

**PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL****Council Meeting – 27 June 2012****CITY OF PERTH – TOWARDS A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CONSULTATION)****Report by Executive Director (Environment)**

This report outlines proposals that will form the basis of a consultation with key stakeholders to identify priorities to inform a comprehensive strategy and action plan that will deliver the Council's ambition to develop Perth City as an excellent place to live, work and visit.

**1. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1.1 The Council is asked to:

- (i) Approve The City of Perth – Towards a Development Strategy attached in Appendix 1.
- (ii) Instruct the Executive Director (Environment) to undertake consultation with key stakeholders.
- (iii) Instruct the Executive Director (Environment) to bring forward a detailed strategy and action plan to a future meeting of the Council.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The restoration of Perth's city status to mark the occasion of Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee has presented the Council with a unique opportunity to capitalise upon the economic, social and cultural benefits associated with the formal recognition of Perth as one of Scotland's 7 cities. Perth is the regional employment, leisure and cultural centre with a growing population of approximately 133,000 people living within the Travel to Work Area. City status will increase investment in Perth and will generate benefits throughout Perth and Kinross. It is anticipated that more people will choose to live and work in rural Perthshire and Kinross-shire because of the facilities and services on offer in the City of Perth.
- 2.2 A substantial investment has already been made by the Council to provide new and improved facilities for residents and business alike. For example, Perth Concert Hall, the two new community campuses and city centre environmental improvements demonstrate a commitment to ensuring Perth continues to play an important social and economic role.

- 2.3 In its Agenda for Cities, the Scottish Government recognises the role of cities in helping deliver the aspirations of the Government Economic Strategy. In their own right Perth and the other cities are recognised as centres of knowledge, innovation and culture and, by working together, the Government believes Scotland's cities have a critical role to play in driving economic growth. The Agenda for Cities also recognises the challenges faced by cities, particularly around the regeneration of our most disadvantaged communities. The Council, and its Community Planning Partners, are already working to ensure that public sector investment creates opportunities for all Perth and Kinross residents.
- 2.4 The Scottish Government has made available £7 million to support the delivery of collaborative projects between the Cities where there is a clear benefit to the Scottish economy.

### **3. PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 The Development Strategy for the City of Perth develops the themes detailed in the bid document for City Status and the Local Development Plan. The strategy details proposals to optimise the benefits of growth and realise the Council's ambition to develop the City as an excellent place to live, work and visit.
- 3.2 Over the next 3 months until the end of September we will engage with residents, visitors, businesses, Community Planning Partners and potential investors to share our vision and invite their input to shape it. From this we will produce:
- A finalised Strategy and Action Plan that sets out our programme to 2025 and identifies the required public and private sector resources to implement it, along with the impacts to be delivered.
  - A City Centre Masterplan that graphically depicts our investment programme and inspires residents, visitors, businesses and investors.
- 3.3 A report incorporating the consultation views will then be brought back to the Council for its consideration.
- 3.4 The finalised strategy will be integral to the overarching commitment by Perth and Kinross Council and our Community Planning partners to improve economic outcomes for everyone in Perth and Kinross through the economic, physical and social regeneration of all our communities.

### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The Executive Officer Team was consulted during the preparation of this report.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial or staff resource implications arising directly from this paper.

## **6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012**

- 6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) Healthy, Caring Communities
- (iii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy
- (iv) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens
- (v) Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities

- 6.2 It is considered that the actions contained in the accompanying report contribute to all 5 objectives.

## **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)**

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.

- 7.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

## **8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS). A screening report will be prepared to determine whether the Strategy is likely to have significant environmental effects.

**9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The report and the attached document set out the work undertaken to date in relation to the preparation of a Development Strategy and Action Plan for the City of Perth.

**JIM VALENTINE**  
**Executive Director (Environment)**

**Note:** No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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# The City of Perth – Towards a Development Strategy

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Perth - the Fair City - lies at the heart of Scotland geographically and historically. The restoration of city status has provided us with a once in a generation opportunity to realise our ambition to build a confident, vibrant community that can make a significant contribution to Scotland's sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

Whilst respecting and cherishing our history, Perth must be forward looking - a modern, cosmopolitan city which offers unrivalled business, educational, cultural and leisure opportunities for its citizens and visitors. A place where people want to be.

We start from a strong base.

Perth enjoys an unparalleled location on the River Tay; a strategic position at the hub of Scotland's transport network; and sits at the centre of a ring of towns and villages which form its city region. The City has a population of 50,000 and, as one of the fastest growing urban areas in Scotland, its population is forecast to increase by a further 10,000 over the next 15 years. Population growth will help sustain and grow our economy and many of the actions proposed in this Strategy are designed to capitalise on economic opportunity.

By demonstrating that Perth continues to be "Open for Business", the Council can help create the conditions to attract more private sector investment into Perth. The growing population of approximately 133,000 people live within Perth's Travel to Work Area and investment in Perth will lever economic benefits for communities all across Perth and Kinross as demand for goods and services increases.

