

Due to Scottish Government guidance relating to Covid-19, this meeting will be held remotely.

Tuesday, 20th October, 2020 - 9.30 am

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AGENDA

Page Nos.

URGENT ITEM FOR DETERMINATION

14. **FUNDING FOR ECONOMY ADVISER – TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT** 130 – 133  
**POST** – Joint Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods & the Head of Business and Employability.

**Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.**

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16th October, 2020

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20<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Agenda Item No. 14 (**URGENT ITEM**)

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## Funding for Economy Adviser – Town Centre Development Post

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Report by: Paul Vaughan – Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods & Gordon Mole  
Head of Business and Employability

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Wards Affected: 2, 3 & 4

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### Purpose

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The purpose of this report is to allow Area Committee to consider a proposal to fund an Economy Adviser – Town Centre Development post for Dunfermline for 2 years and a contribution to the revenue costs of the Maygate Enterprise Centre for this financial year only. The costs will be funded from the Local Community Planning Budget.

### Recommendation(s)

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Members are asked to agree

1. To funding of up to £101,528 across three financial years to support a new town centre role in Dunfermline as outlined in paragraph 2.2.
2. To a contribution of up to £20,000 to support revenue costs as the Maygate Enterprise Centre develops in the coming months.

### Resource Implications

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Financial Year 2020/21 – Cost of up to £12,691 from the Local Community Planning Budget to support the Economy Adviser post for three months; and up to £20,000 to support the revenue costs of the Enterprise Centre as it becomes established.

A further £88,837 will then be required to support the Economy Adviser post across financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23 over a period of 21 months.

### Legal & Risk Implications

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There are no known legal risks.

### Impact Assessment

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An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices. The Fairer Scotland Duty, which came into force on 1 April 2018, requires the Council to consider how it

can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. Both the Plan for Fife and Fife's Economic Strategy align with this Duty in their commitment to working towards achieving thriving places in Fife's key town centres.

## **Consultation**

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This project will deliver one of the main objectives set out in the Design Dunfermline Charrette 2018. The charrette identified a need for a co-lab space in the town centre to develop and grow small, individual businesses. This new post will support this.

The Head of Legal Services and the Head of Finance have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

## **1.0 Background**

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- 1.1 In June 2019, Dunfermline was awarded £300k from the Scottish Government Town Centre Capital Fund to transform a vacant Council building on Maygate into an Enterprise Centre where entrepreneurs can hire space, grow and collaborate.
- 1.2 The main outcomes of this were to provide a town centre space for enterprise to grow and to aid the regeneration of Dunfermline town centre.
- 1.3 A risk to the proposed operating model and overall success of the Enterprise Centre was identified should an alternative not be found to replace Dunfermline Delivers BID following their unsuccessful re-ballot.
- 1.4 Delivering Dunfermline, a Community Interest Company (CIC), was established in the Autumn of 2019 to replace Dunfermline Delivers the town's Business Improvement District Company (BID), and with a view to operating the Enterprise Centre.
- 1.5 The work of both the BID and latterly the CIC had a hugely positive impact on the town centre and Dunfermline in general, supporting the development of Dunfermline as a place that the community, visitors and businesses wanted to be. It was widely acknowledged that Dunfermline was bucking the trend compared with similar-sized town centres with investor confidence demonstrated through a steady stream of new businesses opening and the significant residential developments that are underway in Dunfermline.
- 1.6 Delivering Dunfermline's staff are currently furloughed, and it is understood that the CIC will close permanently shortly.
- 1.7 The pandemic and the demise of Dunfermline Delivers have had a detrimental effect on town centre trade and the night-time economy.
- 1.8 Given current restrictions it is unlikely that large scale public events previously supported by area funding, such as the Outwith Festival, will be able to take place for some time.

- 1.9 Fife Council and partners are reviewing the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, The Plan for Fife. Emerging issues from the pandemic have resulted in a full review and re-focus of priorities, such as tackling poverty and crisis prevention, leading economic recovery and sustaining services through new ways of working.
- 1.10 This review will promote community wealth building approaches with the aim of ensuring that local economies work better for Fife's communities. The development of the Maygate Enterprise Centre would seek to address and support these issues.
- 1.11 It is envisaged that an anchor organisation, working alongside the Economy Adviser, would manage the Enterprise Centre to support the re-growth and nurturing element for existing and fledgling businesses and organisations.
- 1.12 As part of an overall strategy to support capital projects, a proposal is being developed to create a capital enabling and support fund. This will be revenue based and will be able to support 20 months of operation as the project moves towards a sustainable financial model. After some careful consideration, access to the centre will be automatically controlled, which will achieve significant savings on the revenue costs required to run the centre. It is estimated that these will reduce from £60k to nearer £30K per annum for revenue costs to operate the Maygate Enterprise Centre.
- 1.13 In 2019/20, £103,500 of area budget was used to fund large scale community events. These events are unlikely to return to the same extent in the short to medium term so the funding could be used to support this new post instead.

## 2.0 Issues and Options

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- 2.1 Funding is requested to support the appointment of **1 x Full Time Economy Adviser Town Centre Development** for 2 years. It is anticipated that the post would be in place from early 2021 to the end of December 2022.
- 2.2 This position is set at FC8 which costs up to £50,764 per annum including on-costs although it is anticipated that the position could be recruited at the lower to middle points of the salary scale. The total funding commitment is as follows:

Financial Year	£
2020/21	12,691
2021/22	50,764
2022/23	38,073
Total Cost	101,528

- 2.3 The Economy Adviser post holder will support town centre businesses during the recovery phase and address emerging themes such as building community wealth, digital working, promoting mental health & wellbeing, tackling food insecurity and addressing the climate emergency. The role will focus on inward investment, fundraising and lobbying on businesses, behalf, working with Dunfermline companies and local representative organisations. Increasing the national profile of the town will also be a priority by representing Dunfermline in national forums such as Business in the Community and maintaining Dunfermline's Purple Flag accreditation.

- 2.4 The contribution of £20k will help to support revenue costs for the proposed Enterprise Centre as it develops over the coming months and the post holder will also support its development through partners such as Business Gateway, engage with aspiring entrepreneurs, business start-ups and micro-business by offering support to stimulate growth in the local economy. Providing resources under one roof will make it easier to access business support services as well as encourage an environment that promotes collaborative working, inclusive growth and community wealth building. In addition, the centre will enable existing businesses to pivot post Covid.
- 2.5 The post holder is likely to work alongside an anchor organisation to manage access to the Maygate Enterprise Centre. However, controlled access solutions will be developed which would negate the need for a continual "physical presence" during business hours and provide some flexibility.

## 3.0 Conclusions

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- 3.1 Provision of funding for this new post for two years will support town centre recovery in the absence of the BID/CIC companies and assist in the opening and management of the Maygate Enterprise Centre.
- 3.2 Total funding of £121,528 is required to be committed over this and the next two financial years.

### List of Appendices

None

### Background Papers

None

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