

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	20 th September 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Strategic Infrastructure Plan Progress Update
REPORT NUMBER	CG/16/119
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide members with a progress update on the delivery of Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP), and to seek approval for specific actions for funding release from the City Centre Regeneration budget to progress projects within the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP).

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the committee:

- a) note the content of the report and the progress made;
- b) approve expenditure of up to £100k to procure specialist consultants to prepare a Development Framework for Queens Square as a CCMP project;
- c) approve expenditure of up to £100k to procure specialist consultants to carry out a strategic car parking study including the CCMP identified City Centre Parking Study;
- d) approve expenditure of up to £200k to support a European Structural Fund Employability project that embraces the Aberdeen Works Project in the CCMP;
- e) approve a contribution of £150k towards the cost of the Great Aberdeen Run, planned for September 2017, as a key part of the Aberdeen 365 Events project in the CCMP;
- f) approve expenditure of £60k to implement a CCMP communication and engagement programme to support delivery of the CCMP;
- g) delegates authority to the City Centre Director in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Convener of Finance Policy and Resources and the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services to implement the above proposals and award of contracts, following fully compliant tendering exercises; and
- h) agree that the combined expenditure of £610k above be taken from the City Centre Masterplan budget as agreed at the Council meeting in February 2016.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications in relation to the progress updates provided. All financial implications are managed as part of the Council's capital planning process.

The financial requests in relation to the City Centre Masterplan projects are to be taken from the already approved capital budget for the City Centre Masterplan.

There are no implications for any approved PBB options.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other direct implications arising as a result of this report regarding legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, sustainability and environmental, health and safety and/or policy implications.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

SIP

At its meeting on the 6th March 2013, Council agreed to the preparation of a Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP) and this plan was presented and approved at its meeting on the 31st October 2013.

The importance of the SIP can not be underestimated and is one of the key priorities for the Council. It focuses on the delivery of our Strategic and Local Development Plans and is integral to the development of the enabling infrastructure needed to realise the aspirations of all our plans as well as meeting the objectives in the Single Outcome Agreement.

To achieve this the SIP is centred around five key goals:

1. A step change in the supply of housing
2. Better digital connectivity at home and at work
3. Better local transport
4. The skills and labour that Aberdeen needs to thrive
5. A better image for the city

The SIP contains bold, large scale projects that will help deliver these goals and the appendix to this report provides members with a progress update on the delivery of these projects as well as an update to the supporting infrastructure projects.

City Centre Masterplan

A major programme of work within the SIP has been the development of a

City Centre Masterplan (CCMP), and this was approved by Council in June 2015. Work is progressing well on the delivery of CCMP projects. Since seeking funding approval for CCMP projects at the last FP&R Committee (7th June 2016), the following update can be advised:

- Union Street: launch of Operation Union Street Rejuvenation on 1st September – first phase of street decluttering and clean up
- Union Terrace Gardens: completion of evaluation stage of bids for Detail Design Consultants, and selection of preferred bidder at ‘standstill’ stage, to be confirmed on 9 September 2016
- Golden Square: finalisation of Design Brief
- Schoolhill Pocket Park: finalisation of Design Brief and appointment of Design Consultants

This is in addition to several other CCMP Projects which were previously approved as part of the SIP and are progressing, including Marischal Square, the Art Gallery and Music Hall, and also Broad Street where design has been progressed and is being reported on to Council on 6 October.

This report requests approval of CCMP budget to continue to progress the delivery of CCMP projects, as below. All projects help meet elements of the stated SIP Goals (above).

Queens Square

A Development Framework is to be prepared to take forward the vision for a new mixed use quarter in the City Centre, incorporating land and property – much in public ownership - around the Queen Street area, as a key part of transformation of the city centre, as set out in the CCMP. New development opportunities exist for a residential led scheme, taking account of the opportunity for consolidating public services provision, and accommodating existing and potential future arts and cultural uses. Preparation of a Framework will need Consultant input, estimated at up to £100,000. This is one of the few CCMP projects that enables new development to be undertaken in the City Centre, in creating a vibrant new urban quarter.

City Centre Car Parking Study

This is a key strategic project identified in the CCMP taking account of recent initiatives such as the upcoming transformative change in the city centre through implementation of CCMP projects, a refresh of the Local Transport Strategy and the continued progress on the AWPR – all of which will have significant impact on travel into, and around, the City, and associated parking needs – in the city centre in particular. The study will enable a review of current parking assets, both City Council and privately owned, on street and off street. Parking will be assessed from a quantity, locational and qualitative point of view, with associated impacts for policy, permitting, revenue and ACC land asset considerations. A Consultants study will be needed, expected to need up to £100k of ACC funding, though external sources (eg Nestrans, the Civitas Portis EU funded Transportation initiative) may be able to add to, or reduce, ACC budget spend.

Aberdeen Works

Aberdeen City Council has been awarded funding from the European Structural Fund to deliver a £2.2 million employability pipeline project across the city. This initiative will focus on increasing skills and employability prospects for disengaged individuals across the city, positively enhancing lifestyle and disposable income of these individuals, also working towards increasing the available skill pool to support recruitment in proposed future city centre retail, hospitality and support services. This project will also attract significant funding support from external partners and was supported and approved at CHI Committee 25th August 2016. The project helps meet the key aim for the Aberdeen Works project in the CCMP of linking local people to the economic opportunities identified in the city centre masterplan.

Support is sought to provide a contingency fund of £200k from the CCMP budget to underwrite approved project expenditure that may not attract external match funding, such as childcare, travel expenses and neighbourhood audits. It is anticipated that these costs should be fully covered by the additional funding received to cover direct project management costs.

Aberdeen 365

The Aberdeen 365 CCMP Project is aimed at producing an enhanced events programme for the city centre to increase all year round activity and repositioning Aberdeen as a contemporary and 'happening' city centre. A report to FP&R is being finalised, making recommendations for how to achieve this transformation.

One key element of the proposed strategy is to host the Great Aberdeen Run (Half Marathon) – proposed to be held in Aberdeen in September 2017. This will be one of the 'headline' events for the city centre, and will need ACC financial support of £150k from the CCMP Budget as part of the Aberdeen 365 Project.

CCMP Communications

A communications and stakeholder engagement strategy has been formulated to support and promote the ongoing delivery of CCMP projects. This includes activities such as, for example, a building 'wrap', promoting the adopted strapline of 'Transforming Our City Centre' for the Music Hall, a promotional video to draw awareness of key attractions and benefits of the City Centre from the perspective of schoolchildren and other such engagement and promotional activities. It is envisaged that such initial activity will need a £60,000 budget at this stage.

6. IMPACT

The Strategic Infrastructure Plan relates to the following Single Outcome Agreement objectives:

- We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe;
- We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people;
- We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need;
- We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations;
- We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity; and
- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

It also meets the vision of the Community Plan in promoting a strong image of the city and a sense of civic pride and promotes the redevelopment of the City Centre, which is one of the main priorities for the Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement and supports the Council's 5 year Business Plan in terms of protecting and enhancing the built environment, attracting visitors, workers and investment to protect the economic future of the city, and, to facilitate new development projects to improve Aberdeen's living and working environment.

Given the nature of the Strategic Infrastructure Plan this may be of interest to the public.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

N/A

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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