

EX129. Town Centre and Council HQ/Arts Centre

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the progress relating to the regeneration of Falkirk town centre and delivery of the Council's civic headquarter (HQ) and Arts Centre replacement projects.

The Council had participated in a working group involving representatives of Falkirk BID, local retailers, landowners and other town centre stakeholders. The working group suggested that a revitalised town centre should:-

- be a strong and distinctive place to live, work and rest
- create a vibrant place for interaction
- be the centre of an economic powerhouse (TIF/Investment Zone)
- accommodate a diverse range of uses with culture at its heart
- attract people and business back
- exploit the benefits of heritage
- have strong community 'ownership' – a place where 'inclusion is non-negotiable'.

A draft action plan was appended to the report. The action plan identified responsibilities and a timeline for delivery. A governance model was also appended to the report and proposed the formation of 'Revitalising Falkirk' - a Town Centre Partnership and a 'Town Centre Forum'. The Forum would be a sounding board for measures proposed by the Partnership and would receive reports on progress. Draft terms of reference and details of representation would be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive.

The Executive approved the approach to procurement for the HQ at its meeting on 16 October 2018 (ref EX72). The Council of the Future Board was responsible for overseeing the process to assess Bidders participating in the competitive dialogue stage, and assessing Bids (through dialogue) to recommend the preferred bidder/scheme. A scoring matrix, developed using the assessment criteria identified in the report to the October Executive, would be agreed by the Board and referred to the Executive for decision. The recommendation on a preferred bidder and scheme would also be referred to Members for decision.

A feasibility study on the Arts Centre was being commissioned by Falkirk Community Trust in their capacity as the current operator of the town hall. It was anticipated that consultants would be appointed to undertake this work in March 2019.

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) to progress the formation of a Town Centre Partnership to take forward work to revitalise the town centre;**

- (2) that the terms of reference and representation of the Town Centre Partnership be the subject of a further report to Executive;**
- (3) to assist in delivery of a town centre action plan, being established by the Partnership, and**
- (4) the approach to procurement of the Council's civic headquarters and arts centre projects as set out in section 4 of the report.**