

Agenda Item	6
Report No	N/11/19

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Nairnshire Committee

Date: 12 June 2019

Report Title: Nairn Shopfront Scheme

Report By: Director of Development and Infrastructure

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides the background to the Nairn Shopfront Improvement Scheme set against the context of the Sainsbury Developer Contributions that led to the establishment of the scheme, and outlines proposals to utilise the remaining funds to upgrade and improve the Nairn High Street environment.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Agree that a deadline be set for final applications to the Nairn Shopfront Improvement Scheme of 31 July 2019;
 - ii. Consider and agree proposals to work with the Nairn Business Improvement District to utilise the remaining funds to improve the environs of Nairn High Street; and
 - iii. Agree that an update report on outcome of project(s) be brought back to this Committee.

3 Background

- 3.1 A developer contribution of £250,000 was agreed as a condition of the Sainsbury Supermarket development with the Highland Council in Nairn in 2010. It was then agreed by Members at the Planning, Environment and Development Committee held in November 2011, that as part of a Nairn Town Centre Improvement Scheme, these funds be allocated across provision of improved street lighting, enhanced CCTV facilities and a shop front improvement scheme.
- 3.2 The proposed Shop Front Improvement Scheme was allocated a sum of £67,600 as part of the financial contribution towards the improvement of Nairn Town Centre.
- 3.3 All developer contribution from the Sainsbury development must be fully allocated by April 2020.

4 Nairn Shopfront Improvement Scheme

- 4.1 The Nairn Shopfront Improvement Scheme was put in place and was opened for applications in 2011. The first phase of the scheme allocated over £10,000 and saw work carried out to 9 properties along the high street. However, after this initial interest applications to the Scheme started to slow down.
- 4.2 Feedback from the Association of Nairn Businesses (ANB) and applicants from Phase 1 of the Scheme led to a review being carried out by the Ward Manager and the Chair of the ANB, and this resulted in the Scheme being re-launched in May 2015 with a simplified application form and guidance.
- 4.3 A further information drop, including an application pack, was carried out in the autumn of 2016 to every shop on the High Street and this resulted in fresh interest and several new applications.
- 4.4 In August 2018 the Nairn Ward Councillors agreed to further increase the funding available for applications specifically related to improving access to premises.
- 4.5 To date the Shopfront Improvement Scheme has attracted 47 completed applications. 4 have been refused as they did not meet the criteria, 2 were withdrawn by the applicants and 2 are currently pending. 39 applications have been approved by the Nairn Members and £39,238.60 has been allocated from the fund.
- 4.6 Applications to the Scheme have now significantly reduced and given the efforts to promote the scheme, it is felt that it has run its course and consideration should be given to how to effectively allocate the remaining balance of the fund to improve Nairn town centre in the context of agreements currently in place.
- 4.7 It is therefore proposed that a deadline be set for final applications to the Nairn Shopfront Improvement Scheme of 31st July 2019.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 The Nairn Business Improvement District (Nairn BID) has recently carried out a review of Nairn town centre and environs as part of its 'Welcome to Nairn' Strategy Plan, and has approached the Highland Council with a proposal to improve the public realm areas of the high street through a series of initial projects including a 'deep clean' of the high street and connecting entry points from the main car parks, and improving

directional and linking signage.

- 5.2 This would fit well with the aims and objectives of the Nairn Community Town Centre Plan and the Nairn BID Business Plan.
- 5.3 Subject to Members approval, it is therefore proposed to work with the Nairn BID to develop a town centre improvement project(s) that could utilise the remaining balance of the funding allocated to the Shopfront Scheme. The proposed project(s) would need to comply with the Section 75 agreement. Consequently any proposed expenditure would need to be reviewed by Legal Services to ensure that it was in accordance with the approved purposes as detailed in 3.1.

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 Agree project proposals with the Members and the Nairn BID.
- 6.2 Agree that working with the Ward Manager, the Nairn BID lead on the project and that a report is taken back to this committee.

7 Implications

- 7.1 Resource – There are no resource implications.
- 7.2 Legal – Review Section 75 agreement with Legal Services.
- 7.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – No implications.
- 7.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever – No implications.
- 7.5 Risk – Ensure that any project proposals are managed within the timeframes set out in the Section 75 agreement.
- 7.6 Gaelic – No implications.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 24 May 2019

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