

EX10. Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative Update and Steeple End Use Options

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services presenting an update on the progress of the Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) and options for the future use of the Steeple.

The Falkirk THI commenced in 2013 and is due to complete on 30 September 2018. A total of £3.6m of grant funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland has been awarded to deliver the scheme within Falkirk town centre's conservation area.

The Steeple is a priority project within the Falkirk THI and renovation works were completed in May 2017. The Steeple is a Common Good property, maintained by the Council and leased to Falkirk Community Trust. The premises comprise a ground floor commercial premises, first floor small storage and toilet area, second and third floor restored former prison cells. The report presented three options for the future use of the building:-

- 1) Market the vacant space for lease as a commercial opportunity;
- 2) Falkirk Community Trust retain the lease and formally put in place with the Falkirk Local History Society arrangements for the Society to operate the Steeple as a local heritage space and attraction, and
- 3) Keep the premises vacant while the future use of the Steeple is considered. This can take place in the context of the Council's ongoing Strategic Asset Review.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the continued successful delivery of the Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative, and**
- (2) approved option 2 for the proposed future use of the Steeple as set out in section 5 of the report, subject to submission of a viable business case for Executive approval.**