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**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 14 AUGUST 2018**

**SUBJECT: CASTLE TO CATHEDRAL TO CASHMERE**

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the successful outcomes of the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere, Elgin Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme and Heritage Experience projects.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (F) (2, 3, 4, 5) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the exercise of functions that promote economic development, dealing with all matters relating to commercial development, providing financial and other assistance to those engaged in commerce; and relating to applications for assistance.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee considers and notes the report.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Building on the success of the City of Elgin Business Improvement District (BID) development, the Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF) physical improvements and the developments at the Cathedral by Historic Environment Scotland, the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere partnership was formed in 2011. It was also in response to the Moray Economic Strategy and the Elgin City for the Future study and its priorities of 'High Street First', 'The Visitor Economy' and 'Arts, Culture and Heritage'. These studies identified that the 'Town Centre to Cathedral to Cashmere' corridor were key areas for heritage related development and one of the key drivers in Elgin and Moray's recovery.
- 3.2 The overarching aims and objectives of this evolved partnership initiative between Moray Council, Elgin BID, Elgin Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, Moray College/University of the Highland and Islands (UHI), Johnstons of Elgin, Elgin Benevolent Trust, Highland & Island Enterprise (HIE), Moray Speyside Tourism, Robert Gordon University, Moray Society and specialist advisors and heritage champions are:

The vision is to establish Elgin and Moray as a compelling visitor destination

- To achieve and enhance the visitor experience of Elgin City Centre.
- To provide greater access to the local heritage.
- To create a sense of ownership of and pride in the historical and environmental legacy within Elgin particularly by the younger generation.
- To improve the economic opportunities within Elgin City Centre.
- To create the opportunity to conserve and improve the built, historical, cultural and social environment.

3.3 These aims are identified as being intrinsically linked and the Partnership Management Group is tasked with developing and delivering projects and programmes that meet these aims and objectives now and in the future. The current key areas of focus are;

- To co-ordinate the development and delivery of the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere partnership, such as the Heritage experience, Elgin Conservation Regeneration Scheme, Cooper Park and other relevant initiatives.
- To monitor and review the Elgin Town Centre Conservation Area's Management Action Plan.
- To identify and develop initiatives that collectively supports the aims of the partnership within a strategic framework.
- To ensure that all proposals and investments are complementary.

3.4 Previous regeneration work highlighted that there was great interest in the local heritage; however it also identified a lack of interpretation through which visitors and the community could engage with the town's heritage. It was agreed that high quality interpretation and improvements would not only support the heritage experience but potentially increase dwell-time and secondary spend in the town. Interpretation initiatives by themselves would not be effective and the various studies and work carried out pinpointed that a range of physical improvements & activities had to be undertaken together to maximise the effect/outcome for the visitor experience and community engagement.

3.5 In 2011 a set of four studies was commissioned comprising of a Conservation Area Appraisal, Action, Management & Interpretation plans emphasising the importance of Elgin's historic environment and provided new insight into how to care for and appreciate it, through providing enhanced levels of understanding.

3.6 These detailed studies completed in 2012, provided the foundation for the successful developments for an Elgin Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and Heritage Experience, which were funded by local partners, Historic Environment Scotland and Heritage Lottery Fund.

3.7 Previous improvements through the Town Centre Regeneration Fund & Elgin BID development had already instilled community and business confidence in partnership efforts to regenerate the town centre and this was further reflected through the commitment by property owners and businesses in uptake of grants for the CARS regeneration work.

3.8 Detailed work plans were created, which set out all activities & actions, delivery, targets, outputs and outcomes to maximise local resources available to deliver such large scale projects in the most efficient and effective manner

possible. Moray Council acted as lead partner for delivery of the projects and undertook overall responsibility for finance including procurement and administration. The Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Partnership and its Elgin CARS management group took decisions for the overall development of the projects. Four smaller working groups were set up to lead on and develop interpretation & orientation initiatives, public realm work, website & mobile technology and a calendar of events & activities. Additional champions, consultants & local heritage advisors were involved throughout. In addition to this, a reference group was also formed to include those who wished to be advised of the developments via e-bulletins, specific meetings and focus groups.

