

Port Glasgow Town Centre Regeneration Forum (TCRF) Minute of Meeting

Held Thursday 20 June 2024 at 3pm by hybrid format within the Municipal Buildings Customer Services Meeting Room 4 (CSC MR4) and via Webex Videoconferencing.

ATTENDING

Cllr C Curley (Chair)	Inverclyde Council - Ward 1
Cllr S McCabe	Inverclyde Council - Ward 1
Cllr/Provost D McKenzie	Inverclyde Council - Ward 2
Cllr K Law	Inverclyde Council - Ward 2
A Ross	Port Glasgow West Community Council - Chair
T Rodgers	Port Glasgow West Community Council - Secretary
D Blaney	Port Glasgow West Community Council
R Ahlfeld	Inverclyde Community Development Trust (ICDT) - Chief Executive
C Hart	Inverclyde Tourist Group - Treasurer
R Orr	River Clyde Homes - Head of Asset and Regeneration
S Vernal	River Clyde Homes - Housing Services Manager
R Braddick	Inverclyde Council - Service Manager, Corporate Policy, Performance and Communications
J Horn	Inverclyde Council – Physical Regeneration Manager
G Murray	Inverclyde Council - Technical Services Manager
A Johnston	Inverclyde Council - Business Development Officer Town Centres
AM Bagstad (Minute)	Inverclyde Council - Committee Officer

1.0 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Cllr Curley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Cllr Curley, A Ross, T Rodger, Cllr/Provost D McKenzie, G Murray and AM Bagstad present, all other attendees accessed the meeting remotely.

1.2 Apologies received from E Baird, E Cannon, E Dickie, K Green, N McIlvanney, E Montgomery (G Murray substituting), K Orr, G Smith and J A Wilson.

1.3 There were no declarations intimated.

2.0 Approval of Minute and Matters Arising

2.1 The Minute of the meeting held 14 March 2024, were approved by Cllr Curley and Cllr McCabe.

2.2 Matters arising covered under today's Agenda.

3.0 Port Glasgow TCRF Budget

- 3.1 A Port Glasgow TCRF Budget snapshot for June 2024 was disseminated prior to the meeting. Staff from Finance were unable to attend the meeting due to the conclusion of Year End accounts.
- 3.2 It was noted Parklea Branching Out previously had a contract to supply, install and maintain 24 hanging baskets; plant and maintain raised bed planters on Princes Street, as well as plant and maintain bed areas located in Fore Street and Greenock Road.
- The contract ended in March 2023, but Parklea continued to do the work throughout 2023 in kind. However, Parklea contacted IC Officers asking if these works would be required for 2024, at a cost of £7k.
- 3.3 A conversation was held discussing possible long-term funding solutions with suggestions for sponsorships, bids or more sustainable funding streams to support the continuation of yearly floral works in Port Glasgow TC and it was requested IC's Mr. McIlvanney takes this as an action.

Decided:-

- **The Forum unanimously agreed to spend £7k of available Forum funds for PGTC 2024 floral works from Parklea Branching Out.**
- **IC's Mr. McIlvanney to identify a more sustainable funding stream/bid or sponsorship for funding ongoing floral works in PGTC.**

4.0 Town Centre Action/Master Plan

- 4.1 A Town Centre Action Plan Consultation event was held on 19 June 2024. It was noted 20 people attended, with a good range of information and suggestions gathered so far. The Online Consultation is open until 3 July 2024 and thereafter information and ideas will be collated together. ([Link to online Consultation Boards](#) and [Link to online Survey](#))
- 4.2 It was agreed that item 6.1d 'Possible Suggested Projects' of the agenda is to be merged into the Action Plan, to ensure all ideas and suggestions are gathered under the one plan of action.
- 4.3 A Draft Plan was scheduled to be ready by mid-summer. However, Officers will liaise with the consultants for a confirmed timeframe and a Draft Plan will be presented to the next PGTCRF meeting scheduled for 20 September 2024. Officers hope to submit the Draft Plan, for approval, to the Environment and Regeneration (E&R) Committee meeting scheduled for 31 October 2024.
- 4.4 It was noted that any further consultation on the Draft Action Plan will be limited, due to timescales, but Officers will advise if this is achievable.
- 4.5 A Draft Action Plan and report with a categorised list identifying short, medium, and long-term projects with estimated costs, is to be distributed to the Forum before the next Forum meeting, to assist Forum members with deciding which projects can be taken forward under available funds.