## OUR VISION

*Our vision is to develop the City of Perth as one of the most desirable places in Scotland in which to live, work, visit and invest.*

This vision recognises the assets and resources within the City which provide excellent opportunities to maximise growth for the benefit of the whole Perth and Kinross area. To deliver our vision, and help secure the future for all, our strategy will focus on maximising opportunities to promote economic, social and cultural development. Our work in the City will therefore complement actions and programmes across the whole of Perth and Kinross to regenerate our communities and create employment opportunities for all.

## OUR OPPORTUNITY

### Economic

Perth is recognised as having a strong independent retail sector and a good range of supporting services such as restaurants, bars and cultural attractions. The City continues to be attractive as a headquarters location - for both private and public sector organisations. In order to stimulate more economic growth there are a number of key actions which the Council, other public bodies and the private sector could take.

- Bring back into use vacant and semi-derelict properties
- Promote opportunities to increase evening retail and leisure expenditure
- Increase the availability of larger floor plate retail premises in the city centre to meet retail demand
- Undertake targeted marketing to promote Perth (particularly outside Scotland) as a great place in which to live and invest
- Increase the supply of high quality office accommodation
- Increase the availability of serviced business and industrial land
- Use innovative funding and borrowing powers to provide infrastructure to support the growth of the city to the north and west; and increase access to and within the city centre.

Many of these opportunities can be realised over the next 5 years and the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan (which will be submitted for the consideration of the Scottish Ministers later this year) sets out the spatial strategy and policies that will support the growth of the city – and the wider Perth and Kinross area.

### **Social**

Perth has a good mix of public and private rented housing in its city centre – important in attracting younger, mobile residents. There is also an opportunity to encourage more private sector housing in the heart of the city, which is also important in terms of increasing the overall amount of expenditure on goods and services. These benefits and opportunities can be defined as:

- Boosting the demand (and supply) for a stronger “café culture” particularly on weekday evenings and Sundays
- Working with private sector developers to find and support the creative use of upper floors for residential accommodation
- Exploring the potential demand for student accommodation in the city centre and to work with private sector student accommodation providers.

### **Cultural**

Cities compete by offering an attractive high quality physical environment with diverse cultural and social activities that can attract mobile “knowledge workers” and retain a younger resident population. Perth has superb cultural and leisure facilities, notably the Concert Hall, and a good range of Festivals that are growing in national/international importance. The Perth and Kinross Cultural Strategy 2011-2016 was agreed and its implementation will underpin the development of the cultural offering across Perth and Kinross. Within Perth, specific opportunities include:

- Further enhance the contemporary cultural offering by encouraging more artists to live and work in the City Centre
- Further invest in the high quality of the public realm, which will impact positively on the overall perception of the City (the “wow” factor)
- Promote Perth as the natural location for any new national institutions or centres of excellence
- Promote development opportunities to the private sector to increase the choice and quality of hotel accommodation to boost conference business
- Further market Perth as a city break destination

In many respects the cultural and leisure offering is Perth's strongest attribute and, through a continued programme of investment in existing and new facilities, our vision of a world-class quality of life is achievable. The Development Strategy will identify specific investment priorities.

## **SCOTLAND'S CITIES: DELIVERING FOR SCOTLAND**

In addition to delivering investment for the benefit of Perth's current and future residents and businesses, we also have an opportunity to contribute to the Scottish Government's desire to utilise the 7 cities as drivers of the country's economic growth through innovative, collaborative projects. The Scottish Cities Alliance has been established to drive the delivery of specific actions grouped around four characteristics that define successful places - and these closely align with Perth's own objectives and aspirations:

- **Connected cities**, with strong digital and transport infrastructure.
- **Sustainable cities**, maximising the benefits and competitive advantage that the transition to a low carbon economy brings to a city, its region and its residents.
- **Knowledge cities**, with high performing research and educational institutions, high value sectors and access to a highly skilled labour pool to support a knowledge economy – delivered alongside a culture of entrepreneurship, leadership, creativity and international ambition.
- **Vibrant and cultural cities**, which have a distinct quality of place, amenities, retail and cultural offerings to attract and retain talent, investment and visitors.

To facilitate collaborative working between Scotland's cities the Scottish Government has made available £7 million to deliver projects and initiatives that help grow Scotland's economy.

