

Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project

Report by Ian Johnson, Head of Communities and Economy

1 Purpose of Report

This report requests that Members approve the appointment of a Ward 1 Midlothian Council Penicuik councillor as Chairperson of the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project TH/CARS Project Team.

2 Background

2.1 At its 30 August 2016 meeting Midlothian Council's Cabinet approved the simultaneous submission of applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for Townscape Heritage (TH) and to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) for Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) for grants for a heritage regeneration scheme for Penicuik. This scheme is called the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project. The application to the HLF was what is called a stage 1 application.

2.2 The applications were submitted to HLF and HES and approved in principle. The HLF awarded a grant of £114,000 towards the development cost work to produce a stage 2 application. Work is on going to produce the stage 2 application and for it to be submitted to HLF in early 2018. This stage 2 application has involved the appointment in July 2017 of external consultants (Douglas Wheeler Associates and Austin Lord Smith) to assist with compiling necessary detailed work for the application. This has included survey work and developing a programme for works and programmes for training and community engagement and involvement. A draft stage 2 application will be produced by the end of 2017. If the stage 2 application is successful that will release funding from HES and the project will run for a period of five years.

Main Elements of Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project

2.3 The aim of Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project is to regenerate the historic core of Penicuik town centre by:

- providing grant aid to repair and restore key historic buildings in the centre of the Penicuik Conservation Area.
- providing grant aid to improve the public realm focussing on the High Street and The Square;
- developing a training plan to encourage contractors, owners of historic buildings, schools and others to understand and appreciate the methods and techniques of traditional building construction; and
- developing wide ranging community engagement activities to enable local people, organisations and schools to actively get involved in history and heritage projects and thereby gain a greater understanding of Penicuik's unique heritage.

- 2.4** The scheme would be very similar to the Dalkeith THI/CARS and Gorebridge CARS town centre heritage regeneration projects.

Need for a Chair for Project Team

- 2.5** For the efficient and transparent management of the project, HLF and HES will require a Project Team and a project Steering Group to be established. This was done for the Dalkeith THI/CARS and Gorebridge CARS project.

Role of the Project Team

- 2.6** The Project Team will comprise: three local Midlothian Council Members, two representatives from Penicuik Community Development Trust, two representatives from Penicuik First, Midlothian Council's Conservation and Town Centres Officer and the Penicuik TH/CARS Project Officer.
- 2.7** The Team will help to manage the project, advising on the development of projects and public realm projects, and approve applications for grants for building projects and training and community engagement. The tTam will meet on a regular basis throughout the life of the project.
- 2.8** The first Project Team meeting was held on 30th August 2017 where it was agreed that the Chairperson would be a local Midlothian Council Member and the Vice Chair would be a member of one of the other two partner community organisations.

Role of the Steering Group

A Steering Group is also being set up and it will comprise a number of local organisations. Its aim will be to engage with the wider community of Penicuik and assist with the strategic direction of the project. The group may meet about twice a year during the course of the scheme if the stage 2 application to HLF is successful.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

The appointment of a Chairperson for the Project Team has no effect on budgets already secured for the project and the post has no remuneration.

3.2 Risk

The funders, HLF and HES, will expect the project to have a functioning Project Team and Steering Group in order to provide grant funding.

A successful stage 2 application to HLF will need to demonstrate that a functioning Project Team with a Chairperson is operational. Not having a Chairperson would have a negative effect on the stage 2 application to HLF.

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

Investment in comprehensive improvement of town centres in Midlothian directly addresses economic inequalities.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

As set out in paragraph 2.3 above.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Investment in town centres can arrest and reverse their decline.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Section 2 of this report sets out that local community groups, Penicuik Community Development Trust and Penicuik First (BIDs), will be represented on the Project Team. Section 2 also sets out that at its first meeting on 30 August 2017 the Project Team agreed that its Chairperson would be a local Midlothian Council Member and the Vice Chair would be a member of one of the other two partner community organisations.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

This report does not relate to a new / revised policy / service change / budget change. It is therefore considered that undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) in relation to this report is unnecessary. An EqIA for the project was undertaken for the 30 August 2016 report to Cabinet referred to in section 2 of this report.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

A successful Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project can help create a more vibrant and vital town centre which are contributors to a more sustainable economic and physical environment.

This report does not relate to the adoption by the Council of a strategic document and Strategic Environmental Assessment' ('SEA') legislation does not apply to this report.

3.10 IT Issues

There are no IT implications from this report.

4 Summary

A successful stage 2 application to HLF will need to demonstrate that a functioning Project Team with a Chairperson is operational. Not having a Chair would have a negative effect on the stage 2 application to HLF.

Accordingly, this report recommends that a Ward 1 Midlothian Council Penicuik Councillor is appointed to chair the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project Townscape Heritage/Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme Project Team.

5 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- a) Approve the appointment of one of the Ward 1 Midlothian Council Penicuik Councillors as Chairperson of the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project Townscape Heritage/Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme Project Team; and
- b) Confirm which Ward 1 Councillor will assume the role of Chairperson of the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project Townscape Heritage/Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme Project Team.

23 November 2017

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Background Papers: None