- 4.6 The Final Action Plan will be used as a platform for applying/bidding for future project funding.

Decided:-

- **Current Suggested Projects to be merged into the Action Plan**
- **Draft Action Plan and report with a full list of suggested projects, categorised into short, medium, and long-term projects with estimated costs to be distributed prior to the next Forum meeting.**
- **Forum to decide which projects to take forward under current available Forum funds at next meeting.**
- **Draft Action plan to be submitted to October's E&R Committee for approval.**
- **Final Action Plan to be used for future funding applications/bids.**

5.0 Port Glasgow Shipbuilder Environments

- 5.1 A proposed plan of works for the Shipbuilders and Coronation park area was shared at the meeting ([Appendix 1](#)).
- 5.2 It was stated that the works have been split into four projects, being carried out by four different Inverclyde Council Teams as follows:-
- 1 Installation of Pedestrian Lighting – Roads Services.
 - 2 The repair and refurbishment of the Elizabeth Wood Ingles fountain – Property Asset Services.
 - 3 Interpretation signage/boards – Regeneration Services.
 - 4 Planting/landscaping around Shipbuilders Sculpture – Environmental Services.
- 5.3 Projects 1 and 2 will commence first, with all projects scheduled to be completed by March 2025.
- 5.4 It was noted that, for various health and safety reasons and ongoing maintenance costs, the Elizabeth Wood Ingles fountain would not have plumbed water. However, it was highlighted that the installation of the Scottish Water Top-up point, will provide access to suitable drinking water.
- 5.5 It was noted that a previous wall had been removed from the eastern side promenade area of the park (between the slipway and Fergusons) which is unsightly. It was requested that officers include/consider refurbishing this area, either under these environmental works or under the Action Plan.
- 5.6 It was highlighted that the crucial issues with making the park more safely accessible and inclusive with the TC, is the extremely busy dual carriage way, which sits between both and there is no easy solution to safely linking the park with the TC.
- 5.7 This issue was also highlighted in the Consultation Boards for the public to vote on and with the opportunity to give their own ideas/suggestion.

- 5.8 Some suggestions at the meeting were the construction of a footbridge or possible underpass and it was advised that ideas need to be aspirational.

Decided:-

- **Eastern side promenade area of park to be refurbished either under these works or under the TC Action Plan.**
- **Officers and TC Action Plan to look at all options for linking the TC to Coronation Park.**

6.0 Inverclyde Council (IC) Project Updates

6.1 VERBAL UPDATES

a) Trader Engagement (Scotland's Towns Partnerships)

- A Scotland's Towns Partnerships (STP) Team is scheduled to carry out an informal visit to PGTC at the beginning of July. The confirmed date will be sent to all Forum members, for traders to have the opportunity to engage with the team.
- It was advised that STP are funded to provide support with developing Business Improvement Districts (BIDs - [link to BIDs information](#) and [link to STP BIDs page](#)).
- STP also offer support with access to funding however, this informal visit is to identify if PGTC Traders would be interested in developing a PGTC BID.
- It was requested that the Retail Park Traders are also included with this engagement exercise. IC Officers will feed this back to the STP Team.

Decided:-

- **STP's PGTC visit date to be confirmed and sent to all Forum.**
- **IC Officers to advise STP Team that the retail park is to be included as part of PGTC and possible development of a BID.**

b) John Wood Street (JWS)

- IC's Property Development and River Clyde Homes (RCH) have teamed up to identify issues with empty commercial and residential properties, tackle environmental works, resolves water ingress issues, and develop an effective letting strategy for empty commercial and residential properties.
- The team meet regularly, and the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 24 June 2024.
- The Chair requested that a report, listing the issues and required work identified by the team, the issues/works that have already been resolved/carried out, what is still outstanding and the plan of action they have to conclude; as well as an outline of the marketing strategy they have planned for effective letting of empty commercial and residential properties, is submitted to the next Forum meeting.
- It was further requested that the report also highlights any issues that would require a higher level of regeneration interventions and would be out-with the ability of the team to resolve.
- The Chair requested the report is submitted prior to the next meeting.

- It was noted that RCH are currently carrying out a long-term review of their assets and are at the data analysis stage. A more intensive review will be undertaken in the next 3 to 4 months.

