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## **JEDBURGH CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME (CARS)**

**Report by Corporate Transformation and Services Director**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**4 October 2016**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report updates the Committee on the progress of the development of a potential Jedburgh Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). It seeks formal approval for a funding bid to Historic Environment Scotland (HES), formerly Historic Scotland.**
- 1.2 Jedburgh town centre has declined since 2008 with reduced footfall, significant retail leakage and increasing vacancy rates. There has also been an increase in the number of buildings in the core of the town centre which have significantly deteriorated and are considered to have critical issues with external fabric and stonework.
- 1.3 Following the model used for other successful heritage based town centre initiatives in Kelso and Selkirk, a heritage focused regeneration proposal has been developed for Jedburgh. The proposal will seek to begin to reverse the decline by conserving and enhancing key properties within the Jedburgh Conservation Area and act as a catalyst for wider regeneration in the town.
- 1.4 The proposal includes a five year programme of works from 2017/18 – 2021/22 with a total project budget of eligible costs of £1,327,000.

#### **2 STATUS OF REPORT**

- 2.1 The funding application has been submitted to Historic Environment Scotland by the required deadline of 31 August 2016. This report seeks formal approval of the submission and match funding from the Council.

### **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **3.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:**

- (a) Approves the proposed bid for a Jedburgh Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme on the basis of match funding contributions from the Council of £150,000 from the Council's Revenue budget and £50,000 from within the Capital Programme; and**
- (b) Formally approves the funding bid to Historic Environment Scotland CARS Programme**

## **4 JEDBURGH CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Jedburgh has seen a marked deterioration in its town centre. Statistics highlight the socio-economic and environmental decline:
- (a) The retail unit vacancy rate for Jedburgh town centre has increased rapidly in the last two years from 9% in 2014 to 14% at the last audit in December 2015. The average vacancy rate for the Scottish Borders is 11%. Jedburgh also has the second highest vacant retail floorspace in the Scottish Borders at 20%.
  - (b) Footfall shows a significant decline year-on-year with a cumulative decline of 28% since 2008.
  - (c) Retail leakage – the more recent data from a 2011 report shows that 56% of convenience and 84% of comparison goods spend is exported to neighbouring towns or via the Internet.
  - (d) Within the historic centre, there are currently 2 'Buildings at Risk' identified on the national Buildings at Risk Register.
  - (e) At least, six prominent buildings in the core of town centre are showing signs of significant deterioration and have been identified as Priority Buildings for external repairs under a CARS Scheme.
- 4.2 Major funding options for town centre / heritage based projects based include Historic Environment Scotland (HES) – Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) - Townscape Initiative (TI). Both funding programmes run for a period of 5 years. A Common Fund approach is used whereby contributions from one or both of these funders are pulled together as a 'pot' of funding. Grants are awarded from this Common Fund to private sector property owners or for heritage education and training activity, appropriate project groups or businesses. For the public realm component, a grant is awarded from the Common Fund to the Council in relation to the uplift in the quality of the materials for the works. The Council provides or underwrites the match funding from the Council's Capital Programme.
- 4.3 Council Officers considered both external funding opportunities during the development of the Proposal for Jedburgh. Following consultation with Council Officers, Local Elected members and an informal Jedburgh Working Group, it has been agreed to progress with a CARS only funding bid. This is primarily due to the size and scale of the current proposal for Jedburgh, which is similar in size to Selkirk, as well as the timescales for the bid process and timing of the implementation phase.
- 4.4 An informal Jedburgh CARS Working Group has been established which includes the Jedburgh Elected Members and representation from local community groups and businesses. The Working Group's remit has been to prepare and agree the proposal for submission to Historic Environment Scotland. If successful with the bid, the Working Group will take a key role in terms of project governance for delivery of the Project; and the Council will be responsible for the administration and management of the Project.

- 4.5 The CARS Programme has a limited budget of £10million with a competitive bidding process. A pre-application for a Jedburgh CARS proposal was presented to Historic Environment Scotland in mid July 2016 and feedback was positive. The grant request amount of around £850-875K from Historic Environment Scotland was considered appropriate.
- 4.6 The Jedburgh CARS Proposal seeks specifically to conserve and enhance the heritage assets within the Jedburgh Conservation area, particularly focusing on the historic conservation area as well as acting as a catalyst for wider regeneration in the town centre. There are five key elements specific to the proposal (based on the eligibility criteria of the CARS funding):
- (a) Addressing key buildings and properties in the town centre particularly around Market Place, Canongate and the High Street through grant support
  - (b) Redevelopment of the Category A Listed Port House building as a community hub and resource centre.
  - (c) Raising awareness and participation of Jedburgh's rich history and heritage with a programme of heritage related education and training initiatives.
  - (d) Upskilling and employment opportunities in traditional construction skills with the provision of school based learning and work based training.
  - (e) Working together to increase the vibrancy and vitality of the town and in particular maximising opportunities in relation to the recently reopened Borders Railway and the proposed Mossburn Distillery.
- 4.7 The proposals will specifically offer:
- (a) Priority Buildings Grant Scheme - to support works to the external fabric of properties to conservation standard. Priority buildings currently identified are: Port House Building, 12 Market Place/ 2 High Street; 5-6 Market Place; 12 High Street; 33 High Street and 21 Canongate.
  - (b) Small Properties Grant Scheme – grant scheme to support works to the external fabric of buildings in the town centre to conservation standard.
  - (c) Small scale town centre public realm works will focus on stonework repairs and improvements to Jedburgh Abbey Ramparts.
  - (d) Based on the successful programme currently being delivered as part of the Selkirk CARS Project, a draft programme of training and education has been developed and extended to include work based training in traditional building and conservation skills.

