p>Develop strategy for water-based activity on river,</p>	<p>Deliver the Abbey Drain, Fourth Cloister and visitor experience projects</p> <p>Implement strategy for water-based activity</p> <p>Deliver Dunn Square improvements</p>	
ENHANCED ENVIRONMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an attractive riverside greenspace for informal use and for events • Improve access to the river for viewing and water based activities 	<p>Develop partnership strategy to improve water quality in river</p> <p>Prepare proposals for improved access to the river and creation of riverside greenspace</p>	<p>Develop strategy for improved access to river</p> <p>Provide riverside seating and path improvements</p>	<p>Deliver strategy to improve water quality in river</p> <p>Implement strategy for improved access to river</p>	

ACTIVITY AREA 4: Improving Connections				
Objectives	Short Term (by 2018)	Medium Term (by 2021)	Long Term (by 2026)	
INCREASED USE OF TOWN CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better integration with neighbouring communities and works as the heart of the local community Easy access to the town centre, prioritising walking and encouraging dwell-time A town centre that attracts national and international visitors Enhancement and promotion of car parking provision 	<p>Review of car parking and preparation of enhancement strategy</p>	<p>Improvements to existing car parking offer</p> <p>Improvements to key gateways including signage and traffic flow</p> <p>Improve and simplify user signage identifying key points of interest</p>	<p>Creation of easily navigable pedestrian and cycle links with neighbouring communities</p> <p>Promote a communications campaign to emphasise active travel and associated health benefits</p>	
OVERCOMING PHYSICAL BARRIERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A welcoming and easily understood town centre Encourage the availability and swift take up of town centre development sites through increased visibility Overcome the physical and perceived barrier presented by the ring road Create clear gateways into the town centre on main routes 	<p>Develop a clear transport strategy to encourage use of the town centre by different forms of transport</p> <p>Feasibility study to redesign ring road, focussing on key junctions and opportunities to create developable sites</p>	<p>Improvements to key gateways including signage and traffic flow</p> <p>Incremental redesign of road approaches to the town centre</p> <p>Phased delivery of ring road redesign</p>	<p>Complete phased delivery of ring road redesign</p>	
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create viable development sites alongside new gateways 	<p>Feasibility study to identify opportunities to create developable sites following a redesign of ring road junctions</p>	<p>Market and develop proposals for opportunity sites</p>		

4. Next Steps

To achieve robust, deliverable regeneration of the town centre, the Action Plan must be endorsed and supported by the wider regeneration community. The next step is therefore to seek endorsement of the Action Plan by elected members before consulting key stakeholders and partners. The approved Action Plan will then provide the basis for collaborative working to achieve further reaching regeneration of Paisley Town Centre.

It is essential that the Action Plan is monitored to ensure that it remains current and is able to continue to meet Renfrewshire's regeneration agenda. The summary table for each activity area detailed in Section 3 provides a monitoring tool to measure progress and success and to enable the Action Plan to be reviewed and amended accordingly.



Appendix 1: Regeneration activity: platform for change

The process of regenerating Paisley Town Centre and reviving its economic fortunes has already started. The lessons learned from previous initiatives, as summarised below, provide a platform for change and have been applied to develop this new 10 year Action Plan.

The Untold Story

In 2014, the Council approved a heritage regeneration strategy for Paisley - “The Untold Story: the Paisley Town Centre Asset Strategy & Action Plan” presented for the first time, critical thinking about how Paisley’s international-standard but largely undiscovered textile, fashion, religious and architectural heritage could be brought together to showcase the town centre.

Paisley has a unique but untold story about its central role in the development of the world’s textile and fashion industry and the creation of the Paisley Pattern. Its compelling story has the potential to attract visitors and build on its legacy to become a focus for future innovation and excellence. By telling its story well, Paisley can attract tourism, create jobs, tackle negative perceptions of the town, build pride in the town centre and inspire major town centre regeneration. Supporting projects which the Council has since promoted include:

- **Russell Institute:** £4.5m restoration of a category A listed building providing a skills and employability hub with Skills Development Scotland alongside the Council’s Invest in Renfrewshire team which will bring additional jobs to the town centre early in 2017.
- **Museum Store:** a publicly accessible facility in the heart of the High Street. Displaying over 350,000 items, it is due to open in Autumn 2017.
- **Paisley Museum:** £56m flagship project to redevelop Paisley Museum and transform it into a national museum of textile and design, creating a major visitor destination.
- **Library:** opportunities are being investigated to relocate the lending Library to the High Street with the aim of improving service provision, increasing footfall and improving accessibility to learning services.
- **Townscape Heritage Initiative and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (THI/CARS):** £3.5m investment in building repair, shopfront improvements and public spaces in the area around Causeyside Street. The creation of a high quality environment has increased business interest, resulting in a reduction of vacant properties.
- **Incube:** new shop and retail skills academy recently opened on High Street, providing a base and practical support/business skills training to help start-up and early stage business growth.
- **Arnotts redevelopment:** 42 new residential apartments completed as part of the Arnott’s building redevelopment. The Pendulum Bar and Grill

120-seat restaurant is due to open on the ground floor in autumn 2016. In addition, a further block of flats is being built as part of the Cloisters development on Cotton Street.

