

To: Leadership Board

On: 16 June 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Regeneration Funding Bids Update – Priority Themes

1. Summary

- 1.1 The funding of regeneration projects and programmes has for several years been reliant on national government grant funding, which has often been determined through competitive annual bidding processes. The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund have been the mainstay of this method of distributing funds around the country. The Scottish Government remains committed to this fund but has in the last two years made more direct funding awards to all local authorities to invest in town centre projects.
 - 1.2 This year both the Scottish and UK Governments have announced new funding programmes, the Levelling-Up Fund, Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme and the Place Based Investment Programme. Through these funds the Governments are channelling capital investment into local economies and places to deliver economic growth, better places and make progress towards zero carbon targets. The Place Based Investment Programme replaces the fund that targeted town centres and is a direct grant to the Council that has been accepted by the Director of Finance and Resources with that decision being presented for the homologation by the Board in the recommendations.
 - 1.3 This report sets out the purposes behind the available funds and presents a set of priorities that officers will pursue the delivery of through applications to appropriate funding programmes and by utilising capital budget available from the March 2020 Council budget.
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2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Board:

- (i) Homologates the decision of the Director of Finance and Resources to accept the grant offer from the Scottish Government Place Based Investment Programme of £1.195 million for 2021/22.
 - (ii) Agrees to the set of priority themes set out in Section 5 (Figure 1) to be pursued through available funding programmes.
 - (iii) Notes the submission of five projects to this year's round of applications for the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund as set out in Section 6, with any that are invited on to the shortlist being reported back to Board for formal approval of their continuation in the process or acceptance of grant funding;
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3. Background

- 3.1 For several years the funding of regeneration projects and programmes has been reliant on support from national government, often with 'match-funding' coming from the Council. The main and longest running fund is the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) through which the Council has secured support for the Russell Institute, Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub and for Paisley Museum. The RCGF also supports projects run by other organisations (with the grant being passed to the Council to manage), with the projects promoted by Linwood Community Development Trust and Active Communities, Johnstone being supported very recently.
- 3.2 The RCGF is an annual competitive fund with applications coming from all 32 Scottish local authorities plus the Clyde Gateway Urban Regeneration Company. The fund is always substantially over subscribed, meaning that many projects that are put forward are not funded.
- 3.3 As a reaction to this the Scottish Government in 2019 launched the Town Centre Fund – a new £50 million capital programme that allocated funds direct to local authorities (see Leadership Board paper of 19th June 2019) with Renfrewshire receiving £1,459,000. This fund was extended in 2020 by a further £18 million nationally, with Renfrewshire receiving an additional £527,000 (see Leadership Board paper of 2nd December 2020). A list of all the projects supported through this funding and progress to date is set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 This additional funding was part of a package of measures designed to support local economies during and from the impacts of the measures put in place to protect the population from the COVID-19 coronavirus.

The recovery from the pandemic is at the forefront of many new Scottish and UK Government regeneration funding initiatives that have been launched in 2021 including the Levelling-Up Fund, Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme and the Place Based Investment Programme. These are mechanisms by which Government is channelling capital investment into local economies and places to deliver economic growth, better places and make progress towards zero carbon targets.

4. Capital funding for regeneration projects

4.1 In 2021 significant capital resources are being made available by national governments as follows.

Table 1: Government funding for regeneration capital spend, June 2021.

Fund	UK/Scot Govt	Period	Purpose	£ available	Competitive /direct award
Levelling-up Fund	UK Govt	2021/22 – 2024/25	Transport Regeneration and town centres Cultural and visitor investment	Bids up to £20m (1 per MP + 1 additional transport project)	Competitive
Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF)	Scot Govt	Annual – no end date	Place based Tackle inequalities and inclusive growth Community regeneration	c. £25 million annually No max. bid but awards >£2 million are very rare	Competitive
Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP)	Scot Govt	2021/22 to 2025/26 Annual application rounds	Long-term vacant/derelict land Place based Urban green spaces Community regeneration Low carbon development and renewables	£50 million total No guidance on max. bid.	Competitive
Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP)	Scot Govt	2021/22 to 2025/26	Place based Town centres	£38 million total £1.195 million for	Direct award

Fund	UK/Scot Govt	Period	Purpose	£ available	Competitive /direct award
Replaces the Town Centre Fund			20-minute neighbourhoods Contribution to net zero Community regeneration	RC in 2021/22. Est. £4.4m total for RC over 5 years.	