- 4.8 To support the CARS Proposal and to provide specific evidence to HES of a wider regeneration plan for the town, the Working Group has also developed a draft Regeneration Action Plan for Jedburgh. Key themes, priorities and project opportunities have been identified. The Working Group, along with Jedburgh Alliance, will seek to encourage and develop initiatives within Jedburgh which complement the Jedburgh CARS activity.
- 4.9 A bid has been submitted to Historic Environment Scotland by their deadline of 31 August 2016. This has been on the basis that the submission is subject to formal approval by the Council's Executive Committee. A further report will be brought to the Council's Executive Committee once the outcome of the bid is known, anticipated to be January 2017. If successful with the funding bid, the Project would commence on 1 April 2017.

## 5 IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 Financial

- (a) The proposal includes a five year programme of works from 2017/18 – 2021/22 with a total project budget of £1,327,000.

£866,500 is being sought from Historic Environment Scotland's Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) funding with Scottish Borders Council providing match funding of £150,000 of revenue budget and £50,000 of capital with allocations already provisionally identified as match funding in the Council's Capital Programme.

- (b) **Project Income:**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Historic Environment Scotland CARS:	£866,500	65.3%
Scottish Borders Council (Revenue)	£150,000	11.3%
Scottish Borders Council (Capital)	£50,000	3.8%
Private Sector Contributions:	£255,500	19.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,327,000</b>	

- (c) **SBC Contribution – Revenue**

SBC Economic Development service will contribute a total of £100,000 (average of £20,000 over 5 years) towards the Common Fund element.

SBC Planning & Regulatory Service will contribute £50,000 in total (average of £10,000 over 5 years) for the Proposal. This will come from existing budgets. The latter contribution will be set specifically against programme/ project manager costs. A dedicated project officer will be recruited to deliver the project and costs for this have been included in the overall bid. This is a specific requirement of Historic Environment Scotland CARS funding. It will provide the opportunity to deliver other heritage related requirements of the CARS proposal, for example, producing a Conservation Area Management Plan.

(d) **SBC Contribution – Capital**

A revised Project Business Case has been submitted to the Council's Capital Programme for the Town Centre Regeneration Project to include support for the CARS project a match funding contribution of £50,000 from this project in 2019/20. The Council requires to underwrite the match funding element for the purposes of the bid to Historic Environment Scotland.

5.2 **Risk and Mitigations**

- (a) The Proposal allows the deteriorating exterior fabric of key buildings in Jedburgh town centre to be addressed. Specifically, the Proposal will incorporate tackling the exterior of the Category A listed Port House, which will assist in the next stages of its redevelopment. If the bid is not successful, there will be further deterioration of these properties.
- (b) If the funding bid to Historic Environment Scotland is not successful, the Proposal will be reviewed and consideration given to a scaled down or re-phased option focusing on critical priorities.
- (c) If the funding bid to Historic Environment Scotland is successful then it will be necessary to satisfy the external funder's requirement of programme compliance and evaluation including audit requirements. Internal Audit assurance has been provided for the other heritage based town centre initiatives in Kelso and Selkirk with evidence of lessons having been learned, though this will require to be included in future audit plans.

5.3 **Equalities**

The Proposal seeks to address priority buildings and public realm elements in Jedburgh town centre based on their conservation and historic importance. This report highlights a regeneration development proposal and related funding bid. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out at the appropriate stage of implementation to ensure there are no adverse equality implications.

5.4 **Acting Sustainably**

The Proposal seeks to address the exterior fabric of buildings and properties in Jedburgh town centre. As part of the programme of delivery, the works and proposition for each priority building, as well as applications for funding for properties to grant schemes, will need to consider the long term use and viability (including energy efficiency) of each of the properties.

5.5 **Carbon Management**

There are limited effects on carbon emissions from the design and delivery of this proposal.

## 5.6 Rural Proofing

Rural Proofing is not required as the proposal does not relate to new or amended Council policy or strategy.

## 5.7 Changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required as a result of this report.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council are being consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the report.

### Approved by

**Rob Dickson**

**Corporate Transformation & Services Director**    **Signature .....**

### Author(s)

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**Background Papers:** None

**Previous Minute Reference:** None

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Bryan McGrath can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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