- 3.9 To ensure that the project had a full mandate and community buy-in and a sense of ownership, there were public consultations, stakeholder events, regular press releases and young people from local schools and Moray College were consulted and included regularly throughout the planning and development stages. The two Elgin Secondary Schools also included their work with the project as part of their curricula. Involvement with the project has enabled the community to develop pride and understanding in their historical and environmental legacy within Elgin, particularly by the younger generation.
- 3.10 In order for the work to be successful and make as much positive impact as possible, both projects have been developed in tandem, so that collectively they leave a legacy far beyond the life span of the individual elements.
- 3.11 **Elgin CARS** – In April 2013 the Elgin Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme was established and repairs and restoration works were carried out on 53 properties through the delivery of 73 CARS Grants. The project ran for 5 years, ending on 31 March 2018.
- 3.12 All full details are contained within **APPENDIX I** Elgin CARS Final report and summary is below:
- **Priority Buildings** - 14% of CARS funding for
    - 35 High Street
    - 185 High Street
    - 'Clancys' building - 165,167,169 High Street
    - 7 South Street
    - Muckle Cross
    - Victoria Cottages (6 adjoining buildings)
  - **Building Health Check Scheme** – 25% of CARS funding. In 2015, Elgin CARS offered a free condition survey to a number of building owners, where their building had been identified as needing repair. Of the 26 buildings identified, 26 building owners agreed to a schedule of repairs on 17 buildings. Through this scheme, some dangerous chimneys were identified both on the grant recipients' buildings but also on adjoining buildings where urgent work was required and carried out on an emergency basis. The value of this additional investment in emergency repairs which is as a direct result of the CARS project is estimated at in excess of £1,200,000 and some of these works will be ongoing throughout 2018 and into 2019.
  - **Shopfront improvements** for 9 properties were carried out and high vegetation removal from 50 properties – 3% of CARS funding.

- **General Fabric Repairs** - 35.5% of CARS funding was provided for 27 individual grants which ranged in size from the smallest at £930 to the largest at £145,506. Notable buildings, which benefitted from grants included Elgin Museum, St. Giles Church, Thunderton House and the Elgin Club.
  - **Public Realm works** - 6% of CARS funding. In addition to the work carried out to the Muckle Cross, it ranged from refurbishment of the Elgin Fountain, to contribution towards the Heritage Experience, Closes signage to removal of unsightly disused phone boxes from the Plainstones.
- 3.13 To complement this, there were educational opportunities through 2 apprenticeships as well as a training programme for tradespeople, contractors and the general public – 10.5% of CARS funding.
- 3.14 The training programme was a joint initiative with the Keith CARS where Elgin CARS contributed 50% of the cost. 12 courses ran across Keith and Elgin which were well attended and received positive feedback. In total, there were 158 separate attendances at the 12 courses, made up of 117 individual people. 74% of people who attended a course chose to return and attend at least one other. Most of these delegates attended at least half of the courses in the series and frequently commented that the reason for continued attendance was down to the excellent quality and delivery of the training material.
- 3.15 In addition evening talks and drop in sessions for local homeowners were provided with the CARS officers for Keith and Elgin as well as Planning & Building Control officers and local craftspeople available for advice. These evenings were generally well attended and received positive feedback from participants.
- 3.16 The Keith and Elgin CARS also hosted a Historic Environment Scotland run Energy Efficiency course and a two day Technical Seminar. These events had a combined attendance of 110 people.
- 3.17 An Interactive Tours Training was piloted. 13 participants were offered 2 training sessions to enable them to deliver heritage tours with the potential to further develop this and possibly start up their own Tour business.
- 3.18 A dedicated CARS Officer post was created at 6% of CARS funding & was based in the Economic Development team with additional support from the Council Legal, Finance, Procurement, Planning and Building Control teams for assistance with specialist matters relating to the project.

