

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July 2016</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>City Centre Investment Fund Allocations and Update</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Regeneration &amp; Economy</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>Westgate</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Anthony Hodge, Head of Regeneration &amp; Economic Development</b>		
	<b>Email: anthony.hodge@gloucester.gov.uk</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>396034</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>None</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report updates Members on the projects within the City Centre Investment Fund (CCIF) delivery programme. It also seeks to reallocate funds to maximise the benefits of the CCIF to the city and to reflect the Administration's manifesto commitments.

### 2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE:**

(1) That the following new projects be allocated resources:

- a) Opening of Kings Walk Bastion, £20,000
- b) Contribution towards developing the capital components of the cultural strategy, £30,000
- c) £20,000 be allocated for commissioning economic profiling of the city centre to support the delivery of the Business Improvement District and Kings Quarter.

(2) That the following projects receive additional allocations:

- a) £50,000 be allocated for business support and authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration & Economic Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy, to develop a policy that enables the Council to secure a financial return where appropriate
- b) £30,000 be allocated for the delivery of a city centre public realm masterplan

- c) Targeted Historic Grants scheme £40,000 to include £3,000 towards the refurbishment of building plaques

## 2.2 Cabinet is asked to **NOTE:**

- (1) The final cost of the ANPR will be met through the contingency sum
- (2) The success of the relocated Gloucester Antiques Centre at 26 Westgate Street has meant that this important heritage building is now occupied and a review of the format and location of the Tourist Information Centre will take place following the completion of the Visitor Information Strategy.

## 3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Much has been achieved utilising the receipt (£2m) from the Tesco disposal at St. Oswalds. However following the original allocation some years ago, now is an appropriate moment to reflect on the success of the use of this resource to date, and how the residual expenditure can most effectively be utilised to deliver the best outcomes for our ever changing and growing city in light of current circumstances and the manifesto commitments of the Administration.

## 4.0 Allocations

- 4.1 The CCIF was allocated to a number of projects and much has been achieved, as detailed in the report below. However there remains a balance that has not been spent due to complexities around project delivery and changes to the city following the original allocations. This report considers that balance and how it should be used to deliver sustainable benefits. At present the CCIF balance is as follows:

City Centre Investment Fund	£
Budget	2,000,000
Amount Spent To Date	774,100
Outstanding Balance	1,225,900

- 4.2 Cabinet has received detailed reports previously considering progress and the success of a number of the projects, for example, the repaired Westgate Street mosaics, stone cleaning and stabilisation of St Michael's Tower and improvements to the car parks. This report proposes to Members amendments to the CCIF in light of significant changes to Gloucester and its ongoing regeneration and development activity.
- 4.3 In the first instance the main city centre car parks have undergone major improvements and this continues, not least with the Eastgate Centre Car Park. There have been challenges including the application of a rubber based paint that has not been as successful as it should have been at Longsmith Street car park. However this has been monitored by Officers and the paint is going to be replaced at no further cost to the Council.
- 4.4 Following Cabinet on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development successfully procured a supplier for the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system, following a competitive process. A decision was

taken to focus the delivery of ANPR on the Eastgate and Kings Walk car parks. Longsmith Street was discounted on the basis that the long term replacement of this car park had to be a priority and incurring expenditure was not deemed a good use of resources. The lowest tender received was £30,000 above the amount initially allocated. This cost will be met through the use of the CCIF contingency sum.