- 4.2 Other funding streams are available. Historic Environment Scotland continue to run Historic Environment (building) Repair Grants and Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes. The National Lottery remains a significant funder of capital and revenue programmes in the heritage and community sector. These funds have always been very competitive and had been diminishing in size prior to 2020. They were substantially repurposed during the COVID-19 pandemic to support organisations and locations but have now resumed. Nature Scot is bringing forward significant funding for the management of land to contribute toward climate adaptation, particular funding and expertise can be accessed for peatland restoration. Active travel is supported by Sustrans and grants for electric vehicle charging infrastructure are available through the UK Government, Transport Scotland and the Energy Savings Trust.
- 4.3 In March 2020 the Council in its budget allocated a further £2.250 million of capital to build upon the investment supported through the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund and to further invest in town centres across Renfrewshire. In addition the Council has approved actions through its Economic Recovery Plan and Climate Change Action Plan that are providing for the development of new regeneration approaches and feasibility of propositions around active travel and town centre climate adaptation. This availability of Council capital will be important in securing funds where a contribution is required from the Council by the funder.

5 Emerging regeneration priorities

- 5.1 The recent launches of regeneration funding streams set out above have shown that being in a strong position to react to opportunities as they arise will give the Council and other Renfrewshire organisations a much greater chance of securing funds, mobilising and delivering projects efficiently and effectively.
- 5.2 The launch of the Paisley Town Centre Vision to 2030 gives us a framework for Paisley but also sets, as it was intended to do, a framework for actions and future centre strategies across all town centres in Renfrewshire. Committed projects at the museum, town hall, learning and cultural hub and arts centre continue as do large scale investments at AMIDS and on the former Chivas site on Renfrew Road.
- 5.3 New agendas for the post-COVID period are crucial to recognise and understand. The importance of resilient and good quality local places has grown over 2020.

Future thinking must tackle quality of place, neighbourhoods, new purposes for town centres, climate change adaptation, zero carbon infrastructure and the reprovisioning of property and space at a large scale.

- 5.4 The following priority areas, set out in Figure 1, have been developed to focus on what 'shovel-ready' projects we should develop and support grant applications for.
- 5.5 It is notable that within all of the funding programmes launched that the climate/zero carbon agenda runs through them all as does the involvement and influence of communities in project development. These are explicit in the VDLIP in particular. These will be cross-cutting themes across all projects and we will work with communities of interest in developing a priority list for VDLIP sites in local communities for a bid in 2022.

Figure 1 Priority regeneration themes at June 2021

Theme: Town Centres

The list of potential projects in town centres could be almost infinite and appear in other themes below. There are buildings and sites around Renfrewshire, often vacant, sometimes underused, for which new solutions are required. These form a set of priorities for active consideration of redevelopment requiring feasibility and option appraisals and design prior to funding submissions. Projects will focus on repurposing and redeveloping vacant town centre property and unlocking potentials for independent retail, hospitality, cultural and residential development

Theme: Zero carbon infrastructure

To support Renfrewshire's transition to a net zero carbon place and economy. From a regeneration and place perspective the focus required is on the infrastructure to enable a step change in active travel particularly to and from work and places of education. In addition the roll-out of electric vehicle infrastructure including the facilities required for electric taxis.

Theme: Improving the urban fabric

The continuation of support for the built environment of Renfrewshire places is an important foundation of place building. The fabric of buildings, streets and spaces face new pressures to adapt to changes in climate and often to seek new purposes as consumer trends and community needs shift. Building owners need supported to understand and care for the fabric of their buildings. Spaces in centres and in neighbourhoods can be the focus for projects to support climate resilience projects.

Theme: Visitor destination

The drive to develop Renfrewshire's places as attractive destinations for visitors remains high on the agendas to support local places and businesses that would benefit from the spend. Projects will focus on the quality of the visitor experience and broadening the visitor offer, particularly associated with the conclusions of the cultural infrastructure projects in Paisley and the outdoor offer around Lochwinnoch.