### 3.19 Economic & Social Outputs

	<b>CARS</b>	<b>Owners/Private</b>	<b>Total</b>
Priority Projects	£188,161	£164,827	£352,988
Shopfront Repairs	£ 54,248	£14,679	£68,927
Building Health Check	£417,953	£223,215	£641,168
General Fabric Repairs	£548,006	£361,652	£909,658
Public Realm	£105,205	£51,444	£156,649
Training And Events	£ 81,280	£89,492	£170,772
Apprentices	£103,146	-	£103,146
Administration And Cars Officer	£157,489	-	£157,489
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£1,655,488</b>	<b>£905,309</b>	<b>£2,560,797</b>
Additional Public Investment (Estimate)		£1,200,000	£1,200,000
<b>Total Investment</b>		<b>£2,105,309</b>	<b>£3,760,797</b>

Key indicators for the properties receiving CARS funding is as follows:

Approximate numbers of new jobs created	3
Existing economic activity safeguarded	34
New Businesses	24
Floor space back into use - commercial	665sqm
Floor space back into use - residential	1,445sqm
Category A listed buildings grant funded	2
Category B Listed buildings grant funded	11
Category C Listed buildings grant funded	3
Historic shopfronts grant funded	4

There has been a marked decrease in the number of empty shop units in the Conservation Area. Total Vacant Units (where former use was comparison, convenience, retail service, or leisure service)

<b>2018</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2010</b>
25	36	39	25	15

This shows a significant improvement over the last 2 years, and brings it back to occupancy level in 2012. A noticeable difference is particularly evident on Batchen Street and Commerce Street.

The data below shows the anti-social behaviour statistics for Elgin and Moray as a whole for the start of the scheme in 2013 and at its completion in 2017/18. It should be noted that this data covers Elgin as a whole and not just the town centre. These identify a marked decrease in anti-social behaviour as a whole in Elgin over the five years 2013-2018.

Type of Complaint	Elgin 2012-13	Elgin 2017-18	Moray 2012-13	Moray 2017-18
Noise*	381	362	1102	906
Rowdy Behaviour**	490	277	1164	719
Neighbour Dispute*	125	231	296	589
Graffiti	14	5	23	13
Vandalism*	260	145	798	504
Litter	6	8	181	122
Fly Tipping	1	11	327	317
Dog Fouling	59	51	140	201

Source: Community Safety, Moray Council

\*Incidents reported to both Police and the Community Safety Team

\*\*Rowdy Behaviour figures include incidents of; Breach of the Peace, Urinating, Drunk & Incapable and Threatening or Abusive Behaviour from Police Scotland and Rowdy Behaviour & Youth Disorder from the Community Safety Team

3.20 The highly successful Elgin CARS project enabled investment of £2,560,797 together with an additional £1,200,000 of owners investment as a direct result of the Elgin CARS representing a value of funds invested into the Elgin Conservation area of £3,760,797.

3.21 **Heritage Experience** - Elgin's heritage has been interpreted for a twenty-first century audience using a variety of new and creative methods and mediums. The information available is multi-levelled so it appeals to all ages and interests. This includes the following activities set out below.

3.22 **Digital** - An interactive website with mobile technology for downloads onto mobile phones and tablets has been created at [www.elginheritage.scot](http://www.elginheritage.scot), with QR/URL codes on interpretation panels to provide a future-proof way of making the link between physical and virtual interpretation and also to allow further updates to be carried out easily and effectively.

3D high definition laser scanning images provides valuable architectural information, which also offers a platform for developing gaming and for 3D modelling. The work by Robert Gordon University was accompanied by public presentations and talks at the Elgin Museum, Moray College and Elgin Academy.

The interactive orientation point at St. Giles Shopping Centre gives people access to information on all the heritage sites within Elgin and of the 41 heritage sites throughout Moray. It includes a distance calculator so people can plan their stay/visit more easily.

3.23 **Interpretation** - Bespoke interpretation panels and way markers with QR codes have been installed at over 25 sites, some with audio recordings. Interpretive virtual windows at Grant Lodge feature heritage images of people and items that have direct connections to Elgin have improved the appearance of this important, derelict building.

For the commissioning of Sculptures the partnership set up a panel with specialist advisors. A public consultation process took place via displays of the maquettes of the shortlisted Dandy Lion, Drummer, Wolf of Badenoch & Flaming Arches sculptures at Elgin Library with images on website and through media coverage. Feedback cards were available in the Library, Elgin

Academy, Elgin High School and Moray College/UHI as well as having the option to comment on the website. There were over 752 responses with more than 200 of these being from youngsters resulting in the commissioning of the three sculptures of the Dandy Lion, Drummer & Wolf of Badenoch.

A light show depicting Elgin's people and events over the years to the present day is projected onto the back wall of St Giles Church every evening throughout the winter months from October until March. People of Moray were invited to take part in the filming process and have been included in the film.

