

East High Street Public Realm Improvements including the Burns Monument**Report by Ian Johnson, Head of Communities and Economy****1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** To advise Cabinet on the proposals to improve part of the public realm in eastern High Street Dalkeith, to restore and relocate the Burns Memorial Fountain (known locally as the Burns Monument), and to recommend allocation of Dalkeith town centre Developer Contributions to this project.
- 1.2** The project would be undertaken in partnership with Dalkeith Business Renewal, which is expected to allocate funding to this project.

2 Background

- 2.1** In June 2013, a bid led by Midlothian Council was submitted to the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) to undertake public realm and building improvements in East High Street, Dalkeith. The bid was unsuccessful. In May 2014, Midlothian Council submitted a reduced bid to the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund to undertake public realm and building improvements in East High Street, Dalkeith. This bid was also unsuccessful.
- 2.2** A report to Cabinet on 26 August 2014 advised that the second bid to the RCGF had been unsuccessful due to the significant oversubscription of the scheme and the emphasis placed on building works rather than public realm improvements. The report noted improvements to eastern High Street would build on the work that had been carried out at the western end of the High Street as part of the Dalkeith Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The report also noted that it was desirable to improve the public realm in eastern High Street and should further sources of funding become available for this or other town centre projects, a report would be brought to Cabinet outlining the proposals.
- 2.3** An opportunity has arisen to undertake public realm improvements to part of eastern High Street and to restore and relocate the Burns Monument to a more historic setting. Works would be paid for by a combination of Dalkeith town centre Developer Contributions and funding from Dalkeith Business Renewal.

- 2.4** The area outside the Tolbooth and the former Cross Keys buildings is a historic location within the town centre. Both buildings were improved using grants awarded by the Dalkeith THI & CARS project. Both the Tolbooth and the former Cross Keys Hotel have been the scene of significant events in the history of the town centre. A mixture of cobbles and setts in the road are arranged to mark the last hanging spot in the town. Display boards have been produced to provide the public with information about the history of these buildings and events surrounding them.
- 2.5** The site has great potential to become a focal point in eastern High Street, especially with the expected increase in footfall likely to occur when the former Dalkeith Corn Exchange building is reopened as the offices of Melville Housing Association, when the new Dalkeith Museum is opened (housed in the Corn Exchange) and when the improvements to Dalkeith Country Park are complete.
- 2.6** The Burns Monument (also known as the Burns Canopy or the Burns Fountain) was paid for by subscription by the members of the local Burns Club. It was erected in 1899 and provided clean drinking water in High Street. Under the canopy it originally had a drinking fountain in the form of a pedestal and boy with a paddle (also described as boy with oar). On top of the canopy it originally had a lamp (as can be seen in historic images of the drinking fountain).
- It was originally in a prominent location in High Street and remained there until the 1960's when it was considered a traffic hazard and moved to the Park. In 2003 it was relocated from the Park to its current location in Buccleuch Street.
- 2.7** The proposed public realm improvements outside the former Cross Keys building and the former Tolbooth in the High Street would involve;
- removing the existing concrete paving and replacing it with new Yorkstone paving (to match elsewhere in High Street and to be sourced from the UK),
 - repairs to areas of setts, repairs to existing whinstone kerbs (any replacement kerbs will be locally sourced whinstone),
 - form new paved area at the last hanging spot outside the Tolbooth with acknowledgement in the pavement (either in metal or stone)
 - remove two smaller trees from the pavement and form a new stone plinth for the restored and relocated monument to sit on (with ducting for power cables)
 - replace a minimum of two missing and/or damaged trees elsewhere in High Street and
 - install heritage interpretation panels (already manufactured as part of the Dalkeith THI & CARS project).

2.8 The proposed work to restore and relocate the Burns Monument would involve;

- removing the Burns Monument from site, stripping back paint, undertaking any repairs necessary and repainting the structure (all as per heritage specification)
- fitting a working replica lamp to the top of the monument
- replacing the missing pedestal, basin and seated boy holding an oar (known as a putto)
- relocating the Burns Monument on the new stone plinth.

