

13. Area North Capital Programme (Executive Decision)

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Purpose of the Report

To present recommendations for approval of a revised Area Capital Programme, following the production of the Area Development Plan 2007-08, which included a set of 10 local priorities for Area North.

Recommendations

Members are **recommended** to:

- (1) Adopt the revised Area North Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A
- (2) Note that Financial Services will present the revised programme in the next quarterly monitoring report, profiled over 3 years.

Background

The Area Capital Programme provides an important resource for the Area Committee to deliver the Area Development Plan within the overarching aims of the SSDC corporate plan, South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy and the Somerset Local Area Agreement.

Use of the capital programme enables the Area Committee to:

- Target SSDC resources at specific local needs
- Support innovative work – piloting new solutions to address local needs
- Work in partnership through the provision of match funding and grants

Introduction

The current Area Capital programme was last revised in 2004, with a 3 year programme of projects and allocations against local priorities, some schemes were carried forward from previous years:

Completed schemes (or near completion) from the past 5 years are shown below. It is important to note that SSDC funding may have been a small part of the total project cost, and many projects were led and managed locally:

- The Active England programme for youth facilities in High Ham, Martock, Somerton and Fivehead.
- Somerton Town centre enhancement / car parks
- Market towns schemes – drawn from community plans
 - Langport: Cockle Moor Bridge and pathway
 - Somerton: new public toilets; Memorial Park; play and skate at Gassons Lane
 - Martock: Pinnacle enhancement; recreation ground play area

- Langport Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) and town centre
- Play areas, village halls, youth facilities, sports and recreation facilities – supported through community grants.
- Easy access gates for stretches of the River Parrett Trail
- Feasibility work for the Martock-Langport cycleway (funded by Waterlinks grant)

Revising the Area North Capital Programme

Revising the current capital programme was primarily informed by the production of the Area North Development Plan (including 10 local priorities) adopted by the Area Committee in April 2007.

As part of this a number of activities were undertaken:

- Assessment of local community plans (town and parish) and other local sources of evidence of need
- Review of the sustainable community strategy evidence base to identify trends and key issues
- Alignment with SSDC corporate plan and Somerset LAA
- Officer and member workshop (November 06) to review evidence of need for capital investment within existing strategies and service plans
- Cross service workshop (March 2007) to identify key issues and trends as identified by service teams
- Members workshop (March 2007) to assess and prioritise local needs

Proposed Allocations

Proposed allocations of £270,000 are shown below and in **Appendix 1**, attached to this report. These represent allocations **in principle** at this stage. Detailed schemes are approved by the Area Committee using the SSDC capital appraisal.

If approved this will leave £26,134 unallocated within the programme.

Priority	Key Evidence	Allocation	Comments
Community safety, including traffic calming (ADP)	Parish Plans Area North Community Safety Action Plan	£15,000	Expected to be mainly grants, but could include SSDC led schemes
Address traffic and safety issues in West Street, Somerton	Somerton Town Plan	£50,000	Scheme at feasibility stage
Town centre improvements / Market House - Martock	Martock Area Community Plan	£50,000	Both schemes at outline design stage;
Langport - town centre access and car parks	Supporting tourism strategies, draft community plan, and Great Bow Yard business plan;	£50,000	Meets commitment made to facilitate local car parking improvements for Great Bow Yard and ongoing delivery of Langport Vision
Improving community halls and facilities	Parish plans / local assessments of need through community	£50,000	Supplements community grants budget; can assist long term viability of facility

	grants process		as well as increasing participation / access
Play and youth facilities	Parish plans Play and Youth strategies Area North Community Safety Action Panel	£35,000	Supplements community grants budget and current corporate programme for play areas, could be targeted at enhancing existing facilities to increase participation & access, and for diversionary activities
Small business grants	Economic development strategy / rural regeneration strategies Local business surveys	£20000	Grants of £1000, through the Area North small business development grants scheme
	TOTAL	£270,000	

Managing and monitoring the Area Capital Programme

The Area Committee creates the programme based on local need and priorities, based on the recommendations of service teams, co-ordinated by the Head of Area Development.

The Committee receives a quarterly report from Financial Services, which shows the progress of each scheme's budget, according to the planned spending over time.

The quarterly monitoring of the Area Development Plan provides another opportunity to monitor the progress of capital schemes.

Each project or programme has a named officer who is responsible for project management, reporting and evaluation.

In addition specific projects or programmes can be reported on separately by the lead officer, and included within the Committee's forward plan.

Evaluating the success of the programme.

A question often asked is "how do we know that our investment is making a difference where it counts?".

The SSDC capital appraisal process requires each completed to be evaluated. However if this is done close to completion the long term benefits may not be yet apparent.

Further work is needed to ensure that higher levels of investment are monitored on a longer term basis in order to fully inform future work.

