

REPORT

To: NORTHERN LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP	Subject: CUMBERNAULD & KILSYTH TOWN CENTRES REPORT	
From: HEAD OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 17 January 2013	Ref: PL/DIT/12/KG	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to update the Partnership and Committee on the progress made in delivering the regeneration of Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Town Centres.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Cumbernauld Town Centre Action plan was approved by North Lanarkshire Council's Economic Regeneration Committee in 2006 as a multi-agency and wide ranging approach for the regeneration process in Cumbernauld Town Centre. The Kelvin Valley Action Plan, produced in 2003, sets out the priorities for the regeneration of Kilsyth 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 Cumbernauld Town Centre Action Plan and in Kilsyth town centre which are under development or have been recently completed. The report also provides an update on the new Cumbernauld and Kilsyth town centre frameworks and action plans.
- 2.2 The Council is currently progressing survey and initial consultation work associated with the developing the Cumbernauld Town Centre Framework. Business and customer perception surveys have been running throughout September, October and into early November. These are available on the Cumbernauld town centre page of the North Lanarkshire Council website (www.northlan.gov.uk/cumbernauld). A standpoint survey machine was also located in facilities throughout the town centre over a two month period, with paper surveys issued to every business in the town centre. In addition to the surveys, two consultation workshops were held in early November for council service representatives, public sector partners, shopping centre owners, community groups and local businesses. The feedback received from these workshops has been collated along with the survey results and the results are available on-line. The views will inform the development of a draft framework and action plan for Cumbernauld Town Centre. It is intended to hold a further drop-in session within the shopping centres in January 2013 for the general public, and to hold further consultation workshops on the draft framework and action plan in February 2013.
- 2.3 Kilsyth Town Centre will be within the second phase. It is planned to commence survey and consultation work on the Kilsyth town centre framework in Spring 2013. This will follow the same process as is being undertaken for the Cumbernauld town centre framework. Details of survey periods, survey locations and workshop events will be advertised nearer the time, and updates provided at future cycles of the Local Area Partnership.
- 2.4 A capital bid for Town Centres has been submitted for the five year period from 2013/14 – 2017/18 to secure funding for delivery of future capital projects and initiatives in each town centre through the new Frameworks and associated action plans. Future Partnership meetings will be advised of the progress of the bid in relation to Cumbernauld and Kilsyth.

3. Cumbernauld Town Centre Action Plan

Central Way Corridor

- 3.1 Revised lighting designs have been prepared for the area in between the bus stances and it is aimed to be ready to commence installation in February 2013. The lighting proposals will aim to improve the sense of safety and arrival into Cumbernauld town centre, and also to improve road lighting levels in the area under the building canopy. A cleaning and painting schedule for the coffered ceiling is also being prepared by the Council's Design Services, for discussion with the new centre owners once sale of the centre has been confirmed. These works are required to be undertaken prior to installing the lighting.
- 3.2 Design work is also being progressed by the Council's Roads Design team for first phase improvements at the Cumbernauld town centre bus stances, to provide bus pull-out lanes in line with the feasibility study into improving the facilities undertaken earlier this year. Progression of the proposals has been complicated due to complexities around land ownership and difficulties in getting a decision from the Cumbernauld Centre administrators. It has now been confirmed that the kerb waiting areas and bus stopping areas are within the ownership of the centre and as such it will not be possible to progress with improvement works in these areas until such time as the centre is sold and discussions can be undertaken with the new owners. In the meantime, council officers are continuing to work with SPT to identify and progress complementary works and further studies that could be undertaken during the current financial year.

Cumbernauld town centre signage strategy

- 3.3 Agreement has now been received from two of the three shopping centre managers on the long term maintenance responsibility for the Cumbernauld town centre internal wayfinding signage. Due again to the difficulties of engaging with the Cumbernauld Centre whilst it is within administration, the internal wayfinding signage project is being re-tendered on a two phase basis. The signs within the Antonine Shopping Centre and Cumbernauld Shopping Centre will be progressed as phase one of the project, and the signs within the Cumbernauld Centre then forming phase two of the project, to be progressed once new owners are in place and subject to their agreement.

4. Cumbernauld Village Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme

- 4.1 Improvement works to 22 shop or business premises through a group Shopfront Improvement Grants programme have been completed. This programme has resulted in improved signage, new doors, new and refurbished windows (some with ornate grilles), in keeping with the Conservation Area's character, as well as necessary repair work, e.g. to rainwater goods, stonework and render, with associated redecoration. Under the Householder Grants scheme, works have also been carried out to over 20 properties. These grant aided improvements consisted primarily of timber window refurbishment/ replacement work and repairs to slate roofs and chimneys.
- 4.2 In addition to the small grant schemes, there are four priority buildings identified within the Cumbernauld Village CARS:-
- Refurbishment works to Ardenlea House, the former library/ museum behind the Village Hall, have progressed on site and replacement timber sash windows fitted, following its sale by auction in Spring 2012.
 - For the former Village Primary School, the Cumbernauld House Trust and Cumbernauld Village Action for the Community (CVAC) continue to develop their proposal to refurbish the building for a community and charity hub, with the support of North Lanarkshire Council. Big Lottery Fund (£10,000) and a small CARS grant (£4,100) were used to prepare an overall Feasibility Study and an Architectural Feasibility Study to assess viable use options.
 - The recommendations include creating lettable office space, a café and a new build multi-purpose function hall. Funding applications for refurbishment works to the former Primary School are currently being prepared and submitted by the Trust, including to the Big Lottery Fund's Growing Community Assets programme, and to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

- The Category B Listed former Villager (now Circle) public house has been refurbished internally and re-opened in Autumn 2011; roof repair grants may be available for this (with the owner currently preparing a specification and seeking quotations for the works required)
- The owner of the 4th priority building, the Category C Listed Spur public house, has been approached to advise him that a roof repair grant may be available if he applies, with specification and quotations, in time to get the grant eligible works completed by March.

5. Town Centre Activities

- 5.1 Town Centre Activities hosted this year's Christmas events including the Christmas Lights switch on in Cumbernauld Town Centre on 17 November, and in Kilsyth on 30 November, by the Provost or Deputy Provost, signifying the official start of Christmas Shopping, with a festive programme of entertainment. A recent development is that Costa Coffee has opened a second unit in the Antonine Centre. Whilst the retail & office unit vacancy rate is relatively high at 20% - a large number of the units are within the oldest part of the town centre and affected by the current administration procedure. This retail & office unit vacancy rate is equivalent to some 12% of the floorspace area.
- 5.2 Discussions are ongoing regarding a suitable site for a Shopmobility unit can be located in Cumbernauld Town Centre.
- 5.3 TCA also report that they have worked with the Community Group "Watch us Grow" in a proposal to improve several poorly maintained areas around Cumbernauld town centre.
- 5.4 In Kilsyth, informal pre-application consultation has been held for an NHS proposal for a new Health Centre to be built adjacent to the Leisure Centre. No businesses opened or closed in November 2012 – with the retail & office unit vacant rate of 14.6% just below the UK average.

6. Business Improvement Districts

- 6.1 The Council is currently looking into the potential for establishing Business Improvement Districts (BID) 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.
- 6.2 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 towards developing a pilot BID for North Lanarkshire. This work is scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2013.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Local Area Partnership note progress made on the projects and initiatives that have progressed recently within Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Town Centres.

Shirley Linton

**SHIRLEY LINTON
HEAD OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Kirsty Gray on 01236 632629 or Richard Cartwright on 01236 632628 (05 December 2012)