

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET: 18TH NOVEMBER 2009

GALSTON TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek cabinet approval to take forward an amended regeneration strategy for Galston town centre under the Delivering Community Regeneration Action Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 2nd July 2008, Cabinet agreed a broad approach to the regeneration of Galston town centre which included the refurbishment of the social work and local offices and acquisition of sites not in Council ownership i.e. 2-6 Bridge Street, 1-5 Cross Street and the informal car park area bounded by Cross Street/Bridge Street/Church Lane.
- 2.2 On 21st January 2009 Capital Investment allocations of £1.5m and £1.6m were approved for the provision of community facilities and the refurbishment of the social work offices at 7-9 and local office at 11, Cross Street, Galston respectively.
- 2.3 A report to Cabinet on 19th August 2009 indicated the successful outcome of submissions to the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF). The award of £250,000 to Galston is for the acquisition and provision of a new car park plus the acquisition and preparation of the site at the corner of Cross Street/Bridge Street for redevelopment at a total cost of £535,000. The balance of the funding for this project will be met through accelerated spend from the Council's town centre regeneration allocations and demolitions budgets.

3. REGENERATION STRATEGY PROPOSALS

- 3.1 In order to kick-start regeneration in Galston it is proposed to redevelop key sites and buildings within the town centre. The locations of key sites are indicated on the map attached as **Appendix 1** and detailed proposals for each site are as follows;

Site 1 (3-5, Cross Street & 2-6, Bridge Street)

Construct a multi-purpose local office. The office would accommodate local office staff and meeting facilities for the use of both Council staff and the community on the ground floor.

Site 2 (Social Work Offices – 7-9, Cross Street)

Complete refurbishment and improved accessibility to the existing Social Work offices which will be accessed via the proposed local office at the corner of Cross Street and Bridge Street.

Site 3 (Former Housing site at Chapel Lane)

Site retained for future social housing development in accordance with the decision of the Housing Committee on 24th January 2007 and the subsequently approved Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2009-14.

Site 4 (Provost Chambers/Council Offices – 11, Cross Street)

Refurbished and retained in council ownership with the potential for community based or social enterprise uses on the ground floor being further investigated with access being gained via the refurbished Social Work Offices on the first floor.

Site 5 (Former Portland Arms – 2-6, Cross Street)

The layout of the building lends itself most readily to office space for which there is currently little demand. However, there is considerable community interest in acquiring the building. On this basis it is suggested that further discussions be undertaken with potential community partners.

Site 6 (Car Park – Church Lane)

Create a new formal car park off Church Lane at the rear of Cross Street and Bridge Street utilising the TCRF grant. However it should be noted that land acquisition for this site is proving problematic which may result in delays to the completion of the project.

Site 7 (Community Facilities – Orchard Street)

Comprehensive refurbishment of the existing community premises with the intention of this being the main focus for community activity in Galston.

- 3.2 Consideration was given to relocating the existing library to new build premises on the vacant site at the corner of Cross St/Bridge St. Whilst potentially supporting town centre regeneration by increasing footfall to the retail core of the town centre, it was felt that, given the condition of the existing library building, this option does not represent best value. Therefore, it is recommended that the library should remain at its current location.
- 3.3 It has been suggested that minor improvements to the configuration of the footpath layout around Cross Street/Bridge Street/Brewland Street may be

required to assist the movement of vehicular traffic at this important junction and it is recommended that this should be investigated further by council officers.

- 3.4 The provision of a new local office, comprehensive refurbishment of the existing social work office and community facilities in a combination of new and refurbished buildings will create substantial improvements to the appearance and fabric of the town centre. This, coupled with the new car parking provision and remediation of the site at the corner of Bridge Street/Cross Street, represents a significant investment in the sustainable regeneration of Galston.