- 4.5 There is an additional annual maintenance cost of £11,000 per annum for the ANPR system. There will be no impact on the Council's revenue budget as this is expected to be met by increased income through improved functionality and increased use.
- 4.6 The anticipated date for the ANPR going live is mid-August.
- 4.7 Because of the age of the building and complexity of the structure, in particular the roof, progress on delivering improvements at the City Museum has been less rapid than expected. However this was as a result of the need to, in the first instance, commission a roof condition survey, prior to any detailed works being undertaken. Bearing in mind the roof forms part of a shared structure with the building's other occupant, the library and hence the County Council, a joint approach was taken to assess its condition. This was deemed to be the most efficient approach. Now that the condition of the roof is determined, a remediation package is being designed together with internal works.
- 4.8 The Gloucester Antiques Centre has now been successfully relocated to 26 Westgate, with the assistance of Marketing Gloucester, after facing an uncertain future. This has had a major positive impact not only on securing the future of the Centre, but also making 26 Westgate accessible to the public, not least viewing it from Maverdine Lane. The outcome is that there is no longer the requirement for the Tourist Information Centre (TIC), to move to this location, although we are not ruling out a smaller presence within the Antiques Centre. A tenant has been found for this important heritage building without the Council needing to take it on itself. As a consequence the Council can consider how to shape the Tourist Information service that best serves visitors and has regeneration benefits. This it is already doing through the preparation of a visitor information strategy. Until this is completed, this allocation should remain secure within the CCIF.
- 4.9 The City Centre Targeted Historic Grant Scheme was launched in July 2013, a total of twenty grants have been formally offered and accepted totaling £102,728.60 of which £72,818.10 has been paid out for completed work. The most recent approvals of grant are:
- 59-61 Westgate St
  - 82 Westgate Street
  - 58 Westgate Street
  - 78 Westgate Street
- 4.10 Officers have recently approved a number of grant applications including 82 Westgate Street for minor repairs and repainting of the façade which is welcomed. An offer has been made to 59-61 Westgate Street, a Grade II\* designated asset, for redecoration and repair works. An offer has also been made to 58 Westgate Street and was accepted with works completed. This included new windows being inserted within the basement to facilitate its use as an office and community space.

Officers have also recently approved applications for 88-90 Westgate Street redecoration works and 16 Commercial Road.

- 4.11 A priority project has been subject to an offer of £20k for 78 Westgate Street, the building is on the city's Building at Risk Register and a comprehensive scheme for the property is welcomed and work will be commencing over the forthcoming months to restore this Grade II asset.
- 4.12 Members are aware that officers have prioritised building projects for targeted grants and these are buildings which are on the City Council's Buildings at Risk Register (B@R) and also those which are vacant on both ground and upper floors to help rejuvenate the gate streets of Gloucester. The following properties have been allocated funds totalling £77k and an update on their status is as follows:
- 26 Westgate Street – Funded condition survey and structural surveys, this has now been completed and the surveys identified a number of repairs required. The money has been allocated to fund urgent repairs and this is subject to further discussions with the owner, to work alongside the new occupants, the Antiques Centre.
  - 39 Westgate Street – Awaiting final condition survey report, the building is in need of substantial repair.
  - 41 Westgate Street - Following the granting of planning & listed building consent for a new shop front and the conversion of the upper floors on 41 Westgate Street the Conservation Projects Officer has been working with the owner and contractor regarding further opening works and development of a scheme for the building due to its poor condition and it is anticipated that a grant application on this priority project (buildings at risk) will be submitted shortly.
- 4.13 Should any of the above schemes not come forward then the grant monies allocated will be offered to alternative historic building improvement schemes in the city centre area. Officers are still pushing for the priority projects to come forward and have been working with owners and developers to ensure that they take advantage of this unique opportunity. This allocation has been successful and an additional £40,000 is proposed to be allocated to it, to enable further projects to be delivered. This will include £3,000 towards the cost of refurbishing and conserving plaques on historic buildings.
- 4.14 A thriving economy is a key component of this Administration's manifesto. The business grant component of the CCIF is now fully spent. Below details a number of responses from businesses who have benefited from the grant support:

*“By enabling us to afford efficient equipment and employ more staff we have been able to expand successfully.”*

*“The grant helped us with an internal restructure which helped create departments within the business to allow the company to grow further. In doing this it was created three additional job roles, 2 full time and 1 part time.”*

- 4.15 Within the context of the success of this component of the CCIF, and the objectives of supporting and enabling business growth and employment creation, it is proposed that an additional £50,000 of the CCIF, funded through underspends, be allocated to business development. However, to provide a future source of revenue, this should be based on an equity stake rather than a grant. As a consequence Officers will be tasked to develop a compliant programme for this additional money that is free from bureaucracy, but allows the Council to take an equity stake in businesses to help promote ongoing support and growth.
- 4.16 As illustrated by the photograph below, lighting of a number of the city's buildings has been very successful.



