



**COUNCIL EXECUTIVE**

**TOWN CENTRE FUND – CAPITAL GRANT 2019/20**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for the delivery and operation of the Town Centre Fund Capital Grant 2019/20 of £1.826 million which has been allocated to the council via the local authority capital settlement from the Scottish Government.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council Executive:

1. Approves the list of eligible areas and allocation to each area, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. Approves the assessment of the criteria for projects as set out in the report.
3. Agrees that decisions on the applications are made as follows:-
  - (a) Local Area Committees will consider applications from each community to the fund and have the power to award funding in full or in part as they see fit up to the amount allocated to that community
  - (b) After doing so, if there is a balance remaining of the aggregate amount allocated to the ward, Local Area Committees will have the power to apply that balance to applications for the ward area which have not already been funded at all or fully
  - (c) After doing so, if there is still a balance remaining, Council Executive will decide how and where all remaining balances from the Local Area Committees should be spent across the whole council area
4. To note that additional Local Area Committee (LAC) meetings may be required.
5. Notes the conditions pertaining to the grant as set out in the report.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	To be assessed on an individual project basis but it is not anticipated that any proposals will require to be the subject of specific assessments.
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for</b>	Responsibility for the fund will be added to the

	<b>Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	remit of the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration.
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	None.
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Outcome 1 – We make West Lothian an attractive place to do business.  Outcome 10 – We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need.  Outcome 12 – We value and enjoy our built environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	A total of £1.826 million will be allocated to the Capital Fund through Scottish Government Grant Settlement.
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	Not applicable.
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	Financial Management Unit.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1 Introduction**

In February 2019 the Scottish Government announced, as part of their budget settlement within the local authority capital settlement, a new ring fenced capital fund of £50 million for a Town Centre Fund for 2019/20. The allocation of this fund was based on the Scotland's Town Partnership working definition of a town being a place with a population of 1,000 or more, which equates to 484 towns across Scotland, 23 for West Lothian. This resulted in an allocation of £1.826 million to West Lothian.

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. Specifically, this fund aims to contribute to transformative investments which drive local economic activities and re-purpose town centres to become more diverse, successful and sustainable.

In particular, the grant should fund a wide range of investments which deliver against the themes of the Town Centre Action Plan including town centre living and supporting town centres to be vibrant, accessible and enterprising places. This could include re-purposing buildings for housing, retail, business, social and community enterprise, services, leisure, and culture, tourism and heritage; and, improving access and infrastructure.

Investment decisions should be made in the context of national and local commitments to town centres including :

- Town Centre First Principle and Town Centre Action Plan link: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/town-centre-action-plan-scottish-government-response/>
- 
- Place Principle: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction/>
- Scotland's Towns Partnership: <https://www.scotlandstowns.org/>

### Tools

- Understanding Scottish Places: <https://www.usp.scot/>
- USP your Town Audit <https://www.usp.scot/StaticPage/UspAudit>
- Place Standard: [https://www.scotlandstowns.org/place\\_standard](https://www.scotlandstowns.org/place_standard)
- Town Centre Toolkit: [https://www.scotlandstowns.org/town\\_centre\\_toolkit](https://www.scotlandstowns.org/town_centre_toolkit)

These are effectively tools that help communities carry out an audit of a given town centre. Aspects of this have been used in some of the given the time constraints there would be limited scope to utilise.

The Town Centre Action Plan published in 2013 was the Scottish Government's response to the National Town Centre Review. It focused on national and local solutions, encouraging action across public, private and community sectors. The Scottish Government and local government subsequently agreed the Town Centre First Principle which requested that government, local authorities, the wider public sector, businesses and communities put the health of town centres at the heart of proportionate and best value decision making, seeking to deliver the best local outcomes regarding investment and de-investment decisions, alignment of policies, targeting of available resources to priority town centre sites, and encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity. It committed to a collaborative approach which understands and underpins the long term plan for each town centre.

The aim of the fund is to deliver against the themes of the Town Centre Action Plan. Those themes include:

- **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

- **Digital Towns** – exploiting digital technology and promoting Wifi 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.

### **Conditions of the Grant**

The grant is exclusively for capital expenditure which is additional to that which is already or would otherwise be allocated to the council's 2019/20 capital budget, and should not substitute existing spend.

The Grant may also be used to fund third party capital expenditure in the current year. The Grant is to be used in the financial year 2019/20 and it is required that work will be completed, or at least work or contracts signed or commenced in 2019/20.

The allocations of the grant to each local authority was undertaken using an equal weighting of number of towns and populations living in towns i.e. 50% of funding based on number of towns and 50% based on the population living in towns.

### **D2 Proposal for Allocation of the Grant in West Lothian**

It is proposed to allocate the grant to communities in West Lothian on the same basis that was used to distribute the Scottish wide funding to each local authority area. As such, it is proposed to allocate the grant to each place with 1,000 people or more, 50% of funding based on the number of towns (i.e. an equal split) and 50% based on the population. The proposed allocation to the 23 communities is on this basis as set out in Appendix 1.

Due to the tight timescales to spend the allocation, the Economic Development and Regeneration team will contact the current networks, including Town Centre Management Groups, Community Councils and links to communities used to develop the allocation of the Village Improvements Fund and Locality Regeneration Planning to assist in identifying projects, as well as wider publicity to encourage applications.