4. PHASING

- 4.1 The TCRF elements of the project i.e. the preparation of the derelict site at Cross Street/Bridge Street and construction of new car parking, must be completed by 31st March 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter. In order to protect this investment and to facilitate the remaining regeneration proposals the following phasing is suggested;

- Construction of new local office, refurbishment of existing social work office.
- Refurbishment of the Provost Chambers/Council Offices
- Refurbishment of community facilities at Orchard Street.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Allocations of £3.3m from Capital and £0.085m from Revenue funds have previously been made in the Council's financial strategy for the refurbishment of the existing social work office, upgrading of community facilities and the TCRF project in Galston. The TCRF bid secured a further £0.250m taking the total available to £3.635m. The total investment required to achieve the strategy set out in this report is estimated at £4.335m. It is proposed that the balance of £0.700m be met from the general regeneration allocation of £5m from the Capital Investment Programme.
- 5.2 Any additional revenue costs which may arise from the development proposals will require to be borne by the relevant department.

6. LEGAL & ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The council's Legal & Asset Management Services will be required to take forward the acquisition of properties at 2-6 Bridge Street and 3-5 Cross Street together with the areas of land required in connection with the

formation of the new car park off Church Lane. Following acquisition, Legal and Asset Management Services will ensure that all existing rights of access to the car park area are varied to facilitate the development. However, compulsory purchase of some or all of the identified properties may be required to guarantee the success of the project particularly if negotiations become protracted. The CPO process requires that a development programme is approved and is in place alongside the appropriate Planning Consents and Listed Building Consents. It should be noted that the council's ability to meet the TCRF grant requirements may be compromised if compulsory purchase powers require to be used.

- 6.2 Legal Services will be required to ensure that any title granted in respect of the proposed acquisitions detailed in this strategy is valid and marketable and adequately protects the interests of the Council.

7. COMMUNITY PLAN & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The regeneration proposals will contribute towards meeting the aims and aspirations of the 'Delivering Community Regeneration' Action Plan.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There is a risk associated with the proposed purchase of the various properties detailed above. Any use of Compulsory Purchase Powers will require to be appropriately justified and cannot be guaranteed to be agreed by the Scottish Government.
- 8.2 Any property purchased will require to be included in the register of EAC assets and insurances.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 **It is recommended that Cabinet:**

- (i) agrees the regeneration strategy outlined in section 3 of this report;**
- (ii) agrees to the amendment of the Capital Investment Plan to include; a new local office, refurbishment/extension to the existing social work office and refurbished community facilities at Orchard Street;**
- (iii) agrees to allocate £0.700m from the general regeneration allocation in the capital investment programme to facilitate the strategy outlined in this report;**

- (iv) **authorises the acquisition of the sites at 2-6 Bridge Street, 3-5, Cross Street and the areas of ground required to form the car park to the rear of these sites;**
- (v) **agrees to remit the Head of Planning and Economic Development to further develop proposals for utilising the former Provost Chambers/Council Offices and continue to pursue options for bringing the former Portland Arms back into sustainable use;**
- (vi) **agrees to remit the Head of Roads and Transportation to further investigate improvements to roads and footways at Bridge Street/Brewland Street.**
- (vii) **otherwise note the contents of this report.**

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support

11 November 2009 (SA/KD)
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (i) Galston Town Centre Feasibility Study by John Gilbert Architects April 2009
- (ii) Cabinet Report 2nd July 2008 - Galston Town Centre Regeneration
- (iii) Cabinet Report 21st January 2009 – Capital Investment Programme 2009/10 – 2018/19

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Galston Town Centre Regeneration



- ① 3-5 Cross Street, 2-6 Bridge Street
- ② Social Work Offices, 7-9 Cross Street
- ③ Chapel Lane, Housing Site - Proposed Community Facility
- ④ Provost Chambers/Council Offices, 11 Cross Street
- ⑤ Former Portland Arms, 2-6 Cross Street
- ⑥ Car Park, Church Lane
- ⑦ Orchard Street, Existing Community Facilities



North
Not to Scale