**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR HEARTLANDS DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FUND – WHITBURN**

**Background to Fund**

Developer Contributions Funding Schemes consist of monies that the council has received from large housing developments (mostly known as ‘Core Development Areas’) as part of ‘Section 75’ agreements which detail what contributions developers will provide towards local infrastructure and when they will provide these. Sometimes this includes monies which are towards general town or village improvements, such as those below, which the council then administers as a fund.

The monies in this fund come from the Heartlands development to the south-west and south of Whitburn.

The developer obligation (which is known as a ‘Section 75 Agreement’) relating to the development site at Heartlands obligated the developer to provide funding for town and village improvements for Whitburn and Fauldhouse upon the occupation of the 200th house on the Heartlands development.

**Funding**

Funds for this first became available in 2020. They were split on a per capita (population) basis between Fauldhouse and Whitburn. In Whitburn, the full funds were initially allocated. However, d**ue to the return of some funds that were initially allocated to a project in Whitburn, there is now £21,627 available for Whitburn projects.**

Applications for Whitburn are now **OPEN**. Final application submission is due by noon on **Monday 12 August 2024**.

**Who Can Apply**

All community groups can apply, provided they have a constitution or governing document, which they can evidence, and a bank account for that group.

Council services can also apply to this fund to fund projects provided they are not already financially committed to.

**Eligibility**

As the name suggests, this fund is for town and village improvements.

Only applications that deliver or support capital projects can apply to this fund. This can include design costs/ professional fees as part of a capital project. If you are unsure whether or not your project is eligible, please contact the Regeneration Team on the details below to enquire.

Projects which are eligible for funding include the following, though this is not an exhaustive list:

* landscaping works including the provision and maintenance of public space;
* street furniture and lighting;
* townscape enhancement;
* litter management and recycling (excluding general street cleaning activities);
* crime prevention measures e.g. CCTV;
* improved public transport facilities (to be excluded);
* signage and information;
* promotion and marketing;
* car parking improvements and management;
* town and village centre studies;
* site assembly/ site servicing (including CPO); and
* traffic calming/ traffic management.

However, please note that you will need to demonstrate within the application that you have considered the ongoing/ longer-term maintenance requirements for the capital costs you are applying for. This includes having looked into obtaining permissions if the land/ property in question does not belong to your organisation or service.

**Eligible Areas for Projects**

The eligible areas are those defined by the settlement boundaries for Whitburn as defined in the West Lothian Local Development Plan.

The boundary for Whitburn is within the Appendix at the end of this guidance.

**Applying**

To request an application form, please email the Regeneration Team at regenerationteam@westlothian.gov.uk. An officer will contact you to discuss what you are looking to apply for and provide you with the application itself.

You are strongly encouraged to discuss your proposals with the Community Regeneration Officer (details below) prior to writing your application. This can help identify any issues which may need to be resolved before your application is made, particularly where your project is on council land or property, or whether it requires other types of permissions.

**Deadline**

Applications for funding for the Whitburn part of the fund must be submitted to the Regeneration Team at regenerationteam@westlothian.gov.uk **by noon on Monday 12 August 2024.**

**Process**

The key stages of assessing funding applications are proposed as:

1. The application is submitted to the council’s Community Planning and Regeneration Team **by noon on Monday 12 August 2024.**
2. The application is assessed by officers against the eligibility of the scheme and having regard to other projects being progressed within the settlement. Applications deemed not to meet the criteria, or those which are similar to or duplicate other projects, will be rejected at this stage.
3. Officers of the council’s Community Planning and Regeneration Team will hold relevant consultations in line with the Section 75 agreement. This will consist of a meeting to provide any comment on applications and any feedback on initial proposals for funding allocations made by the council’s Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration.
4. The availability of funding will be assessed by the council’s Head of Planning Economic Development and Regeneration having regard to the balance of the fund available, taking account of other committed projects or projects being developed by the council.
5. The applications will be reported to the relevant Local Area Committee (LAC) of West Lothian Council indicating the Head of Service’s intention with regards to the application. The LAC will have an opportunity to comment on the application. It is currently planned for proposals to go the **2 September 2024** meeting of the LAC.

1. A decision on funding will be taken by the Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration having regard to the view of the LAC.
2. Applicants will then receive feedback on the outcome of their application.
3. Any remaining funds will be rolled over into a new round of funding.

**Given the timescales for approving successful applications, only projects which have a start date from September 2024 or after will be considered.**

**Contacts**

Whitburn – Michelle Murray, Community Regeneration Officer, 07500 816855, michelle.murray@westlothian.gov.uk

General enquiries, or to receive the application form, email: regenerationteam@westlothian.gov.uk

**Appendix: Local Development Plan – Settlement Boundary for Whitburn**

The **black line** below shows the settlement boundary for Whitburn. The subject of all applications must within this boundary.

