

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CROSS PARTY GROUP ON TOWNS AND TOWN CENTRES

Wednesday, 4 September 2019, 13:00 – 14:30

Committee Room 1, Scottish Parliament

## 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Deputy Convener, Gillian Martin MSP welcomed all to the meeting.

Attendees and Apologies are noted in Appendix 2.

## 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cross Party Group held 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

The Minutes of the Meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record. Accepted by Tom Sneddon and seconded by Iain Fowell. There were no matters arising.

## 3. AGM Business

Gillian Martin MSP as Deputy Convener introduces AGM business in the absence of John Scott MSP, Convener and proposes J Scott continues as Convener. Accepted by Oliver Mundell MSP.

Gillian Martin MSP to continue as Deputy Convener. Accepted by Oliver Mundell MSP. Seconded by Tom Sneddon.

Neil Bibby MSP to continue as Deputy Convener. Accepted by Oliver Mundell MSP. Seconded by Gillian Martin MSP.

Agreement reached that Scotland's Towns Partnership to continue as secretary to the group.

G Martin summarised the group's activities in the year to date and forward plans. This and other required reporting will be available in the annual report on the parliament website following the meeting.

## 4. Towns for Leisure

Phil Prentice, Chief Officer, Scotland's Towns Partnership and National Director, Scotland's Improvement Districts, introduced the topic; saying that our towns and high streets are critical. Even in a challenging period, we should remember that Scotland invented much of the modern world in our towns. Using our town assets, with hard work and collaboration, we can reinvent our towns.

STP is monitoring the announced UK government funding for towns and working with Scottish Government to ensure flow to Scotland on consequentials.

P Prentice is on the judging panel for the Great British High Street Awards. The Scottish shortlist is being judged this month and category winners will be announced shortly thereafter.

P Prentice highlighted the strong growth in Development Trusts – they are a big part of work happening in our towns.

There is continued growth in towns and cities, and interest in Scotland's policy approach. STP has welcomed delegations from Catalonia, London BIDs, Portugal and Japan. It is reassuring to find that we are not the only country facing challenges.

The future of our towns is about repurposing which provides a natural link to our guest speakers today, who will be discussing different perspectives under the theme, 'Towns for Leisure'.

### 3.1 Guest Presentations

The following points are highlights only. Full presentations, where provided, are available in the CPG area of the Scotland's Towns Partnership website, along with a blog report of the session.

#### 3.1.1 Your Cinema, Your Community

Presented by, Robert Livingston, Director, Regional Screen Scotland

#### Key Messages

With the advent of television and lack of investment in the 70s, we saw demise of cinema, with a resurgence again decades later through multiplex creation. This has seen the highest cinema attendance since the 70s despite on-demand and device viewing. The reason being that an increase in smaller boutique neighbourhood cinema experience creating a new experience and interest. Plans for Scotland seen in places where cinemas already exist. Yet there are towns that are calling for cinemas who are without. Reports and value apps have shown cinemas are good for wellbeing and social value.

Community cinemas and touring cinemas screen new releases which is vital for the local economy. Local cinema - locally accessible, embracing community and diversity. Outweighing the challenges of transport and higher ticket prices. The benefit of cinema-going for communities that most need it is important to grow. Screen Scotland received Creative Scotland funding to focus where geographic and demographic need is greatest. Interest has been tremendous.

This also encourages our industry with Scottish-produced content, archive and local collections, and community filming for those with special needs.

#### 3.1.2 A New Dawn for Dunoon-Fitness, Festivals and Footfall

Presented by Colin Moulson, BID Manager, Dunoon Presents

Dunoon's reinvention began by harnessing the town's natural resources. A BID should create a legacy. Now Dunoon is a hub for wide-ranging outdoor events and making use of its natural resource. The participants in which, have high disposable income. C Moulson showed a Dunoon Presents film, promoting its outdoor 'playground'.

Upcoming events include, Summit to Sea Outdoor Festival, Argyll Rally and they are bidding to attract the Vichy Water Ski Championships – these are world ranking events. The Dunoon Project is a consortium at an advanced stage, creating a cable car and multi-million-pound visitor centre.

Dunoon is very much marketing its offer as Fort William marketed themselves as the 'Heart of the Outdoor Capital of the UK'.

### 3.1.3 The Future of Events in Towns

Presented by, Tony I'Anson, BID Manager for Milngavie and Dalkeith.

Recent events for the local community included in Milngavie - Healthy Habits and Merry Milngavie and in Dalkeith – Dark N Deadly Hallowe'en.

These events contributed to community engagement and encouraging footfall and circulation in town. No external catering was used so this created additional income for the businesses in town.

Based on their experience, some recommendations would be to hold an Events Management CPD event for BID managers and stakeholders; and to streamline the Public Entertainments Licence application process, without compromising on health and safety standards.

