

Yeovil Vision Update Report

Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities
Service Manager: Natalie Fortt, Area Development Lead – South
Lead Officer: Helen Rutter, Assistant Director Communities
Contact Details: helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01963) 435012

Purpose of the Report

To give an overview of work being undertaken through the relaunched Yeovil Vision Board

Public Interest

The Council works closely with Partners, including business representatives, to improve the vitality of Yeovil town centre. It is also actively seeking investors to bring back into use vacant sites and increase the retail and other facilities wanted in the town centre. This report summarises the current activity being progressed by the Board

Recommendation

That Members note the report

Background

Area South Committee approved the revised Terms of Reference for the Yeovil Vision Board in June 2016. At that time it requested that regular update reports be brought before the Committee to ensure that all councillors are kept briefed on its progress. The Committee is represented on the Board by the Chairman, Vice chairman and a third member that rotates dependent on the items under consideration.

The Area South Committee oversees the Yeovil Vision Board, which is one of the recognised formal partnerships on the SSDC partnership register. The Board has refocused its work in the light of the newly introduced Area South Regeneration Board. This latter body considers the overall programme of major infrastructure improvements across the Area and SSDC/public sector led economic investment schemes.

The opportunity was taken, at the same time, to rationalise the Yeovil Town Team structure by bringing its operational groups under the oversight of the Yeovil Vision Board.

Progress Report

At its first meeting in late June it:

- Welcomed David Woan, President of Yeovil Chamber and a further business representative (to be appointed) onto the Board
- Considered a project, led by Cllr John Clark, The Lynx Heritage Project seeking to secure an anniversary display of the Helicopter in Yeovil town centre in August 2016. Sadly this could not proceed, despite strong support from many quarters as the museum in Weston Super Mare could not release it. A second project was also discussed to create a permanent helicopter display, off the public highway at a suitable, prominent location, promoting Yeovil's heritage. This is now being explored.

- Released a sum of up to £10,000 to be spent by the Marketing and Events Group, chaired by David Mills, of the Quedam. This will be used to run a high visibility marketing campaign, utilising the established Love Yeovil branding. This will occur from August to the end of the year and underpin major events including Super Saturday and Christmas Lights. A report on progress with this campaign and the Terms of Reference will be brought back to the next meeting of the Board in September
- Similar reports on the Yeovil One and Yeovil Town Centre Enhancement Group will be given at the next meeting
- The Board reaffirmed its backing for a simplified Urban Development Framework, looking at a small number of the key town centre key regeneration sites, their optimal uses and the traffic management implication/ schemes required. The resourcing of this project is being considered via the Regeneration Boards
- Agreed to introduce a stronger focus on key indicators of the health of the town centre, to help gauge the effectiveness of the various funded interventions approved by the Board

Yeovil Vision Board now has clear lines of communication and access, via the Chairman of Area South and the Town Council representative Cllr Lock, to link its work up with other projects being taken forward via the Area South Regeneration Board. Through this mechanism there is also the chance to access LEP and Growth Board funding.

Next Steps

It is anticipated that additional resources will be made available to the Strategic regeneration Board by the District Executive in early October. This will give a mechanism for funding the simplified UDF which, if approved, will commence this autumn

The next Yeovil Vision Board meeting is on 6th September. A verbal update from this will be given at Area South Committee on 7th September 2016.

Financial Implications

There are no new financial implications arising directly from this report. A number of funding streams are ring fenced for projects that help to deliver Yeovil Vision's objectives. The Board has delegated authority for allocating these budgets.

New projects seeking capital funds ring fenced for the regeneration of the Eastern End of Yeovil, from the Old Town Station capital reserve, are considered by the Area South Committee and authorised through District Executive.

Corporate Priority Implications

Work will contribute to the following specific actions in year 1 of the Council Plan:

- Progress key strategic projects in Yeovil
- Work with Regeneration Boards to deliver local projects eg improve access/ regeneration of Yeovil Town Centre
- Work hub in Yeovil
- Maintain levels of street cleanliness and increase joint working with parishes through parish ranger scheme

- Bring empty properties back into use

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None directly arising from this report

Equality and Diversity Implications

None directly arising from this report

Background Papers

Yeovil Vision and Town Centre Partnership files
