

Area North Committee – 27th August 2008

12. Area North Development Plan – Quarterly Monitoring Report (Executive Decision)

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Palmer, Chairman of Area North Committee
Head of Service: Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North)
Lead Officer: Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North)
Contact Details: Charlotte.jones@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01458) 257401

Purpose of the Report

To provide members with the first quarter's monitoring report of the Area North Development Plan for 2008-09. The Head of Area Development will also make a brief presentation.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to:

- a) note and comment on the report.
- b) Allocate £1,500 from the Area North Committee reserves towards completion of the feasibility study for the Langport – Cartgate Cycleway.
- c) Allocate £2,500 from the Area North Reserves towards professional and other fees to progress priorities for the re-use of redundant buildings or workspace development.

Background

The Area North Development Plan (ADP) identifies key issues and needs within the parishes of Area North over which the Council can have a significant role in addressing or influencing future service provision.

The Area North Committee approved the plan in April 2008, and a full copy is available from the Head of Area Development (North). A monitoring report is presented quarterly. Reports from key partnerships, agencies and SSDC service teams are incorporated into the Forward Plan.

Several areas of the plan are achievable by targeting existing resources of officer time and funding budgets, since their success depends on reviewing current policy and practice, or developing partnerships and networks.

Further information on the Area Development Plan available from the Area North Development team, there are also numerous other reports received by the Area Committee throughout the year which describe how services are being delivered in Area North, and the actions taken by the Area Committee to improve and enhance this.

The Monitoring Report

The first quarterly monitoring report is included in Appendix A. This has been timed to coincide with the Area North quarterly budget report and capital programme.

The planned targets and milestones are included together with an update comment and an assessment of risk. The colour coding is explained below.

Red = behind schedule; risk that this target will not be achieved without action and / or additional capacity.

Amber = progressing, but without careful monitoring / additional capacity this target may not be achieved.

Green = this work is progressing well, and is the targets are expected to be met.

Actions to address activities shown as Amber or Red:

- **Priority 1 - Affordable (rural) housing** – a number of housing needs surveys in rural parishes were conducted by the Community Council for Somerset between 2002 to present. There are a number of possible projects, which have been, or are currently under discussion between a variety of partners. Arrangements for monitoring the progress of these, providing relevant information to the Area Committee, and the roles of the respective partners is being reviewed for a further report.
- **Priority 7 - Supporting small businesses and local services** – work to establish a county wide group of councils and other partners in light of post office network review has taken longer than expected, and will include strategic view of local access to services. Follow up work to support shops (including those who have lost Post Office services) is planned. BT pay phone consultation has restarted as a result of SSDC intervention.
- **Priority 17 – Market Towns Vision** – Conservation area appraisals in Area North are unlikely to be completed in 2007/08, and will be carried forward to 2008/09. Positive outcome from district wide discussion to improve support from and liaison with SCC for local highways schemes through Market Towns Investment Group.

Further comments on schemes within the capital programme are included within the Area North quarterly budget monitoring report.

Additional Resources:

It is recommended that additional resources are provided to further two priority areas of work:

Priority 9 – promote and influence increased local environmental quality through better co-ordination of services and enhancements. Progressing work to secure re-use of redundant buildings requires the availability of small sums for professional fees and other associated costs. No funds are available within existing budgets.

Priority 24 - Langport to Cartgate cycleway - this project has been supported for many years, resulting in considerable prior work. Following a review of this project as part of the Waterlinks programme review, it is strongly recommended that the feasibility study is completed, prior to detailed proposals for delivering a scheme. There is no capacity within existing budgets to complete this work. It is estimated that £1,500 will provide the time required on a consultancy basis.

Financial Implications

The position of the Area Reserve is an uncommitted balance of £44,920. If Members approve these recommendations, this will leave £40,920.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

The Area Development Plan supports all main aims of the corporate plan, and in particular contributes to the achievement of the following 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
15. Increase to 65% by 2010 the people who feel engaged in and can influence decisions that affect their communities

Other Implications

The successful delivery of the Area Development Plan will in turn support the delivery of the Somerset Local Area Agreement, South Somerset Community Strategy and Market Towns Vision, local community plans in Somerton, Langport and Huish Episcopi, Martock, South Petherton, and local priorities in the surrounding villages.

Other key strategies include the South Somerset Play, Youth, Tourism, and Economic Development strategies.

Background Papers: *Area North Development Plan – Adopted at Area North Committee 23rd April 2008.*