It is further proposed that Council Services, Elected Members and other interested partners, for example Central Scotland Green Network Trust, are involved in helping communities develop project ideas.

For continuity an updated version of the application process used for the Village Improvements Fund will be used for all applications. Where it is agreed that projects are delivered by West Lothian Council the application will come from the relevant service, if agreed by the LAC. A draft of the proposed applications form is in Appendix 2 for information. It may be subject to some minor changes before it is made available for use.

In terms of governance it is recommended that Local Area Committees make decisions on the applications and that as far as possible the money allocated to communities in each ward area is used in the ward. All applications will be presented to the relevant Local Area Committee for consideration. A deadline will be set for late August to allow applications to be considered at the September round of LACs. It is probable that additional LAC meetings may have to be called.

After the initial round of decisions, if there is still a balance remaining, the committees would be able to allocate that to applications in the ward area which have not been funded at all or not fully funded. If there is still a balance remaining then Council Executive will decide how and where all remaining balances should be spent across the whole council area.

#### **E. CONCLUSION**

Officers will work with respective ward communities to ensure the allocation to each LAC area is fully utilised during 2019/20.

#### **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 – Proposed Allocation of Grant in West Lothian; Appendix 2 Draft Application and Guidance.

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## Appendix 1 – Proposed Allocation of Grant with settlements more than 1000 in West Lothian

Settlement	Population	Fixed Allocation	Population Allocation	Total Amount Awarded
		£	£	£
Livingston	54,516	40,000	281,557	321,557
Bathgate	23,559	40,000	121,674	161,674
Linlithgow	13,862	40,000	71,592	111,592
Armadale	12,021	40,000	62,084	102,084
Whitburn	11,805	40,000	60,969	100,969
Broxburn	10,970	40,000	56,656	96,656
Uphall	4,687	40,000	24,207	64,207
Blackburn	5,775	40,000	29,826	69,826
East Calder	5,733	40,000	29,609	69,609
Fauldhouse	4,804	40,000	24,811	64,811
Winchburgh	3,758	40,000	19,409	59,409
Midcalder	3,351	40,000	17,307	57,307
West Calder	3,152	40,000	16,279	56,279
Kirknewton	2,598	40,000	13,418	53,418
Polbeth	2,301	40,000	11,884	51,884
Blackridge	2,074	40,000	10,711	50,711
Addiebrownhill	1,991	40,000	10,283	50,283
Stoneyburn	1,982	40,000	10,236	50,236
Pumpherstoun	1,667	40,000	8,609	48,609
East Whitburn	1,344	40,000	6,941	46,941
Seafeld	1,334	40,000	6,890	46,890
Uphall Station	1,073	40,000	5,542	45,542
Greenrigg	1,066	40,000	5,506	45,506
<b>Total</b>	<b>175,423</b>	<b>920,000</b>	<b>906,000</b>	<b>1,826,000</b>

## Livingston

<u>Area</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
Livingston Eliburn	8,211	£48,432
Livingston Craigshill	7,057	£41,625
Livingston Dedridge	6,808	£40,156
Livingston Murieston / Bankton	5,315	£31,350
Livingston Carmondean	5,170	£30,495
Livingston Ladywell	5,024	£29,634
Livingston Deans	4,234	£24,974
Livingston Knightsridge	3,945	£23,269
Livingston Howden	3,489	£20,579
Livingston Village / Kirkton	2,958	£17,447
Livingston Bellsquarry / Adambrae	2,305	£13,596
	54,516	<u>£321,557</u>
		£321,557

### Proposed Allocation of Grant by Ward in West Lothian

Ward	Settlement	Allocation £	Total Allocation £
<b>Linlithgow</b>	Linlithgow	111,593	<b>111,593</b>
<b>Broxburn, Uphall &amp; Winchburgh</b>	Broxburn	96,656	
	Uphall	64,207	
	Winchburgh	59,409	<b>220,272</b>
<b>Livingston North</b>	Eliburn	48,432	
	Carmondean	30,495	
	Deans	24,974	
	Knightsridge	23,269	
	Livingston Village / Kirkton	11,340	<b>138,510</b>
<b>Livingston South</b>	Dedridge	40,156	
	Murieston/Bankton	31,350	
	Ladywell	29,634	
	Howden	20,579	
	Bellsquarry/Adambrae	13,596	
	Livingston Village / Kirkton	6,106	<b>141,421</b>
<b>Livingston East &amp; East Calder</b>	Craigshill	41,625	
	East Calder	69,609	
	Mid Calder	57,307	
	Kirknewton	53,418	
	Uphall Station	45,542	
	Pumpherstons	48,609	<b>316,110</b>
<b>Fauldhouse &amp; Breich Valley</b>	Fauldhouse	64,811	



	West Calder	56,279	
	Polbeth	51,884	
	Addiebrownhill	50,283	
	Stoneyburn	50,236	<b>273,493</b>
<b>Whitburn Blackburn</b>	<b>&amp;</b> Whitburn	100,969	
	Blackburn	69,826	
	Seafield	46,890	
	Greenrigg	45,506	
	East Whitburn	46,940	<b>310,131</b>
<b>Bathgate</b>	Bathgate	161,674	<b>161,674</b>
<b>Armadale Blackridge</b>	<b>&amp;</b> Armadale	102,084	
	Blackridge	50,712	<b>152,796</b>
			<b>1,826,000</b>