



**Glasgow City Council**

**Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm City  
Policy Committee**

**Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods,  
Regeneration and Sustainability**

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**Item 6**

1<sup>st</sup> June 2021

**UPDATE REPORT ON GLASGOW'S TOWN CENTRE CAPITAL FUND**

**Purpose of Report:**

To provide an update on Glasgow's town centre capital fund.

**Recommendations:**

Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider progress with regard to implementation of the Town Centre Fund 19/20 and 20/21 programmes;
- (2) Consider the priorities and opportunities for future Town Centre capital funding to best align with the Council's corporate aims.

Ward No(s):

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes  No  consulted: Yes  No

## 1 Overview

- 1.1 In October 2020 a [report](#) was made to City Administration Committee (CAC) which informed Committee of the allocation of £1.096m from the Scottish Government through the 20/21 Town Centre Fund (TCF). This was in addition to £3.01m allocated through the TCF 19/20 programme. The report approved an approach to the allocation of the TCF 20/21 funding in Glasgow, which would support and build upon the projects funded through the TCF 19/20. A further [report](#) was made to CAC on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021, confirming finalised funding and spend across the two years.
- 1.2 Council officers have worked intensively with grant recipients to make progress on delivery of a diverse programme of projects.
- 1.3 This report informs Committee of progress on delivery of the Town Centre Fund and considers priorities and opportunities for extending and enhancing the programme, should another round of funding be made available from the Scottish Government in 2021/22.

## 2. Report on Progress - Town Centre Fund 2019/20

- 2.1 In March 2019, the Scottish Government, in partnership with COSLA, allocated £3.01 million to Glasgow from the Town Centre Fund 2019/20. On 29th August 2019 a report was made to City Administration Committee that set out a proposed approach to allocating Glasgow's share of the Town Centre Fund. Within that context a set of deliverables was proposed under three thematic headings:
  - Project 1: Pantries (Food & Inclusion)
  - Project 2: Built Heritage (Building Community Capacity & Protecting Heritage)
  - Project 3: Small Grants Scheme (A Collaborative Approach to Enable Communities to Lead Town Centre Renewal)

Within these three themes a total of 12 projects were identified for funding. The 12 projects are listed in Appendix 1 and this includes an update on progress specific to each project.

- 2.2 A final grant commitment of £350,815 was approved for the Possil Shopfront improvement programme being taken forward by Saracen Street Business Improvement District (Community). Subsequently improvements to 11 shopfronts are confirmed as being taken forward within the town centre with a total budget commitment of £334,110 (a full list is shown in Appendix 1).

### **3. Report on Progress – Town Centre Fund 2020/21**

3.1 A Report was made to CAC on [28th January 2021](#), confirming finalised funding and spend across the two years. The 2020/21 programme identified 3 themes for allocating the £1.096m grant. These are:

- Food & Inclusion
- Animating Spaces
- Additional support to 2019/20 works of £85,000 to Tollcross Winter Gardens to cover increased costs.

#### **3.2 Food & Inclusion 2020/21**

An open call grant application process was established for the Food & Inclusion fund. In total 8 pantry projects were approved for funding with a total value of £445,353, which included an allocation of £97,835 from the “Addressing Future Need” Fund. Subsequently one project was unable to proceed. The remaining 7 projects are listed in Appendix 1 and this includes an update on progress specific to each project.

3.3 An open call grant programme was established to allocate the Animating Spaces funding. The aim of the funding is to assist town centres to adapt to the challenges of Covid19 by creating spaces for safe movement and trading. The Animating Spaces grant fund offered an opportunity for community-led proposals for temporary interventions to creatively animate streets to meet the needs for social distancing, increased local activity and economic stimulus. 13 projects were approved for funding with a total value of £238,157 with 12 projects proceeding with details listed in Appendix 1 including an update on progress specific to each project. There have been challenges with delivering on projects with a focus on utilising public areas. This has identified issues for development in future town centre animation projects, particularly in relation to the capacity of community group to lead on projects in the public space and the impact of existing statutory controls/consents.

3.4 In addition, further funding was made to progress works at the B listed Tollcross Winter Gardens increasing funding from the Town Centre Fund from £1,250,000 to £1,330,000 to cover increased tender prices. The works are scheduled to go on site this year and the building will provide opportunity for a range of uses to benefit the local community and users of the park.

### **4 Opportunities and Priorities for Future Town Centre Fund Rounds**

4.1 There has been no confirmation at this stage whether there will be a further Town Centre Fund round in 2021/22 financial year. However, there is opportunity to reflect on the Council’s priorities and the opportunities for development of the programme should further funding become available.