2.9 The Project Costs and Project Funding

Project Cost

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Burns Monument | £46,000 |
| Public Realm* | £70,000 |
| Contingency | £ 4,000 |
| Total | £120,000 |

Project Funding

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Midlothian Developer Contributions | £60,000 |
| <u>Dalkeith Business Renewal*</u> | <u>£60,000</u> |
| Total | £120,000 |

**Work to the public realm may increase as Dalkeith Business Renewal has advised verbally that they may direct additional funds to this project. Written confirmation is expected shortly. No work will be commissioned beyond the original budget without confirmation that the additional funding is in place.*

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

Whilst no direct revenue or capital funding from Midlothian Council is required to fund the project, it is proposed that the Developer Contributions collected for Dalkeith town centre are directed to this project. Currently £64,419 of Developer Contributions have been collected for use in Dalkeith town centre. It is proposed that £60,000 of developer contributions is allocated to the project. Accordingly it is recommended that a provision of £120,000 is made in the General Services Capital Plan, funded by the utilisation of £60,000 of developer contributions and £60,000 contribution from Dalkeith Business Renewal.

Midlothian Council staff time will be required to project manage the works. This can be accommodated within existing budgets. The construction tendering process would be undertaken in-house by Midlothian Council staff. These costs can be accommodated within the project budget. The in house consultancy work is expected to be

undertaken in financial years 2015-16 and 2016-17. The construction work is expected to be undertaken in financial year 2016-17.

3.2 Risk

The Burns Monument is now in critical condition and frost fracturing is evident from the columns. This means water is entering the column tops. Should the fracturing continue the structure could be in danger of collapse. Undertaking a complete restoration of the structure will revitalise a key heritage asset of Dalkeith town centre, minimise the risk of further damage to the structure and minimise any risk to the public.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☒ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

In terms of the key priorities of the Community Planning Partnership through the Single Midlothian Plan, this proposal could deliver significant benefits in terms of the business growth and positive destinations priorities. The scheme would help create training opportunities, extending what has already been achieved as part of the Dalkeith THI & CARS project. It would add notably to the tourism potential of the County town. There is important synergy with the development projects ongoing in other parts of Dalkeith, including the expansion of Dalkeith Country Park and the regeneration of the Corn Exchange.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

This project contributes to meeting the target of improving Midlothian's town and village centres. Regeneration outcomes directly related to the project are as follows:

- Community benefit: greater access, understanding of the heritage, training opportunities for local people during the construction phase.
- Physical: 160m² of public realm improved and one historic structure restored.
- Social: making the East High Street a more comfortable pedestrian environment to improve retail and business footfall.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The proposals offer improved prospects for getting people to come into, and stay longer in, the town centre. This will make the town more economically viable and more attractive. It will increase appreciation of our heritage, and contribute to furthering Dalkeith's more positive image.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

A consultation and information event would be held before work commences on site.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The impact on the following equality target groups would be positive: age (older or younger), disability, and the impact on other target groups would be likely to be neutral; no negative impacts are anticipated.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

The proposals would be developed in line with the principles applied to the public realm improvements undertaken in the High Street to date, including the use of high quality natural stone sourced as locally as possible and recycling materials where feasible. Improvements to the High Street contribute to the economic, social and environmental objectives for the town centre and the wider community as a whole.

3.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues relating to this report

4 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet;

- (a) agrees implementation of the proposals to improve part of the public realm and restore and relocate the Burns Monument at East High Street, Dalkeith;
- (b) approves the use of Dalkeith town centre Developer Contributions for this project;
- (c) subject to recommendations a&b, recommends to Council that a provision of £120,000 is made in the General Services Capital Plan, funded by the utilisation of £60,000 of developer contributions and £60,000 contribution from Dalkeith Business Renewal and
- (d) notes that the recommendations above are subject to formal written confirmation by Dalkeith Business Renewal of its expected financial contribution to the project.

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Background Papers: None