- 3.24 **Public realm** - New heritage maps have been installed at all car park entry points, railway station and at Ladyhill, alongside a bespoke Heritage wall mural map in St. Giles Shopping Centre and directional signage throughout the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Corridor.

To further enhance some of the Heritage features, lights have been installed at the Wolf & Elgin Drummer sculptures and the Tower building on the Plainstones.

An all abilities access path has been created at Ladyhill Castle Scheduled Ancient Monument. On top of Ladyhill site, a bespoke metal bench with inscription based on a visit by Robert Burns to Elgin has been installed. Counters have been fitted at both access points, allowing for the first time to measure the number of visits.

- 3.25 **Events & Activities** - To reach the widest possible target groups and audiences, a range of methods of engagement and delivery were used. These included for the community, visitors, secondary schools, youth café and college talks, meetings, competitions, public presentations & exhibitions and included a calendar of over 30 'free of charge' events which were suitable for all ages and interests. The events and activities attracted over 20,754 visitors and participants. The signature event 'Sword, Fire & Stone' - a 2 day historical tented medieval encampment recreating life in 1390s, with performances and re-enactments scripted on the 'Wolf of Badenoch' and his arrival in Elgin attracted 8,972 visitors, with over 26,000 hits on the temporary Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere website and 24,000 hits for the video clip at Re-enactment Event Scotland.
- 3.26 **Maintenance** – As part of the developments, a maintenance plan has been drawn up with the Criminal Justice section undertaking regular cleaning of the panels, seating etc. and checking for any damage throughout the season.
- 3.27 **Results & Impact** - Robust systems are in place to monitor data, evaluate and analyse on an ongoing basis the impact the project has made in delivering the aims & objectives. The table below provides the key figures up to February 2018.

<b>Creations &amp; installations</b>		
Website - <a href="http://www.elginheritage.scot">www.elginheritage.scot</a> . (excluding temporary site)	18,305	hits
Interactive Orientation Point, St Giles Shopping Centre	6,502	users
All abilities - Access path to Ladyhill Castle Scheduled Ancient Monument with counters	30,797	visitors
Interpretation panels of various sizes	32	
Way-markers with QR code	17	
Heritage images at Grant Lodge	41	
New heritage maps at car park entry points & at Ladyhill	7	
Bespoke Heritage wall mural map in St. Giles Shopping Centre	1	
Sculptures	3	
New directional signs	31	
Lighting of heritage features - Wolf & Elgin Drummer sculptures and the Tower building	3	locations
Bespoke metal bench on top of Ladyhill site with inscription based on a visit by Robert Burns to Elgin	1	
Outdoor projectors with seasonal light show at St. Giles Church	1	
Film on the creation of the Drummer sculpture	1	
Audio recordings with sound effects	6	
3D high definition scans project with range of talks	1	
<b>Events &amp; activities</b> – exhibitions, talks, tours, outreach, competitions & special events	35	
Participants including young people	22,679	Visitors
Volunteers	191	
Volunteer Sessions	320	
Volunteers hours	2176	
<b>Promotion &amp; Marketing</b>		
Gateway large signs at the entry roads from the West and East into Elgin	2	
Explore Elgin's History' leaflets	5000	
Video clip of Sword, Fire & Stone at Re-enactment Event Scotland	24,000	hits
Sword, Fire & Stone temporary Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere website	26,000	hits

- 3.28 Results from focus groups and surveys provided invaluable qualitative data which has been analysed, evaluated and incorporated into a project evaluation report that was produced by Robert Gordon University and is included as **APPENDIX II**.
- 3.29 There was regular media coverage, both local and national of elements of progress, events and activities throughout the duration of the CARS & heritage experience projects with stands taken at local events to further promote the schemes. Elgin was shortlisted amongst the top ten most beautiful High Streets in Scotland (Scotland's Town Partnership, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Herald competition) with an article about the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere projects featuring in History Scotland & Herald Sunday magazines.
- 3.30 With the completion of the Elgin CARS project, the work of the Elgin CARS Management group has been concluded. However the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Partnership has the potential to build on the successful track record of securing funding and delivering further regeneration work, which may also enhance project developments under the Growth Deal. The



partnership is also exploring income generation to ensure the long-term maintenance and sustainability of the investments so far.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The projects will contribute to achieve the corporate plan priority to promote economic development and growth, also the LOIP priority of a growing and sustainable economy.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

The Council considers support for economic development issues on their merits, against the objective to facilitate sustainable economic growth and the desired outcomes of the Ten Year Plan and Corporate Plan. For CARS grants exceeding £25,000, Legal has been involved in the contractual arrangements.

