

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	8th March 2017
Subject:	City Centre Investment Fund Allocations and Update		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy		
Wards Affected:	Westgate		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	1. Multi-head light system installed at Kimbrose Triangle		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the City Centre Investment Fund (CCIF) delivery programme and seeks approval to allocate additional funding to existing and new projects.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that progress with delivery of the City Centre Investment Fund be noted

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Following receipt of funding from the disposal of land at St. Oswalds Retail Park, Cabinet allocated resources to a City Centre Investment Fund in October 2012; to support projects that would help increase the attractiveness, vitality and viability of the City Centre.
- 3.2 Gloucester has shown strong resilience in a difficult economic climate. The successful completion of a number of major regeneration projects, and a clear strategy and project delivery plan (Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021), demonstrate the City Council's success in driving forward projects both directly and in partnerships, and its ability to attract further investment.

3.3 This report provides an update on progress with delivery of projects through the Fund, and proposals for additional allocation of funding to meet the Council's priorities and maximise the economic impact of the Fund.

4.0 Allocations

4.0.1 We are making excellent progress in delivering the City Centre Investment Fund with major success for example the historic grant scheme and the reopening of the Kings Walk Bastion.

4.0.2 To date, £987,363.38 has been spent under the Fund which (with commitments) will increase to £1,277,416.32 by March 2017. The balance remaining will be spent through projects currently being delivered (such as the Business Growth Grants, City Museum Phase 2, and Quality Public Toilet Provision) or to be delivered shortly (Cultural Strategy Capital Components).

4.1 Better Car Parks

4.1.1 An Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system was implemented in October 2016, on both Eastgate car park and Kings Walk car park.

4.1.2 The ANPR system on Eastgate car park has had an immediate positive effect:

- Refurbishment works have made the car park more welcoming
- New technology provides higher perceived service value to customers
- Providing a user friendly experience that makes payment easier to manage and encourages longer stays on the High Street

Together with on foot access into the Eastgate Shopping Centre, this has raised the profile of the car park as an attractive parking offer for the City.

4.1.3 Cabinet will be aware that a number of operational issues remain at Kings Walk car park, despite the introduction of ANPR, including anti-social behaviour and rough sleeping. These issues are being managed through a multi-agency response, but this has limited the beneficial impact of the system and has put pressure on staff resources. Officers are working to resolve these problems, as well as issues arising with the entry and exit barriers, which have resulted in vandalism and loss of income.

4.1.4 Continuing work to improve the reliability of the ANPR system will help maximise income from all users.

4.2 City Museum Phase 2

4.2.1 An application for Listed Building Consent (16/01511/LBC) was submitted in November 2016 for retiling the Museum roof. Consent was granted on Wednesday 1st February, subject to conditions. These conditions will need to be discharged before works can commence.

- 4.2.2 Works are scheduled to commence from late February 2017, with an anticipated completion date of October 2017.
- 4.2.3 Stone repairs, glass repairs, and cleaning, will all also be delivered within this time period. The Council will also change the boilers.
- 4.2.4 Central Roofing & Building Services Ltd has been appointed to deliver the improvements following a competitive process.

4.3 Business Growth Grants

- 4.3.1 Following the allocation of £50,000 from the CCIF to fund business development, Cabinet approved a new Business Growth Grant Scheme on the 11th January 2017, replacing the existing Business Grant Scheme.
- 4.3.2 The new scheme supports business start-up and growth proposals that will create sustainable jobs, and is available City-wide for both start-up businesses and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (employing fewer than 250 employees). The scheme will fund one-off capital expenditure (premises and equipment), with up to 50% funding for businesses in the Primary Retail Area, and up to 30% funding for those outside.
- 4.3.3 Most grants will be in the region of £1,000 to £5,000, but can be up to a maximum of £10,000 in exceptional cases. To secure a return on funding that can be 'recycled' into further grant support, the grant will be repayable once the grant funded business has achieved a turnover on £1m per annum in any single year.

