

ITEM No ...11.....

REPORT TO: CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 9 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT ON: DISTRICT CENTRE FUND PROJECTS 2019/2020

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 398-2019

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Report seeks approval for the Executive Director of City Development working with the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to allocate the capital funding, identified in the Council's Capital Plan, for specific physical projects contained within Appendix 1, that seek to enhance the vitality and vibrancy of District Centres through improvements to the public realm and in so doing help maintain the role and function of each District Centre.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a approves the proposed District Centre Fund programme of capital expenditure, as set out in Appendix 1;
 - b delegates the Executive Director of Corporate Services to continue to review the individual projects to ensure they meet the criteria to enable them to be charged against this capital budget;
 - c delegates the Executive Directors of City Development and Neighbourhood Services to finalise the programme and approve individual projects that will improve the public realm and enhance the future vitality and viability of the district centres; and
 - d delegates the Executive Director of City Development to implement the programme of capital expenditure, following appropriate procurement processes, in order to meet the timescales associated with this fund.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council's Capital Plan allocates £100,000 for District Shopping per annum over the period 2018/2019 to 2022/2023. The reinstatement of a clock on Lochee High Street has been partially funded from this capital allocation (£7k).

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Within Dundee there are 5 District Shopping Centres - Albert Street, Broughty Ferry, Hilltown, Lochee and Perth Road. The District Centres are part of the historic development of the city and have played a vital role in meeting the needs of the surrounding local communities over many years. It is recognised that their role and function is changing, influenced by the evolving behaviour of shoppers, including increased online shopping and that this has impacted on the health of these centres. As a result of the challenges being faced Officers regularly monitor the health of the District Centres (vacancy levels), retailing trends affecting them and their evolving future role.
- 4.2 Whilst there are some common challenges facing all District Centres, each area presents individual issues and opportunities. To address these challenges the Council has sought over the years to protect the role and function of district centres through the retail strategy and policies contained in the Council's Local Development Plan. The strategy and policy provision has sought to direct new retail developments to the district centres and resist out of centre

developments that would draw trade away from these individual centres. The Council has also invested in various physical improvements to maintain and enhance the public realm and create attractive shopping locations. This approach has helped to maintain the vitality and viability of each of the City's 5 District Centres over the years.

- 4.3 The Dundee Local Development Plan 2019 adopted in early 2019 recognises the need to support the future role of District Centres and maintains the strategy and policy provision of the "Town Centres First" approach making the District Centres along with the City Centre as the first choice locations for new retail and other high footfall generating uses. The Local Development Plan also seeks to encourage the continued repopulation of these areas to help sustain their vitality and viability.
- 4.4 Recognising the need to continue to support the role of the District Centres the Council's Capital Plan 2018-2023 contains an allocation of £100,000 per annum for capital projects. This is in addition to "routine" capital and revenue spending on service delivery in these areas. This funding (capital expenditure) has been allocated to invest in measures that will enhance the District Centres through public realm improvements and in so doing help promote and sustain their vitality and viability.
- 4.5 The Council carries out a health check on each District Centre every 2 years with the latest survey completed and published in 2017. The bi-annual survey provides continual monitoring of the health of the centres and has sought to identify any significant changes that might have taken place. Further survey work has taken place in 2019 to identify key trends or issues affecting the District Centres.
- 4.6 The key position in relation to the District Centres is as follows:
 - a the trend in vacancy rates (number of units) across each of the District Centres since 2017 has varied for each centre. Lochee and Hilltown have both experienced increases in vacancy rate greater than 5%. Perth Road saw a minor increase in vacancy rates whilst there was a reduction in levels in Broughty Ferry since 2017. There was no change to overall rates in Albert Street during this period;
 - b there is a general trend to the establishment of a broader range of service based uses (as opposed to traditional retail) within the District Centres affecting smaller sized units, reflecting nationwide trends in relation to retail/service sectors;
 - c there is variation across the District Centres in terms of vacancy levels but when compared with the national position they are performing relatively well with no significant indicators of increased vacancy;
 - d the vacancy levels in 2019 within the centres of Lochee (18.4%) and the Hilltown (22%) are the only two above 10% and raise issues for consideration in terms of issues of long term vacancies, quality and/or size of unit; and
 - e there are greater opportunities for improvements to the existing public realm in, Lochee and Hilltown due to vacant gap sites and the poorer quality of the physical environment in some areas of these Centres.

5 POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- 5.1 In bringing together a list of potential projects, there have been consultations with the communities in relation to the funds to ascertain community aspirations and identify areas where the funds could have a significant impact.
- 5.2 As part of this, Community Officers, working with local community and local business groups identified potential projects. Ideas have been encouraged from a wide range of community engagement sources and have been identified within specific Community Plan themes.

- 5.3 Potential projects have been reviewed and District Shopping Fund eligible projects identified. Discussions have been ongoing with the Community Officers / Community representatives to investigate the projects in more detail and to ensure that aspirations have been correctly identified and understood.
- 5.4 Appendix 1 contains a list of the projects that have been put forward by the communities. These have been assessed in terms of their contribution to the vibrancy and vitality of the District Centres as well as an assessment in terms of their deliverability. As a result a number of projects have been identified to be delivered in the first phase of funding.
- 5.5 The identified funding will not be able to deliver all of the projects that have been identified by the communities. Further work shall be undertaken to prioritise the projects, which will include investigating further funding sources to maximise the impact of the fund.
- 5.6 If additional projects are identified by Communities, they shall be required to be reported by the relevant Communities Officer to the Planning Team. If additional projects are to be added to the list, the Planning Team shall contact the relevant Ward Members to make them aware of the project.

