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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Environment and Regeneration Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>16 January 2014</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Environment Regeneration &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>E+R/14/01/SJ/01</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Additional Earmarked Reserves – Regeneration and Planning</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for proposals in respect of the surplus reserves allocated to Regeneration and Planning under the control of the Environment and Regeneration Committee in September 2013.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Policy & Resources Committee of 24 September 2013 agreed that surplus reserves of £50,000 be allocated to shop front improvements and £150,000 should be allocated to further employability measures.
- 2.2 In respect of the £50,000 allocation for shop front and signage improvements it proposed for a programme of works to be undertaken offering Council tenants up to 100% grant intervention for these works. The initial targeted area will involve six shop front refurbishments at Moss Road, Port Glasgow and will roll out to other shopping locations in Inverclyde subject to any balance of funding, with prioritisation given to the Council's premises at Grieve Road, Greenock.
- 2.3 It is proposed to allocate the £150,000 for employability measures across a number of existing programmes including FJF and the graduate programme by increasing the number of outputs in these programmes. As part of this allocation it is proposed to ring fence £25,000 worth of support for clients with complex support needs involving mental health and/or physical impairment, through condition management and supported employment interventions.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That Committee approve the use of the surplus reserve allocation for the proposed shop front and signage upgrade works in the specified areas.
- 3.2 That Committee approve the use of the surplus reserve allocation for the employability measures identified in Para 4.5.

**Stuart Jamieson**  
**Head of Regeneration and Planning**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Inverclyde Council has a portfolio of shops and commercial and industrial premises which are administered utilising full repairing and insuring leases. The Council has also operated a successful property improvement grant over a number of years.
- 4.2 Inverclyde Council recognises that the quality of shop offering in the area is of major importance to both the overall attractiveness of Inverclyde and the vitality of local retailing. This project will contribute towards improving the appeal and appearance of local shopping. The opportunity to revitalise Council owned shops and in turn local business satisfies the strategic aims and objectives of the Council. In recent times specific interventions by the Council and Riverside Inverclyde have targeted significant improvement in the built environment by offering up to 100% support for shop front and signage improvements. Examples of which can be seen at Grey Place and Dubbs Road.
- 4.3 Officers have reviewed the property portfolio and consider that Moss Road in Port Glasgow would benefit most from this type of intervention, followed in ranking order by Grieve Road, Greenock.
- 4.4 Inverclyde's employability pipeline is funded by the Council from core budgets and one off initiatives. This programme has also been successful in attracting European funding, both from ESF and ERDF and these funds are fully committed for the duration of 1, 2 or 3 years depending on the programme type.
- 4.5 Due to the recent changes in welfare reform, particularly from a benefits perspective, our existing services are coming under significant pressure from clients who are not mainstream to the pipeline under existing arrangements. It is proposed to introduce a number of general and specific services targeting employability needs:-
- Increase number of Future Jobs posts by 12 posts.
  - Specific programme for over 25's for Future Jobs/ Motivation/ Job Experience activity (26 weeks @minimum wage etc.)
  - Specific funding for people coming off E.S.A. Need 13 week paid activity or specific programme.
  - Specific programme for people from the "failed National Work Programme".
  - Increase number of graduate places by 6 places
  - Specific Future Job posts linked to private sector and then to wage subsidy e.g. 6 months free and 3 months wage subsidy or 6 months wage subsidy and 6 months free, including specific measures for former armed services personnel.

The precise financial allocations to each of the programmes cannot be identified at this stage due to variances which occur between public and private sector placement allocations and indeed even pay scales, however the overall costs will be contained within the overall budget.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Financial:**  
One off costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report £'000	Virement From	Other Comments
Reserves	Shopfronts	2014/2015	£50		
Reserves	Employability measures	2013/2015	£150		

5.2 **Human Resources:** No implications.

5.3 **Legal, Equalities and Diversity:** No implications.

5.4 **Repopulation:** The Council's aims stated in the Corporate Statement 2013-17 are assisted by the recommendations in this report by improving the attractiveness of the location and by removing barriers to employment.