#### **4. Discussion**

John Turner, Chair of Glasgow's West End BID, added that a survey indicated events led to 60% spend in the BID area.

P Prentice shared that Scottish Government has given STP additional investment to revamp the Town Toolkit digital platform. This will include further details on leisure including cinema and events. This will comprise one repository to be found in the place portal. In future there will be scope to contribute case studies.

P Prentice commends Dunoon on strategic development of a small BID, which is highly challenging to achieve.

It was highlighted that Regional Screen is still open for applications.

#### **5. Any Other Competent Business and Date of Next Meeting**

P Prentice thanked Gillian Martin MSP for taking part in the MSP Connectors Programme which has been successful, with many MSPs taking part; as well as many towns taking part to host. It has received good press profile and helps to raise the profile of towns among policy makers and the general public. STP is running a range of campaigns including Future Town Design Competition and Scotland's Most Beautiful High Street; and the annual conference as part of Scotland's Towns Week. All details are on the STP website.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 11th December, Towns: Vacant Spaces Made Good

## APPENDIX 1 – RECORD OF 4 SEPTEMBER AGENDA

### **Cross Party Group on Towns and Town Centres**

13:00-14:30, Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September

Committee Room 1, Scottish Parliament

### **AGENDA**

#### **'Towns for Leisure'**

- 12:30 Meet in Parliament reception area
- 13:00 Coffee, tea and shortbread available
- 13:10 Welcome and Opening Remarks – Gillian Martin MSP, Deputy Convener
- 13:15 Minutes of the Meeting of the Cross Party Group held 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2019  
Matters Arising from the Minutes
- 13:20 AGM Business

#### **Towns for Leisure**

- 13:30 **Introduction**  
Phil Prentice, Chief Officer, Scotland's Towns Partnership
- 13:35 **Your Cinema, Your Community**  
**Robert** Livingston, Director, Regional Screen Scotland
- 13:45 **Fitness Festivals and Footfall**  
Colin Moulson, BID Manager, Dunoon Presents
- 13:55 **The Future of Events in Towns**  
Tony l'Anson, BID Manger
- 14:05 Discussion
- 14:25 Any Other Competent Business
- 14:30 Close of Meeting

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 11th December, Towns: Vacant Spaces Made Good

## APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Cross Party Group on Towns and Town Centres Attendance  
4 September 2019, 13:00 – 14:30 , Committee Room 1

### Attendees

Carol	Anderson	TSB
Elizabeth A.	Bell	
Neil	Bibby	MSP
Irene	Bisset	National Pride
Elaine	Bone	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Chic	Brodie	
Sandra	Brown	Eden Project
Stephen	Campopiano	WSP
Joan	Davidson	
Geraldine	El Masrou	Motherwell Shopping Centre
Mags	Fenner	Go Forth Stirling
Alex	Fleming	Falkirk Delivers
Jocelyne	Fleming	The Old Town BID
Ian	Fowell	
Julia	Frost	PAS
Rona	Gibb	Paths for All
Graham	Hamilton	PJ Leggate
Karen	Henderson	
Jennifer	Horn	East Dunbartonshire Council
Tony	I'anson	Milngavie BID
Maxine	Irvine	Milngavie BID
Claire	Jefcoate	
Alison	Jones	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Fraser	Kerr	
Graham	Lebeter	
David	Lindgren	
Robert	Livingston	Regional Screen Scotland
David	Lonsdale	Scottish Retail Consortium
Gillian	Martin	MSP
Murdo	Macdonald	Church of Scotland
David	McAllister	PAS
Sandra	McCallum	
David	McKay	
Jim	McNally	Carluke BID
Colin	Moulson	Dunoon Presents
Rebecca	Muir	Scotland's Food and Drink County
Oliver	Mundell	MSP
Andrew	Ormston	Draw Wylie
Gillian	Petty	TSB
Ruth	Powell	
Phil	Prentice	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Derek	Rankine	SURF
Pete	Reid	Falkirk Council
Grant	Riley	North Lanarkshire Council
Ewan	Robertson	Scotland's Towns Partnership

Mark	Rowley	Scottish Borders Council
Lyn	Simpson	
Robert	Singer	Fresh Ayr
Susan	Smith	East Lothian Council
Tom	Sneddon	DTAS
Calum	Strang	Church of Scotland
Richard	Todd	East Dunbartonshire Council
John	Turner	Byres Road and Lanes BID
Sunil	Varu	Edinburgh West End BID
Charlotte	Wade	
Andrew	Walker	Fife Council
Sam	Whitmore	NHS
Keith	Wimbles	Impact Funding Partners

Apologies

Gregor	Graham	East Dunbartonshire Council
John	Scott	MSP