

EX94. Town Centre Capital Fund 2019/20

Madelene Hunt, on behalf of Bo'ness Community Council and Bo'net Networking Group addressed the Executive.

Questions were then asked by members.

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which updated the Executive on the work taking place to revitalise Falkirk's town centres. There were proposals for the delivery of works relating to the Scottish Government's Town Centre Capital Fund allocation for 2019/20.

To assist the national town centre regeneration effort, the Scottish Government launched a £50 million fund to improve amenity and help regenerate town centres. The 'Town Centre Capital Fund', was set up in partnership with COSLA to support Councils to ensure their high streets were more diverse, sustainable and successful in the face of changing and evolving retail patterns. The allocation for Falkirk was £1,976,000 which required to be committed by March 2020. The proposed projects were intended to stimulate and support place based investment to encourage town centres in the Falkirk area to diversify and flourish.

Town	Project	Anticipated Cost (£)
Falkirk	Car Park and Signage:	
	a) Audit to enable upgrade of ticket machine infrastructure, improve user experience/business satisfaction and technical advice/costed action plan options.	45,335
	b) Implementation of agreed car park and signage upgrade options.	170,000
	Conservatoin and Regeneration Scheme (CARS) II scheme – an extension of the former THI grant support scheme for refurbishment of heritage properties, giving opportunity to protect and improve buildings in Falkirk town centre.	
	a) Appointment of consultants to develop a future funding proposal, identify and prioritise a grant intervention scheme for the town centre.	25,000
	b) Town Centre Vacant Repurposing Feasibility Grant.	350,000
	Public Realm Improvements to Newmarket Street and Lintriggs. Prepare and implement a scheme for improved pedestrian safety and enhancement of this important area of the historic town centre.	550,000
	Provision of luggage lockers at Falkirk Grahamston Station to support local tourism expectations.	3,600

	<p>Enhancements at Falkirk High and Grahamston Stations to improve accessibility and connection to town centre (matching recently submitted bid to Abellio Scotrail Station Travel Plan Fund).</p> <p>Wi-Fi – digitally managed service offering town centre users connectivity and digital opportunities for business.</p> <p>Public Art – Explore and deliver opportunities for Public Art on High Street and Grahams Road.</p>	<p>3,000</p> <p>29,408</p> <p>30,000</p>
Grangemouth	<p>Grangemouth '<i>Making Places</i>' recommendations to be progressed including:-</p> <p>Demolition of longstanding vacant and unlettable commercial assets. This would involve clearance of longstanding vacant units to shrink the town centre footprint and enable a re-purposing of parts of the town centre. Where appropriate, consultation will be initiated with tenants to consider measures such as relocation to vacant units elsewhere within the town centre. The subsequent creation of a cleared site would enable redevelopment.</p> <p>Conservation audit of town centre properties and engagement with private owners. To align with the strategic vision and aims for the historic environment of the Falkirk Council Area as enshrined in the Local Development Plan.</p> <p>Wi-Fi – digitally managed service to Charlotte Dundas and Grangemouth town centre (matched to EU funding).</p>	<p>249,000</p> <p>12,000</p> <p>5,000</p>
Bo'ness	<p>Library Access Improvements – improve access opportunities (including access for people with disabilities) to this facility.</p> <p>Improved entrance works including lighting and signage to library building.</p> <p>Wi-Fi – digitally managed service to Bo'ness town centre. (In addition progress opportunities for a free upgrade to Denny system and introduction of Wi-Fi service to Stenhousemuir)</p> <p>South Street/East Partings Grant Scheme – provision of grant scheme adopting similar approach to Falkirk CARS II model above.</p>	<p>175,000</p> <p>21,000</p> <p>16,433</p> <p>280,000</p>
Further Opportunities	Removal of unsightly APC/DPC units across the area including: Camelon, Grangemouth (2), Falkirk (2), Bo'ness (2), Polmont, Bonnybridge (2).	13,000
Total		£1.97m

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) to proceed with the delivery of the town centre capital fund projects as summarised in the table at para 4.4 of this report;**
- (2) that further reports on the progress of this programme and further measures to assist in revitalising town centres be provided to members during 2020; and**
- (3) to consult with tenants where work arising from the programme would result in the disposal of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets.**