**(c) Financial implications**

The Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere projects created a combined investment of over £4 million into the town centre and the details are outlined below.

The Elgin CARS has been funded by Historic Environment Scotland £750,000, Moray Council £740,488, Elgin BID £125,000 and Elgin Fund £40,000 with owners / private contribution of £2,105,309 at a total investment of £3,760,797. The expenditure is set out in the table below.

<b>Details</b>	<b>CARS</b>	<b>Owners/Private</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Priority Projects	£188,161	£164,827	£352,988
Shopfront Repairs	£54,248	£14,679	£68,927
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Apprentices	£103,146	-	£103,146
Administration and CARS Officer	£157,489	-	£157,489
<b>Sub -Totals</b>	<b>£1,655,488</b>	<b>£905,309</b>	<b>£2,560,797</b>
Additional Public Investment (Estimate)		£1,200,000	£1,200,000
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>£1,655,488</b>	<b>£2,105,309</b>	<b>£3,760,797</b>

The Heritage Experience has been funded by Heritage Lottery Fund £78,000, Moray Council £123,345, Elgin CARS £106,854, Elgin BID £70,000, Highland & Island Enterprise £32,000 and Elgin Fund £12,000 at a total of £422,199. The expenditure is set out in the table below.

<b>Details</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>
Digital outputs	Web design & mobile technology, 3D laser scanning	£62,954
Professional fees	Copy Writing & Interpretative Design	£32,597
Other	Activities budget (Events budget, Materials, etc.)	£26,895
Equipment and materials	3D interactive model, Interpretation, Lighting, Signage, Sculpture, bench, map boards	£271,029
New build works	Ladyhill Castle site path	£28,724
<b>Total</b>		<b>£422,199</b>

In addition, the Elgin Rotary Club and local businesses provided sponsorship for competitions.

**(d) Risk Implications**

All possible care is taken across departments delivering externally funded projects to mitigate any risks.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

The projects were overall co-ordinated by the Economic Development team with an additional dedicated Elgin CARS Officer post being created and supported by staff from the Council's Legal, Finance, Procurement, Planning, Building Control, Roads, Direct Services, Property and Criminal Justice teams.

**(f) Property**

The Elgin CARS allowed to substantially enhance the public realm through grants for the Fountain and Muckle Cross, which was further complemented by the Heritage Experience projects interpretation works.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An equality impact assessment is not required as the reason for the report is for the Committee to note and consider.

**(h) Consultations**

The Corporate Director (Economic Development Planning & Infrastructure), the Head of Development Services, the Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts), the Equal Opportunities Officer, Paul Connor (Principal Accountant) and Caroline Howie (Committee Services Officer) have been consulted and comments received have been incorporated into the report.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Elgin, like so many other towns across the UK had been affected by out of town retail parks and changes in shopping habits resulting in empty shop units and a general sense of decay and economic decline. In response to the various studies, the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Partnership was formed, involving more than 17 organisations across**

sectors to regenerate the city centre by using its rich heritage and outstanding historic buildings to make Elgin & Moray a compelling visitor destination.

- 5.2 The Elgin Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) & Heritage Experience projects were developed with the joint aims and objectives to bring Elgin's history to life in new and exciting ways, engage more people in their heritage, attract more visitors, improve and regenerate infrastructure through a schedule of physical works - to transform some of its key buildings, monuments and public realm as well as administering general fabric repair grants for buildings and shop front improvements. Collaborative working has meant that over £4.1 million has been invested through private, public and owner contributions.**
- 5.3 Crucial to the success of the projects has been the regular wider community engagement and the partnership model for management and local decision making process, which has created a sense of ownership and pride. The projects have transformed the town centre into a more attractive place to visit, live and work, leaving a legacy for future generations.**
- 5.4 The success of the partnership work has already been a catalyst for other developments such as the Discover Moray's Great Places project.**

Author of Report:	Reni Milburn, Principal Officer Economic Development
Background Papers:	Documents on file in Economic Development
Ref:	