6. Immediate actions

- 6.1 The Scottish Government has written to all local authorities launching the Place Based Investment Programme, referred to above. The Director of Finance and Resources has accepted the offer of £1.195 million for financial year 2021/22, the deadline for which was set at 21 May 2021, and the Board is asked to homologate the Director's action to accept the grant offer.
- 6.2 The deadline for Stage 1 submissions for the RCGF programme is imminent (17th June 2021). Submissions have been developed for the following projects.
- Paisley Community Trust – PXLS community cinema and digital hub
 - PACE 'Exchange' Theatre – support for final phase of project
 - Active travel link to Gallowhill from Renfrew to Paisley active travel route
 - Development of land at Kirkpatrick Drive, Erskine for business units
 - Extension and redevelopment of visitor and activity facilities at Castle Semple, Lochwinnoch
- 6.2 The Board asked to note the submission of these projects to the RCGF fund with the understanding that any that are invited on to the Stage 2 shortlist being reported back to Board for formal approval of their continuation in the process.
- 6.2 The deadline for the Levelling-Up Fund is also imminent with submissions to that fund being the subject of a separate report to this Board.

APPENDIX 1 Town Centre Fund projects 2019 and 2020 awards, summary update at June 2021

Project summary	Design	Tender	On-site	Complete
<p>1. Third party led – repurposing vacant town centre property.</p> <p>i. Former Police Station, Johnstone – funding contribution for Active Communities. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾</p> <p>ii. Former toilet block Robertson Park, Renfrew – conversion to a cycle hub by Kustom Kruisers. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾</p> <p>iii. Former Mannequin’s night club, Paisley – funding for PACE Youth Theatre to deliver a new performance and rehearsal base. ^(2019 and 2020)</p> <p>iv. Erskine Community Sports Centre – refurbishment of vacant space for occupation by Erskine Arts. ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾</p> <p>v. 3 County Square, Paisley tenement refurbishment – enabling works prior to heritage restoration works. ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>August 2021</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>March 2021</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>March 2022</p> <p>September 2021</p>
<p>2. Town centre presentation</p> <p>i. Lighting enhancements to Houston Square, Johnstone including bandstand and war memorial. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾</p> <p>ii. Johnstone festive lighting enhancements ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾</p> <p>iii. Gap site interventions in Johnstone –</p> <p>a. High St./MacDowall St. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾</p> <p>b. George St./High St. corner ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾</p> <p>iv. Lighting enhancements to Renfrew Town Hall and Cenotaph and gateway lighting project at Bascule Bridge. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾</p> <p>v. Vacant shop units in 1 – 17 Dunlop Cr., Renfrew –</p> <p>a. Shop front renewal works. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾</p> <p>b. Internal fit-out of units 13 – 17 (Start-Up Street project). ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾</p> <p>vi. Shuttle Street, Paisley – lighting canopy and commercial waste storage enhancements. ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>✓</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>✓</p> <p>August 2021</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>✓</p> <p>December 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p>

Project summary	Design	Tender	On-site	Complete
3. Active travel links i. Wayfinding, lighting and CCTV enhancement through Robertson Park, Renfrew connecting the town centre to neighbouring residential areas. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Enabling regeneration fund - tackling vacant floorspace, sites and other project support. i. Contribution to shop unit refurb – 43-45 and 65-71 George St., Paisley (Start-Up Street project) ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾ ii. Shop unit refurb – 71 High Street, 28 & 38/40 McDowall Street, Johnstone ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾ iii. Commercial waste bin storage – 55 High Street, Paisley ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾ iv. Contribution to Glen Cinema commemorative artwork, Dunn Sq. Paisley. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾ v. Minor street furniture repairs, Johnstone. ⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	September 2021
	✓	✓	✓	✓

Implications of the Report

1. Financial –

Government grants awarded to the Council are monitored in accordance with the terms and conditions of grant. The Council will liaise with the Scottish Government to comply with drawdown and financial reporting requirements.

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 regeneration and economic recovery/growth.
- **Building strong, safe and resilient communities:** working in partnership with local groups and organisations to achieve positive outcomes.

4. Legal – None.

5. Property/Assets

Any acquisitions, leases or licenses required to enable project delivery using any funding awarded will progress through the recognised Council processes and with relevant Board approvals.

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 – A programme of contract processes will be developed with the advice of the Council's Procurement team to secure effective and best value project delivery.

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, 2nd December 2020 - Extension to the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund 2020 – 2021.
 2. Report to Leadership Board, 19th June 2019 – Town Centre Capital Fund.
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