- 4.17 £75,000 was allocated for improved street lighting in the gate streets. Various options were looked at, including column-based lighting, but it was felt that additional clutter in the gate streets would not be desirable. The suggested approach of renewing the existing building-mounted floodlights with new energy-efficient LED lighting will provide a better quality of lighting as well as reducing electricity costs. This allocation will be reduced to £30,000 and will leave an unspent balance on this budget line which can be reallocated to other priorities.
- 4.18 In addition to this, £10,000 contribution will be retained for the lighting of St. Michael's Tower, at The Cross. This lighting project is being developed by Gloucester Civic Trust with support and involvement from Historic England.
- 4.19 There has been much discussion previously concerning the unattractive facades proposals. As has been well-documented, it has been challenging to find a solution which delivers the change we are looking for and represents good value for council taxpayers. In addition, the transfer of the ownership of both shopping centres in the last two years and the need to work with the new owners on their investment intentions for the new centres has complicated matters further. In particular Kings Walk needs the agreement of the owners for the removal of the canopy structure on Eastgate Street, which has been costed and determined as an expensive component of the scheme. There are also complexities of legal agreements which only came to light as with any project, as the detail is progressed. It is felt that

£100,000 of the proposed budget can be reallocated to other priorities in view of the low cost solutions now being pursued.

- 4.20 It is also worth noting that an interim low cost solution was undertaken for the Kings Walk façade, through cleaning and repainting. This was well received. Once the sale of the shopping centre has completed, discussions can be held with the new owners on the approach for this façade. In addition, street art has been added to the vertical rendered panels at Longsmith Street car park. Concrete repairs and further repainting is also proposed, along with the replacement of out of date vinyls and signage.
- 4.21 Work on the public realm within the city has been continuing. Included within this activity was the renewal and refurbishment of city centre bins, extensive painting and a contribution towards the Hollie Gazzard bench. Detailed work has also been funded to consider further improvement to the public realm including:
- i) A street furniture database recording characteristics of the furniture between the Docks and Westgate Street, to inform the development of the Public Realm Strategy
  - ii) The boundary of the street furniture survey work has been established and the plan drawn up using a GIS map base, set within the boundary of the Primary Shopping Area.
  - iii) Surveys of existing street furniture have been undertaken.
- 4.22 This detailed information will together with a draft strategy be used to inform the development a of public realm scheme for the city centre. £30,000 will be allocated to this proposal to enable the Head of Regeneration & Economic Development, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy to procure and deliver an indicative scheme which will be subject to public consultation. This agreed scheme will then be the focus to enable the capital sums to be raised to deliver the project going forward.
- 4.23 Delivery of economic growth is central to this Administrations manifesto. To help deliver this a sound knowledge base of the city centre economy is required, based on evidence. To deliver this £20,000 is proposed to commission a detailed assessment of the city centre to ensure our key projects, not least Kings Quarter, are progressed in a direction that the market and private sector can support and our inward investment activities can be properly focused e.g. right tenant mix.
- 4.24 In relation to signage, the two interpretation boards for “The Spa” and “Kimbrose Triangle” have been completed and have been delivered to the City Council Offices. A contractor has been appointed to install the new boards which are due to be completed by the end of July.
- 4.25 A replacement for the Eastgate Chamber interpretation board has now been delivered and is in situ. This was implemented with the valuable assistance of the Civic Trust.
- 4.26 Marketing Gloucester are leading on the installation of further signage boards/finger posts being installed across the City similar to those for the public realm

improvements to the docks and Kimbrose Triangle. This will include reference to City tourist attractions including both City Council museums and the Guildhall.

