

ITEM No ...8.....

REPORT TO: CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 9 MARCH 2020

REPORT ON: DUNDEE CITY CENTRE: LIVE WORK VISIT – STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 78-2020

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Reference is made to Article VI of the minute of the meeting of City Development Committee held on 28 October 2019 which remitted the Executive Director of City Development to develop an improvement plan for the city centre, and report it back for Committee approval. The purpose of this report is to establish the Council's approach to the creation of a plan for future development and investment within the city centre. The report provides an update on progress for the creation of the document and identifies the key strategic themes and aims to be delivered.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee

- a approves the key strategic themes and aims noted within this report; and
- b remits the Head of Planning and Economic Development to develop the Strategic Investment Plan, consult on it and report back to the elected members for approval in due course.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The development of a Strategic Investment Plan for the city centre will help shape future funding bids to external funding bodies and help stimulate private sector investment in the city centre. There are no direct financial implications to the council as external funding of £25k has been secured from Sustrans and this will be used to retain a consultant to support the Head of Planning and Economic Development in developing the Strategic Investment Plan.

3.1 As set out in the report to City Development Committee on 28 October 2019, the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund allocation of £735k is enabling a range of projects and works to be implemented that respond to challenges and opportunities within the City Centre.

3.2 The 2020/25 Capital Plan provides a commitment towards £2.5m investment in a new City Improvement Fund, which has the potential to be utilised to provide match funding for external funding sources to maximise the investment within the City Centre.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 Dundee city centre has undergone radical and transformative change during recent decades. Strategic planning and investment have led to the creation of a high quality public realm, extensive pedestrianisation and the delivery of major assets, such as the Overgate redevelopment.

4.2 The city centre has experienced significant challenges in recent years and the need is evident to ensure that the entire city centre stays strong and builds on the positive development that has been undertaken.

- 4.3 To best prepare for future development and investment opportunities a Strategic Investment Plan is being developed. The plan will cover the city centre, including the Central Waterfront, and the edge of the city centre. This plan will inform development around major sites, transportation, active travel, pedestrianisation, environmental improvements and public realm enhancements. Crucially, it will help the City Council to capitalise on opportunities and initiatives as they emerge, such as the proposed Low Emission Zone.
- 4.4 By providing a strong vision with key themes and strategic aims the Plan shall maximise future funding opportunities that become available. The Plan shall also identify a strategic “pipeline” of projects that shall assist with their delivery to tight funding timescales. The Plan shall build on from the projects identified within the Town Centre Fund 2019-20 capital expenditure programme.
- 4.5 Sustrans Business Case Funding has been secured and Officers are currently in the process of engaging an experienced consultancy, with specialism in the relationship between active travel and economic development, to author and produce a public report that presents a detailed but easily understandable case for investment in active travel in Dundee and the development of a strategic cycling network across the city. Additional funding opportunities shall be sought to build a robust foundation of information which the Investment Plan shall be based.
- 4.6 A multi-disciplinary team representing City Development and Neighbourhood Services has been established to lead on the creation of the Plan. Additional Service areas shall be required to feed into the process as well as key external groups. It is clear that collaboration and joint working across a wide range of organisations/groups is essential to deliver the ambitions of the Plan.
- 4.7 The Strategic Investment Plan shall focus on key features of the physical and spatial aspects of the city centre, the parallel work streams with other Council Service Areas shall continue to be developed. This shall include the creation of a cross departmental caretaking and maintenance strategy, promotion of the City Centre in terms of its day/night time offerings and continue to explore the potential for a Business Improvement District (BID). The Strategic Investment Plan will help provide a solid foundation for the future development and investment in the City Centre, and to promote sites and buildings for development.

5 DUNDEE CITY CENTRE: LIVE WORK VISIT – STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN

5.1 Vision

The core vision of the Plan shall be that Dundee city centre shall continue to develop as a unique, vibrant, inclusive and sustainable place to live, work and visit. Its role as a local and regional centre will be strengthened by enhancing its sense of place and by offering high standards of living for all; diverse leisure, tourism and shopping experiences; greater employment opportunities; improved connectivity; and an enhanced public realm. By building on the recent momentum of positive change, Dundee city centre will continue to attract investment to grow the city’s economy, population, and prosperity.

Interconnected Themes and Strategic Aims

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Strategic Aims</u>
1 Living	Repopulate the city centre through supporting and encouraging city centre living.
2 Working	Increase and diversify employment opportunities in and around the city centre.
3 Visiting	Develop and support a vibrant shopping, leisure and tourism offer.

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Strategic Aims</u>
4 Connectivity	Enhance and develop sustainable pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and digital connectivity to and throughout the city centre.
5 Public Realm	Enhance the quality and increase the extent of the city centre's public realm.

Specific targets will be identified for each theme and opportunities and actions developed in response to each strategic aim, to provide a clear pathway to deliver on the vision and aspirations for the city centre. The Plan shall be ambitious and shall require a broad range of partners to deliver on its vision.

The Strategic Investment Plan shall help to shape the night time economy of the City Centre and draw more visitors, eaters and leisure users into the city in the evening. This is a significant objective of the Plan to build on delivering a strong night time economy.

5.2 Guiding Principle

Climate Change and Carbon Reduction

In June 2019 the City Council declared a climate emergency, recognising the serious and accelerating environmental, social, and economic challenges faced by climate change. In response, the Dundee Climate Action Plan has been prepared to address the city's energy, transport, waste and resilience.

The city centre has a key role to play in leading by example and facilitating carbon reductions, particularly given its geographic vulnerability, increased building density, high levels of heat demand and generation, concentrated resource use, substantial Council estate, high visitor numbers, high level of service provision, and its high dependence on vehicular transportation.

The formation of the above five themes are driven by a sustainability agenda and their development will be guided by the Dundee Climate Action Plan.

The Strategic Investment Plan will also influence the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, seek to increase the number of affordable housing units within the city centre and identify key vacant buildings and gap sites for development.

City Plan Alignment

Striving to have more people living, working, and visiting the city centre aligns with the vision set out in the Dundee Partnership City Plan 2017-2026. This vision aims to create an attractive city with a strong and sustainable economy; providing jobs, retaining graduates, attracting new talent and offering real choice and opportunities. The city centre has a pivotal role to play in delivering this vision because it is a primary mechanism. Dundee city centre will be an attractive, diverse and innovative city centre, full of job and leisure opportunities, that strongly influences graduate retention, provides opportunities and attracts further investment, new talent, visitors and tourists.

The City Plan 2017-2026 gives priority to "closing the jobs gap" and getting 4,700 people living in the region into jobs over the 10 years of the plan. Key to this ambition is the creation of new jobs which can be achieved through encouraging more business start-ups, more companies to grow and more companies to locate in the city and wider region.

Timescales

The Head of Planning and Economic Development shall develop and consult on a draft Plan based on the above key strategic themes and aims. The draft timetable shall be as follows:

Evidence gathering and research: March – June 2020

Development of Investment Plan: July – October 2020

Consultation: November – December 2020

City Development Committee Reporting for approval: March 2021

6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. There are no major issues.

7 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

Gregor Hamilton
Head of Planning and Economic Development

Author: Gary Knox

Robin Presswood
Executive Director of City Development

Dundee City Council
Dundee House
Dundee

GH/GK/EC

27 February 2020