



Joint Forum of Community Councils in West Lothian

Town Centre Capital Funds Special Meeting

Held on Wed 10th July 2019 held at Civic Centre Livingston

Attendees

WLC: Nairn Pearson, M. Kirkbright, Lesley Keirnan, Craig McCorriston, Provost Tom Kerr

Community Councils:

Bathgate CC Donald Stavert, Billy Johnston, John McDonald, Ronnie McLeod

Broxburn CC Keith MacLeod

Carmondean CC Jean Moffat

Craigshill CC Ian Buchanan

East Calder CC Chris Davidson, Morag Lyall

Eliburn CC Allan Cockerell, Steve Egan

Greenrigg CC Peter Kain, Rab Lamont, Hazel Robertson, Hugh Robertson

Kirknewton CC John Sives

Ladywell CC Mary Benson

Linlithgow CC Pamela Barnes, Gordon Smith

Mid Calder CC Eleanor Blair, N. Crichton

Murieston CC Ian Brown

Uphall CC Irene Bishop, Pippa Plevin

Whitburn CC Tam Lynch, Marilyn Bonnar

WLC Presentation

Nairn Pearson from Community Regeneration at WLC gave the attached presentation.

The Town Centre Capital Fund has £1.826m available for West Lothian. 23 eligible CCs.

Bids have to go to LACs by 31st Aug to be considered in Sep/Oct.

It has to be spent or contracts in place by end of March 2020. Craig confirmed that it is not possible to change date as constrained by ScotGov.

Concern about VAT liability and whether WLC could procure the projects, Nairn to clarify.

Many concerned that timeline very tight, might not be possible to get anything in place in time and felt out of their depth with the sums involved.

Community Council Progress

Kirknewton are working with their Dev Trust.

Looking at a Community minibus to help Over 60s group to get to Health centre, going on trips, and Balerno High School after school transport. Developing the village park, pitch and put, pavilion, benches. Walkways to East Calder.

East Calder are looking to buy a property on the Main street to refurbish and use as a community hub.

Broxburn are working with BUD.

Have contacted Becky Plunkett of Open Space to see if they can asset transfer land behind Strathbrock Partnership Centre that is for sale. Looking at getting Brock garden centre to build vegetable planters.

Possibly conduct questionnaire or use survey BUD has already done to find out what people want.

Eliburn have setup a Facebook page to get engagement and ideas. Looking at developing NewYearField in some way.

Whitburn are looking at involving other Community Centre groups to upgrade the reception area.

Carmondean want to look at transport issues, putting a ramp at the bus stop and getting better digital bus info displayed.

Linlithgow are getting as many groups as they can together to discuss what they can do. Would like a Community bus but don't think feasible in the time.

Craighill have 4 potential projects, including WiFi coverage, paths and signage and developing Craigs Farm.

Greenrigg would like to get better play equipment in their park but don't know how ongoing maintenance would be paid for.

Murieston would like to lease back some WLC owned land for various types of gardens community, forrest garden and wild meadow.

Mid Calder would like to emulate Pumpherston and asset transfer land near the Community Centre for a Community garden and planters.

Bathgate are looking at extending the CCTV in the center of town, better internet coverage, a bandstand or market at the Steelyard, and restoring the fountain to use. Also a town map guide and walks into the Bathgate hills.



Town Centre Fund for 2019/20 - West Lothian Fund

Joint Forum of Community Councils West Lothian

Presentation - 10 July 2019

Town Centre Fund 2019/20

In February 2019 the Scottish Government announced a new £50million for a Town Centre Fund for 2019/20. The funding is aimed at towns of 1,000 or more, which equates to 23 towns in West Lothian, resulting in an allocation of £1.826 million to West Lothian.

Council Executive has agreed the allocation for each of the 23 eligible towns. The fund is now open for applications with a closing date of 31 August 2019. All funding must be utilised in 2019/20 so projects need to be either delivered or contracted by the end of March 2020.

Purpose of Grant

The purpose of the grant is to enable local authorities to stimulate and support placed based economic investments which encourage town centres to diversify and flourish, creating footfall through local improvements and partnerships.