- 4.27 Planning permission has now been granted for seven digital signs to replace existing signage with the possibility of an additional six being put in place in partnership with Docks management and Canal and River Trust. New vinyl skins were fitted to signs throughout the city on the large signs and currently options are being examined for the remaining slim wayfinding between Kimbrose and the Docks, some of which may be replaced by the digital signs. The CCIF will make a contribution of £20,000 towards this project. However much work still needs to be done to ensure the effective implementation of the digital signage. By their very nature they are complex and power sources will be required to ensure their functionality.
- 4.28 Work is progressing on the public toilets, detailed investigations have been undertaken in relation to the location and accessibility of services to connect toilets to in Kings Square. The next meeting of the Kings Square Steering Group will be asked to agree the location.
- 4.29 To really make the most of the city's heritage, CCIF is proposed to be used, through this re prioritisation, on the opening up of the Kings Walk Bastion, at a cost of £20,000. Creating access will enable tours to be made around the Bastion and to help it to contribute more directly not only to our visitor economy, but also encouraging people to visit the city centre. Combined with other improvements both existing and proposed, this will make the draw of the city centre ever more powerful.
- 4.30 These proposed revisions will leave a sum, £63,000, to be reallocated. It is proposed that £30,000 be used to support the development of the capital components of the Cultural Strategy, with the balance being held as contingency.

## 5.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 5.1 The alternatives for the allocation of the remaining money in this fund were assessed in Section 5 of the September 2013 Cabinet report. These included:

Scheme	Likely Impact	Priority Rating	Cost in £000's
Tourist transfer buggies to the Cathedral	Raised by an individual and not followed up by the Friends of the Cathedral. Slight impact on the economy but no impact on appearance.	Low	tbc
South-west Corner of the Park	Clearance and re-vamp work, should now be achieved through the Planning Obligations on the nursing home scheme planned for the corner of Southgate and Trier Way.	Low	tbc
Street-side paved area at Fountain Square, Westgate	Near Folk Museum but peripheral to the centre. The cost is an estimate for a basic scheme rather than a significant improvement.	Low	25
Kings Bastion/Eastgate	Opportunity to showcase Roman Gloucester and add to the	Medium	100

Chamber Improvements	attractiveness of the tourist offer. Timing for submission to HLF programme suggests this should not be a top priority at the moment.		
Street lighting improvement in Westgate and Eastgate.	Scheme from the Lighting Strategy that would change the ambience of the Gate Streets and benefit the evening economy. Supported by the EE Task and Finish Group.	High	75
Improvements to Southgate Street public realm from Kimbrose to Spa Road.	Some benefit to lower Southgate businesses but low impact on attractiveness of main shopping /tourist area.	Low	tbc
Contribution to new footbridge over the Barge Arm in the Docks.	Improved linkages creating a circuit to benefit Barge Arm and Merchants Quay business potential and the Waterways Museum, but overall impact is limited.	Low	tbc
Pop-up toilets for evening use	Would benefit the evening economy in particular if this curbed anti-social behaviour.	Medium	tbc
Introduce Flag Holders on all gate street buildings	Copies Tewkesbury. Would introduce colour and movement or add clutter depending on viewpoint. Listed Building and conservation issues. Would need good coordination and good maintenance from businesses.	Medium	tbc

## 6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 The recommendations for further allocations have been based on the objectives of the City Centre Investment Fund which is to improve the attractiveness of the City Centre.

## 7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

7.1 A considerable amount of further specific work will be required. A six monthly update report will be brought back to Cabinet so that progress and potential re-allocations can be considered.

## 8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The report proposes the spending of an element of a capital receipt received as a result of the sale of a piece of land to Tesco.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## 9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 The business support proposal set out in this report which aims to be based on an equity stake rather than a grant will need to be carefully considered to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.



(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## **10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

10.1 The recommendations offer an opportunity to improve the appearance and attractiveness of the City Centre.

## **11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):**

11.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

## **12.0 Other Corporate Implications:**

### 12.1 Community Safety

There are no community safety implications.

### 12.2 Sustainability

Use of LED lighting is more efficient than standard street lights will reduce energy consumption.

### 12.3 Staffing & Trade Union

There are no staffing implications.

**Background Documents:** None