## **STRATEGIC THEMES**

### **Perth - A Connected City**

With 90% of Scotland's population living within 90 minutes travelling time of the City, there is an opportunity to capitalise on our strategic position at the centre of Scotland's transport network complemented by world-class digital connectivity. Specifically we will:

- Work through the Regional Transport Partnership to lobby for improved transport connections that provide faster and safer journey times between all of Scotland's cities by road and rail
- Work with the private sector, and the Scottish Government, to deliver the required transport infrastructure investment identified in the Local Development Plan to support Perth's growth
- Explore the best means of securing investment in Perth Harbour so that it can compete effectively and efficiently with other ports and other transport modes
- Work towards the creation of new transport interchange in the heart of the city that links directly with trails and cycleways
- Maximise use of the River Tay as a leisure resource by facilitating the provision of pontoons and jetties

- Work with the Scottish and UK Governments and the private sector to deliver super-fast broadband throughout Perth whilst ensuring all residents and businesses in Perth and Kinross benefit from the Government's commitment to fast broadband
- Work with Perthshire Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses to stimulate demand within the business community for fast broadband

### **Perth - A Sustainable City**

The City of Perth will build on its successes to date to become one of the leading sustainable urban areas in Europe. To achieve this we will:

- Join Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow in becoming a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors initiative which would commit us to meeting and exceeding the EU's objective to reduce CO2 by 20%
- Actively pursue the Green Deal to ensure that our residential and business premises benefit from the latest energy efficiency measures
- Embrace the Smart Cities agenda by collaborating with the other Scottish cities to develop a competitive advantage in the low carbon, environmental and clean technologies sector – building upon existing company and academic expertise across Perth and Kinross and Dundee
- Ensure the western expansion of Perth incorporates district heating systems where possible and support the private sector in this by making available research and advice – and by effective use of the Planning System
- Work with transport operators to explore the introduction of low carbon transport
- Increase our recycling of household waste beyond the present 50% level to 75%
- Reduce our carbon footprint by encouraging new uses for vacant city centre properties where this is financially viable
- Ensure that all new Council-funded buildings will achieve at least a BREEAM 'very good' sustainability rating with an aspiration that all our new buildings are rated 'excellent'.

### **Perth - A Knowledge City**

The City of Perth will invest in knowledge, skills and support programmes to allow the public, private and voluntary sector create products to work together more effectively to add value and create wealth.

Building on our recent investment in two new Community Campuses, which provide state of the art learning facilities for people of all ages within the city, Perth will champion its knowledge economy, linking learning and enterprise. We will also accelerate our Commercial Investment Programme to ensure Perth has a competitive choice of land and premises to support business growth.

We will commit to:

- Increased collaboration with Perth College UHI, the main UHI Campus in Inverness and the Universities of Dundee and Abertay particularly around renewables and clean technologies, tourism and hospitality, creative industries and food and drink
- Investing a further £20 million in Perth's school estate over the next 5 years with £62 million in total being invested across Perth and Kinross.
- Working closely with the private sector and other public sector bodies to increase the number of graduate-level jobs in Perth
- Working closely with Scottish Development International to promote Perth as location for knowledge-based inward investment and organisation headquarters
- Developing new industrial land at North Muirton and working in partnership with the private sector deliver industrial land at Inveralmond and a new business park at Broxden.

### **Perth - A Vibrant, Cultural City**

The City of Perth will build significantly on its growing reputation as a vibrant place in which to work, live and visit. This is critical if economic benefits of city status are to be maximised. Globally, research demonstrates that vibrant, cultural cities attract new investment and talented people as well as tourists. Perth has a strong sense of place that will be enhanced through planned investment in the urban realm complemented by investment in new and upgraded cultural and leisure facilities. In doing so, we will:

- Develop an ambitious events programme to maximise the unrivalled marketing opportunities of The Winning Years to 2014, when Perth and Scotland will benefit from a number of major events including the premiere of the Disney-Pixar film Brave, the 2013 Year of Natural Scotland, and in 2014 the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, The Ryder Cup at Gleneagles and the Year of Homecoming.
- Create a new brand for the City of Perth, to maximise the competitive advantage of becoming Scotland's newest city and signpost the city as a place in which to work, live and invest
- Progress plans for the economic and physical regeneration of the city centre.
- Commit to securing the funding to allow the £13 million Perth Theatre redevelopment to proceed
- Invest £5 million towards the £15 million refurbishment of Perth's leisure facilities and submit a bid to host the proposed Sports Centre of Excellence in Perth
- Secure investment in Perth's public realm – specifically Mill Street and the vennels to complement public and private sector investment
- Celebrate Perth's cultural and environmental heritage by creating a new series of trails and walks around the city centre utilising new technology to interpret and inform
- Work with VisitScotland to relocate the Tourist Information Centre to a more prominent location

- Creating a cultural quarter in the city centre which will include artists workshops and studios as well as remodelling the Art Gallery and Museum and the Fergusson Gallery
- Develop a public arts policy that is fully inclusive and embraces all of Perth's communities
- Work with partners to capitalise on the economic development opportunity offered by the V&A@Dundee
- Establish a Conference and Convention Bureau to capitalise on the rapidly growing business tourism market
- Continue to use our twinning links in Canada, China, France, Germany Poland and Russia to promote cultural and commercial links

## **CONCLUSION**

Perth is already a successful city, playing an important regional and increasingly national role. Restoration of city status provides us with a springboard to realise our ambition more quickly - particularly by working in an alliance with the other Scottish cities. By consulting on, and delivering, the actions set out in this Strategy, we will achieve our vision of Perth as one of Scotland's most desirable places to be.