4.4 City Centre Targeted Historic Grant Scheme

- 4.4.1 The City Centre Targeted Historic Grant Scheme was launched in July 2013 and allocated £200,000. In July 2016, an additional £40,000 was assigned. A total of twenty three grants have been formally offered and accepted totalling £111,705.60, of which £84,341.10 has been paid for completed work.
- 4.4.2 Most recent approvals of grant were for:
- *88-90 Westgate Street* (permission granted for hot food takeaway use)
 - *16 Commercial Road* (Glos Bike Project)
- 4.4.3 Works which have been recently completed are as follows:
- *59-61 Westgate Street*: a Grade II* designated asset, for redecoration and repair to the windows and façade.
 - *97 Westgate Street*: a new shopfront has been installed, which includes separate access to create a self-contained residential unit on the upper floors.

- *58 Westgate Street:* includes new windows being inserted within the basement, to facilitate its use as an office and community space.
- *82 Westgate Street:* repainting of frontage.



97 Westgate Street, February 2017.

- 4.4.4 Members will also be aware that £20,000 has been offered for works at *78 Westgate Street*. The building is on the city's Building at Risk Register. Works are underway and a new shop front has been installed, together with internal works to facilitate a commercial unit on the ground floor and residential above. This is due to be completed in March 2017 and should result in the property being removed from the Council Buildings at Risk register.
- 4.4.5 The conservation team have also prioritised a number of building projects for targeted grants for buildings on the City Council's Buildings at Risk Register, and those which are vacant on both ground and upper floors. The successful completion of these projects will contribute to the continued rejuvenation of the four gate streets of Gloucester.
- 4.4.6 The following properties have been allocated funds totalling £77,000:
- *26 Westgate Street:* funds were used to commission a condition survey and structural surveys. These have been completed and the surveys

identified a number of essential repairs. The money has been allocated to fund these, subject to further discussions with the owner to work alongside the new occupants, the Antiques Centre.

- *39 Westgate Street:* a condition survey report has been received, and the building is in need of substantial repairs. This would present an opportunity for further match funding to restore the building. No decision has been made on this as of February 2017.
- *41 Westgate Street:* following the granting of planning & listed building consent for a new shop front, and the conversion of the upper floors to a one bedroom apartment, there have been discussions with the owner to move the scheme forward, although no definite conclusion has been reached.

4.4.7 As previously advised, should any of the above schemes not come forward; allocated monies will be offered to alternative historic building improvement schemes in the city centre area. Officers are still pushing for identified priority projects to come forward, and have been working with owners and developers to ensure that they take advantage of this unique opportunity.

4.5 Street Lighting

4.5.1 Progress has been made to ensure high quality lighting schemes are delivered within the City Centre to provide a better quality of lighting at a reasonable cost. At the June 2016 Cabinet meeting, a revised £30,000 was allocated to build on the progress already made.

4.5.2 The Guildhall re-lighting scheme aims to replace most of the existing Compact Metal Halide type lights with LED versions, which will have a similar effect but will last far longer and be more cost effective to run and maintain. It is anticipated this will cost around £15,000 (depending on a revised quote and final specification).

4.5.3 Re-lighting of two significant junctions within the Gate Street has been identified as a key priority for the CCIF. At the Cross it is proposed to remove four of the existing building-mounted Highway floodlights and be replaced by two light columns with multi-head systems. These would provide both public realm and architectural lighting features, and once completed will enhance the overall lighting in this space.

4.5.4 The second priority is the Westgate Street and College Street junction, adjacent to the Cathedral Precincts. Proposed lighting would match that in place at Kimbrose Triangle (just off Southgate Street). The County Highways Lighting Manager has been engaged and is fully supportive. Appendix 1 shows the multi-head light system installed at Kimbrose Triangle, proposed for the two junctions.

4.5.5 This programme of works will be within the budget allocation, and the previously ring-fenced unspent balance will be re-allocated to other projects.

4.6 Quality Public Toilet Provision

4.6.1 £100,000 was been committed to provide high quality public toilets in the City. Officers are considering a number of locations based on emerging new schemes, including the Bus Station (as an out of hours facility), and within the improvements to Kings Square.

4.7 Public Realm Strategy

4.7.1 As part of the continued works on public realm renewal within the City, a further £30,000 was allocated for the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development (in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy) to procure and deliver an indicative public realm scheme for the Gloucester Four Gates Streets.

