

To: Leadership Board

On: 16 June 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Paisley Town Centre Vision Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 In January 2020 the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government launched the 'Vision for Paisley Town Centre' as an exemplar for traditional town centres across Scotland demonstrating the sort of change required to retain and develop vibrant centres at the heart of our towns. In the past year there has been a significant change of ownership in property in the heart of Paisley town centre and the advancement of proposals, using the guidance of the Vision, to redevelop the Paisley Centre. This report seeks to inform the Leadership Board of progress to date.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Board:
- (i) Notes that, following the launch of the Vision for Paisley Town Centre in 2020, proposals for the repurposing and partial redevelopment of the Paisley Centre are being discussed with the Council.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2019 the Leadership Board received a progress update on the delivery of the Paisley Town Centre Action Plan 2016-2026 and on the development of the 'Vision for Paisley Town Centre' (the Vision) the project supported by the Scottish Government and Scotland's Towns Partnership. The subsequent launch and publication of this report in January 2020 has galvanised significant interest in the potential for renewal and evolution of the town centre.

- 3.2 The aims of the project, to explore the diversification of the town centre and how it may need to physically adapt and change, have become all the more pertinent due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the retail sector and on High Streets across the country.
- 3.3 A significant part of the Vision was the consideration of how large floorspace property, like shopping centres, might have to change as demand for retail space, particularly from multi-national retail companies, continues to decline. One of the case studies for the Vision was the Paisley Centre that occupies a significant part of the urban block between the High Street, Causeyside Street and New Street (see attached plan).

4. The Paisley Centre

- 4.1 In November 2020, in an off-market transaction, Beyond Retail Property Fund purchased the Centre from its American based owners. Beyond Retail are a UK based property company that specialise in the redevelopment of town centre property. Beyond Retail have Paisley links and a track record in repurposing and redeveloping High Street retail property.
- 4.2 Over the last 6 months Beyond Retail have been developing mixed use redevelopment proposals for the Paisley Centre. They have used the ideas developed in the Vision as their guide to what might be achieved and also as an indication that the Council is encouraging of transformative change in the Centre as a driver of new functionality, diversity and vitality into the town centre.
- 4.3 During 2020 Marks and Spenser's (M&S) announced the closure of their Paisley High Street store which will bring to an end more than 75 years of association between that retailer and the High Street. An agreement has been reached that Beyond Retail will acquire this unit and incorporate it within their plans for the Centre. It is understood that ownership will not formally transfer until later in 2021 due to some internal works being carried out to the building by M&S prior to its sale. These works will take several months across the summer and autumn of this year.
- 4.4 In addition to the Council, Beyond Retail have also engaged with the University of the West of Scotland and with Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Trust to explore potentials and options for the use of space within the redeveloped Centre. They have also discussed options with Paisley First and Paisley Community Trust.
- 4.5 What is emerging is an exciting and deliverable masterplan for a radical reconfiguration of the Centre. One that retains much of its very considerable concrete structure and the best of its street frontages but explores the potential to introduce new uses such as a health centre, residential, food and beverage and a hotel alongside retained retail and commercial uses encouraging increased footfall.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 A masterplan will be launched soon and following further appraisals to confirm the inclusion or otherwise of different options the owner intends to commence the planning application process before the end of 2021. Any such planning applications for large scale change will be the subject of pre-application consultation with stakeholders and the general public before being formally submitted to the Council for a decision.
- 5.2 It is important to note that as these plans are prepared and confirmed, Beyond Retail will continue to operate the Paisley Centre as a going concern. They are in close contact with all of their tenant businesses currently operating from the premises and their needs going forward. They will continue to engage with the Council on the proposals and also on how any displacements of businesses currently in the Centre might be accommodated elsewhere in the vicinity of the High Street.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community Planning** –
 - **Reshaping our place, our economy and our future:** Renfrewshire Council is working with stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for culturally-led regeneration, providing support to make best use of heritage assets.
 - **Building strong, safe and resilient communities:** working in partnership with local groups and organisations to achieve positive outcomes.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality and 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. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

An Equality Impact Assessment is being prepared as part of the project requirements.

8. **Health and Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risks** - None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** - Not applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** - No identified impacts at present.

List of Background Papers

1. Report to Leadership Board, 18th September 2019 – A Vision for Paisley Town Centre

Author: Stuart McMillan, Regeneration Manager

Paisley Town Centre Update, Leadership Board, 16 June 2021.



 Paisley Centre
 Marks and Spencer Retail Unit



User: ptpollock1

Date: 19/05/2021

Scale: 1:1,000



Ordnance Survey Mapping - © Crown Copyright and database right 2021. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100023417.