- 4.2 It is worth noting that the grant programmes the Council have established over the 2 years of the Town Centre Fund have been extremely successful in mobilising community led action in Glasgow's town centres. Over the 2 years of the programme in total 30 grants have been made for activity in town centres. Whilst this approach is resource intensive for the Council in terms of facilitation, it is considered an approach that should continue and be developed.
- 4.3 The City Council recently commissioned research to review previous interventions in Town Centres and to consider and guide how we might take forward future policy guidance and investment in our Town Centres. As well as highlighting the successes and lessons learned from Town Centre Action Plan projects, as exemplified by Central Govan Action Plan, Calton Barras Action Plan and Shawlands Town Centre Action Plan, all of which have won various planning and regeneration awards in recent years, the report also looks at best practice from other cities and proposes a potential framework for the future regeneration and enhancement of Glasgow's Town Centres.
- 4.4 The timing of this study was such that it was partly undertaken across 2020 during the current pandemic which has further highlighted the need to diversify and invest in the City's town centres to ensure their ongoing vitality and positive contribution to civic life in Glasgow.
- 4.5 The report also highlights the importance of the emerging concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods, in terms place making and liveable neighbourhoods, but also crucially in assisting the City to reach its ambitious targets in terms of climate change and decarbonisation. In this regard, future planning policy should promote as one its key guiding principles sustainable neighbourhoods based on a network of multi-functional town and neighbourhood centres. The concept of twenty minute neighbourhoods is increasingly becoming embedded in both Scottish Government and City Council place making policy.
- 4.6 The report also proposes a framework for future investment and the potential future roll out of future Town Centre Action Plans, should funding become available. A copy of this report can be viewed [here](#). The report will also help inform the policy review which will inform the next iteration of the City Development Plan, recognising the need to review the current planning policy context to ensure that Town Centres can adapt and thrive to existing and emerging challenges and opportunities which emerge going forward. Work on the new City Development Plan is now underway and members will be kept advised of progress.
- 4.7 Another key aim in this regard is to allow the City Council to be more pro-active in identifying investment opportunities and projects if and when future town centre funding opportunities come forward. Within this there is an opportunity to link this with activities such as the post Covid economic recovery including an opportunity to engage proactively with social enterprises (particularly around food and repair issues) and the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme in a holistic remodeling of town centre's role within the City's neighbourhoods.

## 5. Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

*Financial:* Glasgow City Council has been allocated £4.1m additional investment towards Town Centre renewal for 2019/21. This is being administered through GCC as the main partner, working with other partners to deliver on activities

*Legal:* GCC Legal Services will conduct due diligence on the process to provide partnership grants to organisations to help deliver on the key objectives of this funding.

*Personnel:* Personnel resources required to assist in the delivery of the overall programme will be supported through existing project resources.

*Procurement:* No specific procurement matters.

**Council Strategic Plan:** The report supports the following strategic plan priorities -

6. Support small businesses and encourage business diversity in local high streets across the city, and continue to support Business Improvement Districts.

74. Develop a more integrated approach to how we use our policies, assets and resources to improve community empowerment, neighbourhoods and delivering equality.

### Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-21*

The programme will help deliver Outcome 9 by investing in new or improved facilities within Town Centres and support the reduction of barriers to participation for learning and culture opportunities for people with protected characteristics.

*What are the potential equality*

Positive impact. The programme addresses food insecurity.

*impacts as a result of this report?*

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.*

Overall the programme will support investment within areas of socio-economic disadvantage. Through the Pantry element of the project it will specifically address the challenge of food insecurity.

### **Sustainability Impacts:**

*Environmental:*

The programme will support the Town Centre First Principle through bringing new and improved services to the centre of some communities. This will help facilitate lower carbon lifestyles and in some areas improve the environmental condition of Town Centres.

*Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:*

As outlined above, the programme addresses particular social issues which have moved to the forefront of the Inclusive Growth agenda, including food insecurity.

*Economic:*

The programme supports the investment within Town Centres and is directly contributing to the inclusive growth agenda within the city. The funding is part of the Scottish Government's economic stimulus in response to Covid-19

### **Privacy and Data Protection impacts:**

The provisions for GCC levels of privacy and data protection will be included in the standard conditions as part of the grant award letters prepared with support from Legal Services.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider progress with regard to implementation of the Town Centre Fund 19/20 and 20/21 programmes;
- (2) Consider the priorities and opportunities for future Town Centre capital funding to best align with the Council's corporate aims.