The fund is for **CAPITAL** costs of a project only

Investment decisions should be made in the context of national and local commitments to town centres linked to the themes of the Town Centre Action Plan. The grant is exclusively for capital projects that deliver against the themes explored further in this presentation

Process

- Applications to be made by community groups or appropriate council service by 31 August 2019
- Local Area Committees will consider the applications for the towns within their ward in September/October
- Approved projects will then receive confirmation allowing them to proceed
- Council will consider any funding that has not been awarded across the Local Authority Area
- Projects should be delivered by 31 March 2020

Themes of Grant

- **Town Centre Living** – footfall is key to achieving thriving, successful towns centre; and, the best footfall is residential for people who will use shops, services, and will care for its safety and security in the evenings
- **Vibrant Local Economies** – creating a supportive business environment including the involvement of Town centre Management Groups Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and other local partnerships
- **Enterprising Communities** – social enterprise, services, arts and events; and, community empowerment and community based activities which increase the health, wealth and wellbeing of town centres
- **Accessible Public Services** – creating and accessing public facilities and services, supported by economic, service and transport hubs;

Themes of Grant continued

- **Digital Towns** – exploiting digital technology and promoting Wi-Fi infrastructure to enable access to information, data analytics, marketing opportunities, branding, and communication with the wider world;
- **Proactive Planning** – land reform and supporting the creation of sustainable, low-carbon and connected places which promote natural and cultural assets, designed in partnership with local communities and key stakeholders.

Activities

which contribute to the regeneration or development of an area include; in particular:

- securing that land and buildings are brought into effective use;
- contributing to, or encouraging, economic development;
- creating an attractive and safe environment;
- preventing crime or reducing the fear of crime;
- providing or improving housing or social and recreational facilities, for the purpose of encouraging people to live or work in the area or of benefiting people who live there;

Activities

which contribute to the regeneration or development of an area include; continued

- providing employment for local people;
- providing or improving training, educational facilities or health services for local people;
- assisting local people to make use of opportunities for education, training or employment;
- benefiting local people who have special needs because of disability or because of their sex or the racial group to which they belong.

Good Examples

In principle the following examples would be considered positively:*

- Creation of a Path to join a community together
- Streetscape/Landscape improvements to your Neighbourhood “Town” Centre
- Heritage based Improvements – Milestones/Signage within community
- Equipment - Purchasing and installing interactive technology/Equipment for community events
- Land Purchase – to develop for wider community benefit (community garden)
- Purchase of Building – to develop for wider community benefit
- Infrastructure – Community Wi-Fi/Community transport

* Not an Exhaustive List

Bad Examples

- Funding to deliver activities/pay for staff
- Disposable Equipment/Marketing materials
- Capital development/improvement that does not benefit the wider community
- Land/building purchase with no plans in place, and feasible plans for implementation
- Projects without on-going costs/maintenance built in and/or formal agreements in place
- Creation of additional car parking in residential areas

Application Form

Some key questions to be considered if applying:

- Does your project have community support based on need? Can you evidence this (strategies/questionnaires, Regeneration Plan)?
- Do your outcomes clearly align with one or more of the funding themes and benefitting the wider community?
- Are your designs and costings accurate?
- For external contractors - is it based on multiple quotes?
- If match funding is involved - is this in place?
- Maintenance/Sustainability considered?
- Can you deliver the project by **31 March 2020**

Project management

Have you considered any revenue / liability / maintenance / VAT / Planning issues and how these might affect the timescale, sustainability of your project?

- Design/Plans
- Implementation arrangements e.g. contract/tenders
- Planning Approval?
- Are you are able to evidence the management and administration within your application?
- Health and Safety/Risk Assessments
- Public Liability
- **Scottish Ministers reserve the right to withhold, make deduction from or require repayment of grant monies where conditions included in agreement are not met**

Tools and Resources

There are a number of tools and resources available:

- **Understanding Scottish Places:** an online tool which shows how every town in Scotland with a population of 1,000 or more is interacting with its surrounding settlements and performing <https://www.usp.scot/>
- **USP Your Town Audit:** add to USP a six-day study which provides the standard benchmark for measuring the health of a Scottish town - <https://www.usp.scot/StaticPage/UspAudit>
- **Place Standard:** a framework designed to support communities, public, private and third sectors to work efficiently together to assess the quality of a place - https://www.scotlandstowns.org/place_standard
- **Town Centre Toolkit:** guidance on designing and planning town centres to be attractive, accessible and active, focusing on urban design, quality, sustainability and use of town assets - https://www.scotlandstowns.org/town_centre_toolkit

Questions ?