- **City of Culture Bid 2021:** Paisley is bidding to become UK City of Culture 2021. Bringing significant media attention which will increase dramatically as the bidding deadline approaches, it offers the opportunity to focus the minds of those who live, work and use the town centre on how it can meet their needs for the 21st century, how the bar can be raised and how actions can be delivered.
- **City Deal:** Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal identified some £144m investment over the next 10 years for development of three major regeneration projects. City Deal will deliver a train/tram link between Paisley town centre and Glasgow Airport which will place Paisley firmly as a key regional gateway with related potential to grow visitor numbers and build town centre employment. The Glasgow Airport Investment Area Project aims to open up and improve access to economic development locations adjacent to Glasgow Airport, in particular along the White Cart Corridor and the Clyde Waterfront. The Renfrew Riverside Project seeks to significantly improve connectivity and enhance economic development opportunities at key development sites on the south bank of the river.

These projects are key elements to trigger far reaching change however it should be recognised that significant and transformational change takes a long time. Many towns and cities can illustrate this through their experiences over a number of years to achieve sustainable change. Regeneration activity is the foundation for a town centre to reposition itself in terms of how it is perceived, how it delivers its role and how it provides a high quality place for residents, businesses and visitors.

Appendix 2: Workshop Summary

Two workshops were held in March/April 2016 to identify key issues for town centre regeneration and the challenges for delivery. Discussions were wide-ranging, however in terms of recapturing the town centre as an important place for Paisley, Renfrewshire and the wider area, a number of themes for regeneration emerged.

The importance of Paisley Gilmour Street

Paisley Gilmour Street is the 4th busiest station in Scotland with 4 million passengers using it annually. However, it does not integrate well in the town centre and appears relatively isolated. The station is the main point of town centre arrival but its arches to the north form a physical barrier.

Connections to and from the town centre

The road network restricts how local people use the town centre. The existing roads (Renfrew Road, Greenock Road, and Mill Street) effectively form a barrier, isolating Paisley's communities from its centre. With priority given to traffic, getting to and from the town centre can be most difficult for those living closest to it. In taking people 'through' not 'to' the town centre, the road also helps shape what people think of it. Connections between the town centre and these roads are often unclear to residents and visitors alike, affecting the choices they make of where to park, shop or be entertained.

Making the most of Paisley's heritage

Paisley town centre has a rich heritage with many beautiful and historically significant buildings yet many people, residents as well as visitors, are not aware of them or their story. The town needs to shout about its assets and provide a comprehensive experience for visitors, including cafes, restaurants, accommodation and other businesses to support and build its cultural assets.

Encouraging more and sustainable activity on the High Street

Over the years the High Street has struggled to retain trade, illustrated by continuing vacancies and low footfall affecting surrounding streets. High Street has the capacity to be a focus for activity, helping to differentiate it from other town centres. Paisley should be a busy place that people want to come to because it has a unique offer. For many people the High Street is a symbol of the health of the town centre. Building interest, activity and footfall will be critical to encourage change and encourage people who live, work and visit the area to use the town centre.

Changing perceptions

The perception of Paisley town centre must be improved to encourage people to use it as well as promote it as a place to visit and do business. In raising the aspiration of the town centre, local people will be more engaged with the place which will then be actively involved in promoting their place and taking pride in what Paisley has to

offer. Alongside physical improvements, this will be critical in changing external perceptions of Paisley.

Effectively integrating the University and College into the town centre

The University and College are important for Renfrewshire and for Paisley town centre. More needs to be done to encourage better integration. Attracting students to live, work and socialise in the town centre will support and encourage a range of businesses. Student markets for shopping, catering, entertainment and accommodation have traditionally tended to be seen as separate from those of the local community. Opportunities to integrate town centre and student markets should be identified and developed. Masterplanning work in both campuses currently being carried out by both organisations will hopefully go some way to addressing this. The physical relationships and connections between the town centre and the campuses are critical – the buildings must be integral to the town centre rather than separate entities.

June 2016