

## **Appendix 2**

### **Capital Expenditure Programme for Town Centre Improvements**

#### **Introduction**

- 1.1 West Lothian Council Capital Expenditure Programme is available to the 5 Traditional Town Centres of Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn & Uphall, Linlithgow and Whitburn. The purpose of the fund is to allow capital improvements to take place in each of the towns that will directly contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 1.2 The budget is managed by Economic Development and projects for each town must be agreed with all elected members and involve wider stakeholder involvement and consultation through Town Centre Management Groups/Local Area Committees in each of the towns. An officer from Economic Development is assigned to work with and support each of the Traditional Towns.

#### **Policy & legislative context**

- 2.1 The Scottish Planning Policy 8 Town centres and retailing (SPP8) sets out the Scottish Government's broad policy objectives for maintaining an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector, to sustain and enhance the vitality, viability and quality of town centres, and ensure compatibility with the principles of sustainability. The Scottish Government is committed to land use policies that secure vital and viable town centres, which provide economic, social, health and environmental benefits for the wider community. This involves promoting and enhancing town centres by focusing appropriate growth and development in them. The Government's key policy objectives are:
  - Promote distinct, competitive places and encourage regeneration
  - Create a climate that enables all sectors of the community to have access to a wide choice of shopping, leisure and other services
  - Improve the physical quality and sustainability of our town centre environments.
  - Support development in existing accessible locations.

#### **WLLP Town Centres**

- 3.1 West Lothian Council Local Plan strategy aims to:
  - Strengthen and enhance Bathgate Town Centre as a District Centre
  - Sustain the vitality of local centres and encourage retail and community facilities commensurate with their status

- Improve the physical environment of existing centres, through the council integrating its own programmes of action with those of agencies, developers, traders and local communities with whom it works in partnership
- 3.2 For the avoidance of doubt all Capital Expenditure projects must compliment the Adopted WLLP 2009.

### **Eligibility of projects**

- 4.1 Projects must be located in a location that contributes to the competitiveness of the town centre.
- 4.2 Projects must tie in with Public Realm Design Guides where applicable.
- 4.3 It must be demonstrated that the provision for any additional revenue costs can be met through external parties and private leverage. Only existing budgeted revenue implications will be met by West Lothian Council.
- 4.4 Projects must contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Vitality is a measure of how lively and busy a town centre is and viability is a measure of the capacity to attract ongoing investment.
- 4.5 In addition to meeting all the criteria above projects funded through the Capital Expenditure Programme budget must also fall into at least one category below:
- Townscape/Civic Space/Public Realm enhancements
  - Street furniture and lighting
  - Landscape improvements
  - Litter management and recycling (in addition to baseline services)
  - Crime prevention measures e.g. CCTV
  - Improved public transport facilities
  - Signage and information
  - Promotion and marketing
  - Car parking improvements and management
  - Feasibility studies/monitoring & evaluation
  - Sustainable transport
  - Shop front Improvements
  - Security measures
  - Employment & training opportunities
- 4.6 Public Art projects that do not form part of Civic Space should be progressed through West Lothian Council Art Services.

### **Partnership working**

- 5.1 West Lothian council recognises the value in partnership working. Community led partnerships that generate external funding, such as Bathgate in Bloom, will be encouraged. These partnership arrangements could be progressed to allow for additional revenue costs to be met as outlined in 4.3.

### **Additional funding**

- 5.1 The adopted West Lothian Local Plan 2009 aims to improve the physical environment of existing centres, through the council integrating its own programmes of action with those of agencies, developers, traders and local communities with whom it works in partnership. The council will, therefore, explore opportunities to secure other funding and work in partnership with others to maximise new investment. It is anticipated that the improvements secured through this budget will act as a catalyst for attracting further investment. In addition, West Lothian Council has approved Supplementary Planning Guidance, which requires developers of the Core Development Areas (CDA's) to contribute towards town and village improvements. Both Armadale and Broxburn town centres are able to benefit from this additional resource.