Decided:-

- **A report setting out TC residential and commercial issues and required works, works completed to date, outstanding works, plan of action to conclude outstanding works, outline of planned marketing/letting strategy for empty commercial and residential properties and detailing any issues that require a higher level of regeneration interventions – to be submitted prior to the next meeting.**

c) Town Centre Shop Canopies

- It was noted the broken Canopies have been replaced.
- Property Development Team to progress with the power washing of the canopies.

Decided:-

- **Property Development Team, to progress with the Power washing of canopies.**

d) Possible Suggested Projects

- Item moved under the Action Plan item, for further consideration and discussions.

e) River Clyde Homes Maintenance Responsibilities

- At the PGTCRF meeting in March 2024, RCH advised they would undertake weekly litter picking in the Alleys.
- It was noted that there has been a significant reduction in litter within the Alleys following this intervention.

f) Heritage Fund Project

- At the PGTCRF meeting in March 2024, Inverclyde Community Development Trust (ICDT) advised they had submitted a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), to create a project that delves into PG's history of film, cinema and going to the pictures in PG.
- ICDT confirmed just under £100k funding has been secured and they have appointed a Heritage Worker. The heritage project will also have a focus of engaging with people who have dementia, socially isolated people, new Scots, and care experienced young people.
- It was noted that ICDT will work towards linking this project into the PGTCRF strategy.
- The project launches on Saturday 22 June 2024, the same date as the Comet Festival. The heritage project officer will be there to promote and share information about the project.
- ICDT will provide ongoing updates to future meetings.

Decided:-

- **ICDT to send list of NLHF Project events and venues.**
- **ICDT to provide ongoing updates to future forum meetings.**

g) King George VI – Community Hub

- It was noted that an airtightness test was carried out in May 2024, with the aim to achieve a measurement of 3, the test achieved an excellent measurement of 2.6, which exceeded expectations and requirements for low carbon targets.
- The Contractor has since progressed with electrical, mechanical, and photovoltaic works. However, works are taking longer due to ensuring the airtightness achieved is maintained and all technical targets are met.
- It was noted it will take approximately 3 months, at least, to complete the works.
- It was noted that this project has been a learning curve for everyone involved, which added to timescales and increase costs. However, the positive aspects from this project will be a community building that will be environmentally efficient, with technical energy saving abilities.
- It was advised that additional works to enclose mechanical plant required the addition of a suspended ceiling, but by the end of the project, the building will be fully fitted out and decorated internally and externally, ready for handover and use.

Decided:-

- **Report progress update to next meeting.**

h) Scottish Water Top-Up Point

- It was noted the Top-up Point is in place, but a road lane closure is required to have it connected to the water mains.

Decided:-

- **Roads Services to provide update on mains connection works to next meeting.**

i) Business Support and Property

- Mr. Johnston advised that a leaflet highlighting the business grants and loans available was included with all the non-domestic rate statements that are sent out at the beginning of the financial year.
- It was noted that the team had not received many enquiries from businesses within PGTC.
- It was noted that at previous Forum meetings, a Business Support and Property Update report was submitted, providing updates on the business support and loans provided to PG Businesses within the period prior to the meeting.

The report also provided an update on vacant commercial properties, explanation for being empty and plans for bringing them back to the letting market.

The final part of the report listed all the available grants, loans and business support IC had to offer.

It was requested that this report be reinstated and distributed prior to each meeting.

- It was further requested that the link to IC's Business Development Team section, is to be distributed via the minute.

Decided:-

- **Business Support and Property Update Report to be reinstated and submitted prior to all PGTCRF meetings.**
- [Link to IC's Business Development Team's Section.](#)

j) Port Glasgow 2025 (PG25)

- No one from PG25 was available to provide an update on this item.
- It was noted that IC Officers have been requested to also look at proposals and possible funding streams, for supporting celebration events which may also tie in with other events that are happening in Glasgow; towards a 2025 yearlong event.

A report with Officers findings and recommendations is scheduled to be submitted to the next Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee meeting, on Tuesday 13 August 2024.

- It was also noted that Historic Environment Scotland (HES) have been approached to include PG's Newark Castle in the celebrations and in partnership with IC and ICDT, they are looking at creating and holding activities in and around the Castle too.