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.

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Appendix 1: District Centre Fund – Capital Expenditure

| Project | Description | Community Engagement Source | Community Plan Theme | Project Timing |
|--|---|---|--|--------------------------|
| Lochee | | | | |
| Installation of lighting at the Weavers Public Art | Lighting at the Weavers Public Art & surrounding public realm to improve attractiveness in the evening. | Lochee Community Consultation June 2019, Lochee Regeneration Forum 2019 | Close the jobs gap/make Lochee High Street a more attractive place in which to shop and invest | 2019/20 |
| Heritage Themed Art Trail | Creation of a Heritage Themed Art Trail including signage and public art provision | Lochee Community Consultation June 2019 (report available), Lochee Community Regeneration Forum | Close the jobs gap/make Lochee High Street a more attractive place in which to shop and invest | Later Years |
| Car parking improvements at Camperdown Street/St Mary's Lane | Improvements to parking provision including resurfacing at St Mary's Lane and remodelling Camperdown Street informal car park | Lochee Community Consultation June 2019, Lochee Trader Consultation February 2018 | Close the jobs gap/make Lochee High Street a more attractive place in which to shop and invest | 2019/20 – ST MARY'S LANE |
| Road engineering improvements to High Street/Burnside Street | Road engineering solution at Burnside Street/High Street junction to slow traffic at junction | Lochee Community Consultation June 2019, Lochee Regeneration Forum 2019 | improve road safety/tackle issues of road safety at key locations/investigate measures to improve safety at key locations around schools | Later Years |
| Albert Street | | | | |
| Implement a network of public spaces and pocket parks (Craigie Street, Eliza Street, Langlands Street) | Enliven spaces to create attractive pocket parks | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve access to healthy green and open spaces, Improve quality of neighbourhoods | 2019/20 – ELIZA STREET |

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| Improve environment at Albert Street/Dura Street junction (SPAR) | Installation of additional high spec paving and street furniture | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve access to healthy green and open spaces, Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Develop "Stobswell St Square" at former TSB at 96 Albert Street | The creation of an enhanced public space that is integrated with the community | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve access to healthy green and open spaces, Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Bus build outs to Albert Street to slow traffic | A series of bus build outs to help slow the flow of traffic | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve quality of neighbourhoods, Improve Road Safety | Later Years |
| Gateway signage | Gateway signage for all entrances to Albert Street District Centre using the "Stobswell Scotty Dog" | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Increase public art provision along Albert Street and feature lighting for key public buildings | Increase the provision of public art within the district centre | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Footway upgrading and localised widening for temporary café space at Dura Street | Upgrade to pavements to accommodate temporary café use. | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Road engineering improvements to slow traffic and improve pedestrian movement along Albert Street | Road engineering improvements to slow traffic and improve pedestrian movement along Albert Street | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve quality of neighbourhoods, Improve Road Safety | Later Years |
| Public Notice Boards along Albert Street | Increase the number of public notice boards | Community Officer with consultation to the Stobswell Forum | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |

| Hilltown | | | | |
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| Façade enhancements to 219 Hilltown | Façade enhancements to match adjacent shop units that have previously been improved, including internal shutters, decorating entrance gate and signage. | Walkabout, Forum Meeting, comments from residents and local shop keepers. | Building Stronger Communities, Improve the quality of Neighbourhoods | 2019/20 |
| Pavement upgrades along Strathmartine Road | Upgrade to pavements. | Walkabout, comments from Shopkeepers and survey online | Building Stronger Communities, Improve the quality of Neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Public art provision including developing feature public notice boards | Enhance public art provision and improve provision of public notice boards. | Walkabouts and Forum Meetings | Building Stronger Communities, Improve the quality of Neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Public realm improvements to seating area south of Kinghorne Road | Improvements including lighting to promote a safer environment and enhance the use of the space | Walkabouts and Forum Meetings | Building Stronger Communities, Improve the quality of Neighbourhoods | 2019/20 |
| Enhanced lighting around Hilltown Clock | Enhanced lighting columns that can accommodate the community's existing decorative lighting for the Christmas season | Walkabouts and Forum Meetings | Building Stronger Communities, Improve the quality of Neighbourhoods | 2019/20 |
| Perth Road | | | | |
| Further environmental improvements at Millers Wynd to include seating and bin provision | Complete the environmental improvement with provision of seating and decorative bin | Community Officer in discussions with West End LCPP | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | 2019/20 |

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| Redesign of signage to declutter and reduce impact on pedestrians | Rationalise street clutter and the removal of redundant signage to improve improved pedestrian movement. | Community Officer in discussions with West End LCPP | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Replace public bike stand with more sympathetic design | Improve cycle storage provision with an appropriately designed and place cycle rack. | Community Officer in discussions with West End LCPP | Improve quality of neighbourhoods, Improve transport connections to communities | Later Years |
| Broughty Ferry | | | | |
| Landscaping improvements to Gray Street/Queen Street at car park | Landscaping to improve the attractiveness of the appearance of the car park from Gray Street | Community Officer & the Broughty Ferry Traders Association members. | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Pavement improvements to Fort Street | Upgrade to pavements. | Community Officer & the Broughty Ferry Traders Association members. | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |
| Various signage – gateway, directional, interpretation board within the District Centre | The provision of signage including gateway, directional, interpretation board within the District Centre to improve its vitality. | Community Officer & the Broughty Ferry Traders Association members. | Improve quality of neighbourhoods | Later Years |