4.7.2 The contract for these consultant services looks to *“appoint a multi-disciplinary consultant team, with a proven track record in public realm design and delivery, to prepare a plan for the development and implementation of a distinctive, high quality public realm scheme, creating a strong sense of place throughout the Four Gates streets in Gloucester.”*

4.7.3 The contract will be delivered in three phases:

- Pre-consultation, consisting of a light touch analysis of the existing public realm provision across the Four Gates streets
- A public consultation phase, to gauge public interest and consult on initial suggestions
- A post-consultation design with budget estimates

4.7.4 The consultancy is expected to commence late February and to last for approximately six months (anticipated to conclude August 2017).

4.8 Kings Walk Bastion

4.8.1 An allocation of £20,000 has been used to fund the re-opening of the Kings Walk Bastion, to exploit the site’s heritage as a cultural highlight for visitors, increase visitor numbers for Gloucester as a whole and draw increased footfall to the City Centre.

4.8.2 Works undertaken as part of the allocated £20,000 include:

- The installation of a new pump and back-up pump to keep the chamber dry
- The installation of a new sump cover
- The installation of a new lighting scheme

- Repairs to the chamber cover/hatch;
- Mould cleaning analysis
- General cleaning and removal of obsolete equipment/structures.

4.8.5 Given the scale of the project, works were generally undertaken at night to avoid impacting on the running of the shopping centre.

4.8.6 Following this officers have, in partnership with the Civic Trust, opened the chamber to visitors for three days over the course of the history festival.



The photograph above gives an indication of the level of public interest.

4.8.7 The Council is now working with the Civic Trust and the Kings Walk shopping centre to arrange regular openings. Initially, the plan is to arrange 'rota' tours, which happen at a set time each month with booked tours for organised groups. Overall, the project has been very well received.

4.9 Economic Profiling

4.9.1 £20,000 from the Fund has been allocated to undertake an economic assessment of the City Centre. This will consider the current economic profile of the City Centre and provide a gap analysis to consider economic trends, existing and potential occupiers, and other uses that could be exploited to support our regeneration schemes.

4.9.2 This brief is currently out to tender and work is expected to start in March 2017.

4.10 Cultural Strategy: Capital Components

4.10.1 The City Council formed the Gloucester Cultural Board in 2016, with an aim to improve Gloucester's cultural offer by engaging and empowering local communities and leaders to transform the city. £30,000 was set aside at Cabinet on July 2016 to support the development of capital components of the Council's Cultural Strategy (2016-2026).

4.10.2 The Music Works, a Gloucestershire based charity, work with young people to engage them through music, build confidence, self-belief and motivation, and empower them to improve their life chances. This successful project is looking for premises in Gloucester City Centre to operate from.

4.10.3 £12,500 grant funding has been requested towards the capital cost of expanding into Gloucester. This grant will be matched with funds from the County Council's Music Education Hub, funding the full capital costs of the scheme.

4.10.4 Music Works intend to create a dedicated, inclusive community music hub, aimed at children and young people, providing:

- Tuition and performance opportunities, with rehearsal space and studio
- Adapted equipment to promote an inclusiveness of disabilities
- A unique offering of high quality equipment, expertise and progression opportunities

4.10.5 Grant funding will enable development of aspiring local artists within the community, and support to a number of young people, giving them the opportunity to develop and nurture their musical talents in a space not yet offered within the City Centre fabric.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

5.1 Options considered included reallocating the budget; however, this approach may not deliver the improvements identified as part of the on-going regeneration of the City Centre.

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 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Implications

8.1 A number of community based organisations are involved in the delivery of CCIF funded activities.

9.0 Financial Implications

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

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

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 There are no additional legal implications as a result of this report.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

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

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

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

13.0 Other Corporate Implications:

13.1 Community Safety

There are no direct community safety implications.

13.2 Sustainability

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

13.3 Staffing & Trade Union

There are no direct staffing implications.

Background Documents: None

Appendix 1: Multi-head light system installed at Kimbrose Triangle (4.5.4)

