

Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund Bid for Phase 2 of Dalkeith High Street Improvements**Report by Mary Smith, Director Education Communities and Economy****1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** To inform Cabinet of the outcome of the Stage 1 bid to the Scottish Government for grant aid to continue the Dalkeith High Street improvements and to seek a Council contribution of a sum of £20,000 to the project.

2 Background

- 2.1** In May 2013, Scottish Government announced a further round of Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF). This grant is aimed at economic regeneration and can include town centre improvements. It is expected that schemes should be ready to start on site in 2014.
- 2.2** This represented a good opportunity to bid for a grant to extend the Dalkeith High Street improvements to East High Street from its junction with South Street to the entrance to Dalkeith Palace grounds, as part of a wider regeneration programme to enhance the town centre and surrounding area. The public realm improvements would include the paving outside important historic buildings, namely the newly refurbished Tolbooth and Cross Keys buildings, and the Dalkeith Corn Exchange (currently subject to renovation proposals to become office accommodation for Melville Housing Association and to house the Dalkeith Museum). It would also include the relocation and restoration of the Burns Monument to its original position, interpretation and development of a heritage trail, and improved access to local businesses with rationalised car parking, service lay-by areas and junction improvements.
- 2.3** A Stage 1 bid was led by Midlothian Council (with the agreement of the Corporate Management Team) and was submitted on 28 June 2013. The bid has been successful and the Council has been invited now to go to a Stage 2 bid which has to be submitted by 14 October. The grant requested is a sum of £1,245,977 towards a total cost of £1,399,977.
- 2.4** Contributions sought to support the bid include:
- | | £ |
|--|--------|
| Buccleuch Estates | |
| (improvements to entrance to Country Park) | 50,000 |
| Historic Scotland | |
| (contribution to the restoration of Burns monument) | 5,000 |
| Local business contribution (to interpretative panels) | 5,000 |
| Devine Electrics | |
| (to restore derelict building at rear of Tolbooth) | 54,000 |

Midlothian Council	20,000
Dalkeith Business Renewal (to be agreed)	<u>20,000</u>
TOTAL	154,000

- 2.4** If the Stage 2 bid is successful, this will mean that work to extend the improvements to the High Street can continue which will further enhance the setting of the buildings restored as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)/ Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The Heritage Trail will also be developed further with interpretative panels and information available to the public.
- 2.5** The objective is to make the town centre more attractive, vibrant and accessible to businesses, residents, shoppers and visitors alike, building on the work that has been carried out at the southern end of the High Street as part of the Dalkeith THI, CARS and Town Centre Regeneration Scheme projects. In particular, the aims are:
- to attract people to the upper part of the street where there is a major hotel and a number of restaurants and other commercial uses;
 - to improve and promote an important physical link between Dalkeith Country Park, with significant tourism development potential, and the retail offer available in the town centre;
 - to make the heritage trail more accessible, working in conjunction with partners on the restoration of the Corn Exchange; and
 - to add to the understanding of Dalkeith's unique history and heritage as a focus for tourism development.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The report is seeking a Council contribution of £20,000 which is considered essential to the success of the Stage 2 RGCF bid as it would demonstrate the Council's commitment to the project and help secure additional funding from other key partners, as listed in paragraph 2.4. This investment has potential to secure RCGF grant assistance of around £1.25 million.

Work is ongoing to identify the funding for this contribution from within existing budgets through re-prioritisation of needs and resources. If the Stage 2 bid is successful and resources have not been able to be re-prioritised to identify the £20,000, then a further report to Cabinet seeking a supplementary estimate will be required.

3.2 Risk

If the Stage 2 RGCF bid is unsuccessful, then the project will not be able to proceed. If one or more of the funders does not wish to proceed, there will be a funding gap and the scope of the scheme will need to be reduced accordingly.

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 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:

Economic: 15 jobs created or sustained.

Community benefit: greater access, understanding of the heritage, 10 training opportunities for local people during the construction phase.

Physical: 1258m² of public realm improved, two historic structures/buildings restored and one converted for business use.

Social: making the East High Street a safer and more comfortable pedestrian environment to improve retail and business footfall, linking in to the new community facilities and new Dalkeith Museum that will be provided in the Corn Exchange restoration scheme, aiming to attract 5000 visitors in the first year as well as a number of school groups.

In neighbouring Woodburn, there is a high proportion of people with mobility problems: wider, safer and more accessible footpaths will improve their ability to access East High Street.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

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 heritage jobs and training, extending what has already been achieved as part of the THI/CARS focus on education and training. It would be a great boost to the tourism potential of the county town, especially in terms of its linkage with Dalkeith Country Park and its future development prospects. There is important synergy with the Corn Exchange regeneration and also with the retail development currently in progress, which will bring a Morrisons supermarket into the town centre, and the arrival of the new Eskbank station as part of the Borders Railway, all of which offer improved prospects for getting people to come into, and stay longer in, the town centre. It will make the town more attractive, increase appreciation of its heritage role, and contribute to boosting Dalkeith's image for inward investors.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The scheme has been the subject of local consultation and development with key partners and community groups: Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland, Dalkeith Community Council, Dalkeith Country Park, Melville Housing Association, Dalkeith History Society, local businesses in the town, Dalkeith Youth Forum, the Chamber of Commerce and Dalkeith Business Renewal.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

The impact on the following equality target groups would be positive: age (older or younger), disability, and people experiencing poverty or at risk of poverty and the impact on other target groups would be likely to be neutral; no negative impacts are anticipated. Midlothian Disability Access Panel and Midlothian Road Safety Forum would be consulted on the design proposals.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The proposals would be developed in line with the principles applied for 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.

3.9 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

4 Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) notes that the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund Stage 1 bid for the Dalkeith High Street Phase 2 improvements was successful; and
- (b) approves a Council contribution of £20,000 towards the High Street Phase 2 improvements for inclusion in the Stage 2 bid to the Scottish Government.

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Background Papers:

Regeneration Capital Grant Fund First Stage Application, 28 June 2013

Declaration Box

Instructions: *This box must be completed by the author of the report. The box will be copied and saved by the Council Secretariat who will delete it from the report prior to photocopying the agenda.*

Title of Report: *Midlothian Local Development Plan Update*

Meeting Presented to: *Cabinet 8 October 2013*

Author of Report: *Anne Geddes*

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-

- ☒ *All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Human Resources.*
- ☒ *All risk implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *All other report implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.*

Education interest.