Decided:-

- **Possible IC 2025 celebrations and funding streams report to be submitted to next P&R Committee.**
- **HES, IC and ICDT partnership's planned 2025 Celebration updates, to be submitted to future Forum meetings.**

7.0 River Clyde Homes (RCH) – Statistical Information

7.1 It was noted that no recent TC anti-social behaviours had been reported.

7.2 RCH requested a Housing Officers for PGTC to assess which RCH residential properties required broken window interventions. It was noted that all properties with broken windows within PGTC are in private ownership.

7.3 The following voids were noted:-

- Total 52 voids in TC;
- 10 voids within the high rises (classed as demand properties);
- 12 TC voids (classed as demand properties);
- 17 voids (classed as low demand properties); and
- 14 Out of Management properties requiring various intensive repairs.

7.3.1 It was noted that May 2024, saw significant letting activities within the Eastern Team.

7.3.2 RCH Officers will provide tabled figures to show letting movement within PGTC each quarter, to gauge the effectiveness of the short and medium-term interventions.

7.4 It was advised that the Cleaning intervention within the Alleys has been successful. However, RCH Officers in the medium-term will need to review the sustainability for continuing this project.

7.5 There is an RCH's Working in neighbourhoods (WIN) day taking place on 21 June 2024 and Cllr Curley has agreed to take part. There will be approximately 140 RCH staff out in force for the day.

Decided:-

- **RCH Officers to provide tabled figures to show letting movement within PGTC each quarter, to gauge the effectiveness of the short and medium-term interventions.**
- **RCH to report back on outcome of WIN Day.**

8.0 River Clyde Homes (RCH) – Planned Works

8.1 RCH are currently carrying out an Assets Survey which considers properties condition and demand levels. They are at the data collation stage and the information gathered will evolve over time and help them to collaborate with IC and private ownerships within the different areas and work towards agreed outcomes.

Decided:-

- **Progress updates on Asset Strategy to be provided for next meeting.**

9.0 Any Other Competent Business (AOCB)

9.1 It was requested that all future PGTCRF project updates are provided in report format before each meeting to expedite business at the meetings.

Decided:-

- **It was requested that all updates for the meeting are submitted well in advance of the meeting for distributing prior to the meeting.**

9.2 The Port Glasgow West Community Council (PGWCC) gave an overview of the meeting they had with Savills, the factors for PG's Gallagher Retail Park to raise a number of community issues. A copy of the items discussed at the meeting can be viewed at [appendix 2](#).

9.3 It was noted that the Comet project is still at testing the market stage as follows:-

9.3.1 Contact has been made with the University of Main and it was advised the 3D project option is complex and expensive.

9.3.2 IC Officers have pulled together the final information for the Prior Information Notice (PIN), which will be submitted for approval, the week commencing 24 June 2024. Thereafter, the PIN will be published on the Public Contracts Scotland portal and Creative Scotland's opportunities website.

9.3.3 The PIN issue date is scheduled for 26 June 2024 with a response deadline of 10 July 2024 however, these dates are dependent on the approval process.

9.3.4 It is hoped the feedback from the PIN will provide Officers with a more definitive route to market.

9.3.5 Cllr Curley carried out historical research at the University of Glasgow, gathering information for the Comet story boards and signage project, which will be developed in tandem with the Comet project.

Decided:-

- **Officers to feedback outcome of PIN notice.**

9.4 It was noted that an action (Relocation of the Neighbourhood Recycling Point (NRP) within the Bay/Fore Street Carpark) from the PGTCRF meeting held 4 September 2023, had not been taken forward due to ill health. However, the PGWCC would like to take this project forward and have submitted a request to IC's Physical Regeneration Manager. It was advised at the meeting that the PGWCC should directly contact Road Services, to progress this item, and feedback at the next meeting.

Decided:-

- **PGWCC to directly contact IC's Road Services to progress the outstanding action item Relocation of the Neighbourhood Recycling Point (NRP) within the Bay/Fore Street Carpark and provide feedback at the next meeting.**

9.5 It was also noted the bushes in front of the Dry Dock Mural require constant pruning to keep them from blocking the Mural and the PGWCC feel that maintenance is lacking, as they have to submit numerous requests, each year, to have the bushes pruned.

Ms. Horn advised IC's Corporate Director for Environment and Regeneration has sent a request to Environmental Services to have the bushes pruned.

9.6 Cllr/Provost McKenzie stated he has received several complaints from PGTC community complaining about a frequently overflowing blue commercial bin on Princes Street, outside the undertakers; which is very rarely emptied. There was also evidence of vermin, and it was advised pest control measures had been installed on 19 June 2024.

