

To: AIRDRIE LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP	Subject: AIRDRIE TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN	
From: HEAD OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 16 January 2013	Ref: DPT/01/01/KG	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to update the Partnership and Committee on the progress made on the Airdrie Town Centre Action Plan projects and initiatives.

2. Airdrie Town Centre Framework and Action Plan

- 2.1 The Airdrie Town Centre Action plan was approved by North Lanarkshire Council's Economic Regeneration Committee in March 2005 as a multi-agency and wide ranging approach for the regeneration process in Airdrie Town Centre. This report is the latest in a series of updates provided at each cycle of the Area Partnership on the individual projects contained within the Airdrie Town Centre Action Plan which are under development or have been recently completed. The report also provides an update on the anticipated programme for the new Airdrie town centre framework and action plan.
- 2.2 The Council is currently progressing survey and consultation work associated with the first phase of the town centre frameworks. Airdrie town centre will be within the second phase to be progressed, and it is planned to commence survey and consultation work on the Airdrie town centre framework in early 2013. This will involve the undertaking of surveys with town centre businesses and traders and customer perception surveys with town centre users and the people of Airdrie. These customer perception surveys will be undertaken using survey machines located in key buildings and facilities in the town centre, and online on the Council's website. Workshops and drop-in sessions will also be arranged with Council Services, Local Members, partners, town centre stakeholders, trader representatives, community and local interest groups. It is anticipated that the survey work for Airdrie town centre will commence in February 2013, with first phase workshop events then held in April 2013. It is aimed to have the updated Airdrie town centre framework and action plan completed by early autumn 2013.
- 2.3 The Council will determine its capital Plan for the period 2013/14 to 2017/18 in early 2013 and the partnership will be advised of any budget allocation for the town centre at a future meeting. The Partnership are reminded that there is no allocated budget for works in Airdrie town centre within the town centres capital budget for the current financial year.

3. Project Updates

Airdrie Town Centre - streetscape works

- 3.1 The works to Graham Street roadway have now been completed. This has involved resurfacing of the granite sett road surface with hot rolled asphalt, repair of crossing points, re-laying of the granite sett parking bays and new yellow lining to reinforce parking restrictions outwith the parking bays. These works have been implemented through existing contractual arrangements of the Council's Roads and Transportation Service.

Sir John Wilson Town Hall

3.2 At the last Local Area Partnership, approval was received for the allocation of funding from the Local Development Programme in 2013/14 towards architectural lighting works at Sir John Wilson Town Hall. The lighting works require Listed Building Consent and a Listed Building Consent application will be submitted early in the New Year to allow the works to proceed expediently at the start of the new financial year. As yet, funding for public realm improvements to the front of the town hall and adjacent John Smith Pool has not been secured, although this forms part of the capital bid for town centres that has been submitted for the next five year capital budget.

4. Town Centre Activities

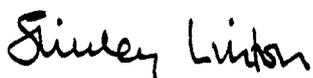
- 4.1 Buchanan Street and Graham Street are now open to traffic after the resurfacing.
- 4.2 Of the four new units recently available next to Aldi on the High Street, Greggs and Dominos Pizza are open for business. This has added two new units to Airdrie town centre giving a business (retail & offices) unit vacancy figure of 7% (of 301 units). The first of the new retail units on the ground floor at Airdrie Community Health Centre is due to be occupied by December.
- 4.3 Airdrie Christmas Lights Switch-on took place on Thursday 22nd November, with support from the staff of Airdrie Community Health Centre, Boots and Pic n mix.

5. Business Improvement Districts

- 5.1 The Council is currently looking into the potential for establishing Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) in North Lanarkshire's town centres. A BID is a defined area within which a levy is generated from all non domestic ratepayers and used to provide services additional to local authority baseline services. A BID is also conditional on strong support from the private sector via a formal ballot and must have the support of the local authority to succeed.
- 5.2 The growth of BIDs in Scotland has been steady since 2008 with 17 now established and a further 16 in development, covering 20 local authority areas. At its meeting of 22 November 2012 the Policy and Resources (Regeneration & Infrastructure) Sub Committee approved further work on BIDs (Business Improvement Districts). The work will involve engaging with town centre businesses to raise awareness of BIDs and assessing whether any of the town centres would like to work toward developing a pilot BID for North Lanarkshire. The work is scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2013.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Local Area Partnership note progress made on the projects and initiatives contained within the Airdrie Town Centre Action Plan.



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HEAD OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Kirsty Gray on 01236 632629 (30 November 2012)