

## Town Centre Fund – Capital Grant 2020/21 Guidance Notes

### Background

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. In 2019/20 this resulted in an allocation of £1.826 million to West Lothian and a second round of funding has been announced for 2020/21 of £658,000.

The purpose of that grant was to enable local authorities to stimulate and support place 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 sought to 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 instances, although given the time constraints there would be limited scope to utilise, but you should find these as useful background.

## Town Centre Action Plan

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 collaborative approaches which understand and underpin long-term plans for town centre.

The aim of the 2019-20 fund was 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 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.

## Conditions of Award of Grant

The Scottish Government is delivering £30 million capital funding into regeneration in the financial year 2020-21 as part of the £230 million economic recovery stimulus package, particularly aimed at supporting local construction activity and employment across Scotland. The Scottish Government, in agreement with COSLA and local authority Leaders, will be providing £18 million to local authorities through the Town Centre Fund - Capital Grant 2020/21. This represents an allocation of £658,000 to West Lothian.

Local authorities should also make investment decisions in the context of national and local commitments to town centres including the Town Centre First Principle and the Town Centre Action Plan; and more recently, the Place Principle (see above).

The grant is exclusively for capital expenditure which is additional to that which is already or would otherwise be allocated to the council's 2020/21 capital budget, and this should not substitute existing spend.

The grant may also be used to fund third party capital expenditure in the current year. **The grant must be used in the financial year 2020/21 and it is required that work will be completed, or, at least work or contracts signed or commenced within 2020/21.** It is advised that any unused grant will require to be repaid to the Scottish Government.

The allocations of the grant to each local authority was undertaken using an equal weighting of number of towns and populations living in towns; and adopts the same basis as that agreed back in Spring 2019 for the then Town Centre Fund 2019/20.

### Allocation of the Grant in West Lothian

The allocation to communities in West Lothian is based on the same approach used to distribute the Scottish wide funding to each local authority area. As such the grant is available to each community 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 allocation to the 23 communities as proposed is set out below.

Ward	Settlement	Allocation £	Total Allocation £
<b>Linlithgow</b>	Linlithgow	40,551	<b>40,551</b>
<b>Broxburn, Uphall &amp; Winchburgh</b>	Broxburn	35,012	
	Uphall	22,977	
	Winchburgh	21,198	<b>79,187</b>
<b>Livingston North</b>	Eliburn	17,836	
	Carmondean	11,230	
	Deans	9,197	
	Knightsridge	8,569	
	Livingston Village / Kirkton	4,176	<b>51,008</b>
<b>Livingston South</b>	Dedridge	14,788	
	Murieston/Bankton	11,545	
	Ladywell	10,913	
	Howden	7,579	
	Bellsquarry/Adambrae	5,007	

	Livingston Village / Kirkton	2,249	<b>52,081</b>
<b>Livingston East &amp; East Calder</b>	Craigshill	15,329	
	East Calder	24,981	
	Mid Calder	20,418	
	Kirknewton	18,976	
	Uphall Station	16,055	
	Pumpherstoun	17,193	<b>112,952</b>
<b>Fauldhouse &amp; Breich Valley</b>	Fauldhouse	23,201	
	West Calder	20,037	
	Polbeth	18,407	
	Addiewell & Loganlea	17,814	
	Stoneyburn	17,796	<b>97,255</b>
<b>Whitburn &amp; Blackburn</b>	Whitburn	36,611	
	Blackburn	25,061	
	Seafield	16,555	
	Greenrigg	16,044	
	East Whitburn	16,574	<b>110,845</b>
<b>Bathgate</b>	Bathgate	59,124	<b>59,124</b>
<b>Armadale &amp; Blackridge</b>	Armadale	37,025	
	Blackridge	17,972	<b>54,997</b>
			<b>658,000</b>

## Support in Developing Applications

Due to the short timescales to spend the allocation, and the current restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Economic Development and Regeneration team will use their current networks and links to communities, as well as wider publicise the funding, as a means to encourage applications. This will also include organisations which currently have projects from the 2019/20 allocation, to further assist in identifying eligible projects.

Advice and support with applications in the first instance is ward based so please contact:

<p><b>Ward 1, Linlithgow</b> Stewart Ness, Linlithgow Town Centre Officer, 07717 865225 <a href="mailto:stewart.ness@westlothian.gov.uk">stewart.ness@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ward 2, Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh</b> Stewart Ness, Broxburn and Uphall Town Centre Officer, 07717 865225 <a href="mailto:stewart.ness@westlothian.gov.uk">stewart.ness@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p> <p>For Winchburgh the contact is Douglas Grierson, Regeneration Team Leader (Interim), 07500 816852, <a href="mailto:douglas.grierson@westlothian.gov.uk">douglas.grierson@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ward 3, Livingston North</b> Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer, 07500 816862, <a href="mailto:scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk">scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ward 4, Livingston South</b> Lesley Keirnan, Community Regeneration Officer, 07771 980037 <a href="mailto:Lesley.keirnan@westlothian.gov.uk">Lesley.keirnan@westlothian.gov.uk</a>.</p>
<p><b>Ward 5, East Livingston and East Calder</b> Lesley Keirnan, Community Regeneration Officer, 07771 980037 <a href="mailto:Lesley.keirnan@westlothian.gov.uk">Lesley.keirnan@westlothian.gov.uk</a> .</p>
<p><b>Ward 6, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley</b> Douglas Benson, Community Regeneration Officer, 07769 877145, <a href="mailto:douglas.benson@westlothian.gov.uk">douglas.benson@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ward 7, Whitburn and Blackburn</b> Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer, 07500 816862, <a href="mailto:scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk">scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk</a> ;</p> <p>For Blackburn, the contact is Michelle Kirkbright, Community Regeneration Officer, 07500 816855, <a href="mailto:michelle.kirkbright@westlothian.gov.uk">michelle.kirkbright@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ward 8, Bathgate</b> Nairn Pearson, BID &amp; Town Centre Manager, 07917 263587, <a href="mailto:nairn.pearson@westlothian.gov.uk">nairn.pearson@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ward 9, Armadale and Blackridge</b> Michelle Kirkbright, Community Regeneration Officer, 07500 816855 <a href="mailto:michelle.kirkbright@westlothian.gov.uk">michelle.kirkbright@westlothian.gov.uk</a></p>

## **Decision Making Process and Governance**

Due to the tight timescale a deadline of **Friday 27 November 2020** has been set for all applications being received.

All applications will be considered by the relevant Local Area Committee. If there should be any unallocated funding from the Local Area Committee, then this will be reported back to the Council Executive to determine how to spend this across the whole Council area.