It was also noted that the commercial waste bin behind Manzils is also frequently overflowing and attracting vermin.

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to contact Environmental Health Services requesting they engage with PGTC commercial traders, to encourage them to be responsible for their commercial waste.**

10.0 Date of Next Meeting

Friday 20 August 2024, by Hybrid format (Customer Services Meeting Room 4 and via Microsoft Teams Videoconferencing).

Chair Signature Date

APPENDIX 1



Coronation Park Proposed Works

APPENDIX 2

Extract from Secretary's Annual report PG West Community Council, AGM, 27May 2024

10. We met with the Gallagher Retail Park Factoring Agents (Savills), to raise a number of issues that have been raised at our meetings over the past year or more. Robert Simpson sent us a map layout of the Gallagher Retail Park estate (see attached). The Tesco estate is the responsibility of Tesco.

* We had concerns for the two large puddles that regularly built up when it rained, and soaked pedestrians feet, and raised this with Roads Services. They informed us that the road had not been adopted; the road and pavements were the responsibility of Gallagher Retail Park Factoring Agents (Savills). They informed us that they had not realised that they were responsible for Glen Mill Way. They have now introduced a six monthly drain cleaning contract. Local shoppers will now see that the puddles have gone.

*We raised the issue regarding the fact that there was no bus shelter on Glen Mill Way. Robert informed us that discussions had taken place, Tesco, Savills, SPT, and Roads Services, but no one had money. We will now be seeking a meeting of all stakeholders to pursue this issue, stakeholders include: Tesco's management, Gallagher Retail Park Factors, Cllr David Wilson (who is Inverclyde Council's rep on the SPT), local Ward 2 Councillors, and not least our PGWCC representatives. We argued that a bus shelter would enhance the shopping experience of shoppers using both Tesco's and the Retail Park. The bus shelter would need to move some twenty metres. Roads Services advised that a bus shelter cannot be build on a pavement, but on the site of the embankment near the recycling point. This land is owned by Tesco.

* As we stood at B&M, we observed that 80%+ of pedestrians crossed over at the dipped pavement between B&M and Tesco, less than 20% went up to the zebra crossing near Next. Robert advised that they were to do road repairs at the entry to the Retail Park. When this repair work is being carried out, they will consider painting a zebra crossing at this point, but would not have lights to stop traffic. It will depend on driver courtesy to stop.

* We proposed there should be benches for shoppers to take a break, preferably with sheltered covering.

* We raised concerns about the unwelcoming sight of staff and customers standing smoking in front of various shops. We asked Savills to inform the Unit Managers. We suggested sheltered smoking bays in the car park area. He informed us that this would be difficult as parking spaces were at a premium.

* We raised the issue of broadening the parking bays, as large transit vans, and other large vehicles took up most of space in these bays. One example was right in front of us, where a transit van was only six inches from a driver's door. This would require the driver to enter the car by

the passenger door. This would be difficult for drivers with partial mobility problems (but no blue badge). Robert informed us that the bays were in accordance with regulatory guidelines, in terms of width and length.

*We asked that all shopping trolleys should be chained (coin access), to stop littering the PG Town Centre and surrounding housing estates with abandoned trolleys, some causing damage to vehicles. Tesco is now doing this, which is reducing the number of abandoned trolleys being taken off the estate.

* We raised concerns regarding the Glen Burn, behind the Retail Park; next to Ardgowan Street, which has an old 'building site' fence erected around it (for safety). Local residents living nearby informed us that this section of the burn is often used for dumping. This was concerning following the earlier 'flooding events in the area. Robert advised us the section of the Glen Burn, behind the rear of the Pet Food Unit, was not part of the Gallagher estate. We will need to speak to Scottish Water, or Inverclyde Council to see who is responsible for this section of the Glen Burn.

ACTIONS:

- We will seek to convene a meeting of stakeholders, with a view to getting a bus shelter built on Glen Mill Way.
- Robert will consider painting a zebra crossing between B&M and Tesco.
- Robert will consider installing seating within the Estate.
- Robert will contact unit managers to ask they install coin operated trolley links, however, this will be the responsibility of each unit.
- We will enquire as to who is responsible for the section of the Glen Burn, just off Ardgowan Street.



Map of Gallagher Retail Park Estate

End of Document.