Key projects may require a specific report, which presents the results of detailed evaluation of the effects and benefits. Others can be measured in simpler ways, and reported likewise – for example through an annual review of community grants.

High quality project management requires that the key factors by which success will be measured are established at the start of a scheme or programme – grant applications include this information, as does the capital appraisal form.

Implications to Corporate Priorities

The Area North Capital Programme supports the delivery of **all** corporate aims and in particular the following corporate objectives:

- 8 Work in partnership with the public and private sector in developing and delivery of the Market Towns Vision
- 9 Identify and address the particular issues affecting rural areas
- 11 Work in partnership with others to improve the health prospects for all
- 14 Maintain above 90% the people who generally feel safe in their communities
- 15 Increase to 65% by 2010 the people who feel engaged in and can influence decisions that affect their communities
- 16 Maintain above 80% the people satisfied with their neighbourhoods as a place to live
- 17 80% of residents and businesses satisfied with the quality of the local natural and built environment by 2012

Other implications

The financial resources available to the Area North Committee are also targeted at priorities identified in the Area Development Plan and Area North Community Safety Action Plan, and will often support priorities from within the following strategies and plans:

- Parish and community plans
- Tourism and Economic Development strategies (district / county / regional)
- The Somerset Local Area Agreement
- Youth, Play, Sports and Cultural Strategies

Financial implications

If the revised programme is approved this will allocate £270,000 in principle, leaving £26,134 unallocated. A further £277,000 is allocated in detail to previously approved schemes.

Background Papers: *Financial Services Area North budget file.*

APPENDIX A				
AREA NORTH CAPITAL PROGRAMME - In principle allocations 2007-2010				
NB The recommended revised allocations will be profiled over 3 years				
Priority schemes / projects (agreed 2004)	Gross Remaining Budget 31-Mar-07 £	Comment	2007 - 2010 Recommended revised allocation £	AREA PRIORITY
				(Ref: Area North Development Plan 2007-08)
Disabled access grants - Village Halls & Key locations.	7,818	Future needs could funded from revenue grants or from Community facilities see below	0	
Community safety projects	4,818	to address priorities from the Area North Community Safety Action Panel / parish projects	15,000	2. Promote safer communities, reducing crime and fear of crime and addressing anti-social behaviour, including traffic related issues
Extending use of community facilities	22,500	to address priorities identified by local communities through parish plans or similar	50,000	5. Maintain and improve access to services especially for health and social needs 6. Support communities to maintain and develop facilities and activities
New youth facilities	7,548	need still exists - see below for further allocation	0	
New play areas & youth facilities.	7,500	to address priorities identified by local communities through parish plans or similar	35,000	3. Work with young people to provide things to do and places to go 4. Develop play and learning opportunities for children and families
Parish Play Areas January 2001 play audit.	16,879	the outstanding projects could still be supported through above allocation	0	
Total Health and Well-Being	67,063		100,000	
Somerton - Address safety and access in West street / town centre	50,000	Top priority in Somerton Town Plan, at feasibility stage	50,000	Support the delivery of key projects to build sustainable communities (Section 2)
Traffic Calming schemes	13,000	No schemes came forward, however requests could be met from community safety allocation	0	
Rights of Way improvements	15,000	Many needs met through SCC & SSSC access scheme; new projects can be supported from elsewhere in programme	0	
Market Town schemes (Langport, Somerton, Martock)	20,000	For Martock - work in hand to progress enhancement of SSSC car park and Precinct area; Market House development. (See below for allocation to Somerton, Langport)	50,000	Support the delivery of key projects to build sustainable communities (Section 2)
Total Environment	98,000		100,000	
Small Business Grants	0	To continue the programme started in 06-07 from revenue, grants for alterations or modifications to improve business capacity	20,000	7. Promote economic vitality and growth - especially small-medium busienss and post offices / village shops
Langport - improving access and visitor facilities	44,000	Further allocation to address poor infrastructure and access to the River Parrett, and in and around the town centre, promoting visitor stay (linked to future Waterlinks projects for Langport)	50,000	Support the delivery of key projects to build sustainable communities (Section 2)
Total Economic Vitality	44,000		70,000	
Total agreed in Principal	209,063		270,000	
Un allocated Programme	87,071		26,134	
TOTAL UNALLOCATED & APPROVED IN PRINCIPAL	296,134		296,134	
CORPORATE CAPITAL PROGRAMME schemes in Area North				Corporate Priorities (Ref SSSC Corporate Plan objectives)
Great Bow Yard	84,000		84,000	6, 8, 18
Somerset Waterlinks	321,000	subject to result of application to BIG lottery	321,000	8,9,11,15,16,18,19
Community Play Schemes 2006 bid	115,000	led and managed by Sports and Leisure Service	115,000	8,9,11,14, 15,16
Youth Facilities Development 2006 bid	15,000	as above	15,000	8,9, 14, 15,16