

Area North Committee – 27 November 2013

12. Area Development Plan 2013 -14 – Update Report

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Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on the Area Development Plan for Area North 2013-14

Councillors are asked to contact the Area Development Manager (North) or other named contacts in advance of the meeting with requests for further information.

Public Interest

Area Development teams support the council's four Area Committees (North, South, East and West) to secure investment in local social, economic and environmental priorities for Yeovil, the market towns and rural areas of South Somerset.

This is a half-year report on the progress of a variety of projects and initiatives funded or supported by SSDC in Area North, during 2013-14.

Recommendation

Note and comment on the report and presentation highlighting any local issues relating to the Area North Committee's priorities.

Area North Priorities 2013-14

- **Jobs** – we will aim to add value to the economy in Area North, through promoting sustainable economic growth, assisting with the delivery of the Somerset Rural Broadband Programme, promoting tourism and enhancing the offer to visitors.
- **Affordable housing** – we will assist with the delivery of affordable homes in Area North, including support to test and develop new models.
- **Self-Help** – we will promote greater levels of self-help to promote the sustainability of local services and facilities for all ages.
- **Flood and Water management** – we will help promote locally led solutions which prevent unacceptable flood events in our communities; we will support the work of the Somerset Water Management Partnership including the task force for the Levels and Moors; we will seek to include past learning from the Parrett Catchment Project into future solutions and we will support the Environment Agency find a long term solution to flood relief and return our rivers to their original profile.

The attached Appendix includes updates on the projects and areas of work we are currently supporting.

Our work usually starts with a simple enquiry:

“I wondered if you can help us find out more about....?”

Or sometimes - “What is the council doing about....!”

Area Development work falls under three main headings:

Local investment programmes where we work with communities to secure investment into social, economic or environmental well-being. This can be summarised as working to ‘make a difference where it counts’. This can mean dusting off and making good the old ways of doing things, or can be about doing something completely different.

Local access to services. SSDC operates a network of community offices across South Somerset where residents can find face to face help with their enquiries and requests. In addition the Area North team work in partnership with other agencies and local communities to maintain and develop local access to services. This includes Service Level Agreements with four Local Information Centres in Martock, South Petherton, Somerton and Langport. Other examples are supporting local community transport projects; the emerging ‘job clubs’; local advice, information and support services; local access to ICT use and classes.

Community engagement We work with ward councillors to (try to) design local solutions to local problems. We particularly support engagement with the local business community, town and parish councils and local residents to help SSDC achieve the council plan and other responsibilities. Where possible we try to help local people make a difference to their communities in ways that suit their circumstances. No one size fits all – yet ‘localism’ does not mean you get your own way every time!

Financial implications

None from this report. The Area North budget including the capital programme was approved by Full Council in February 2013. Specific projects are funded through separate reports if required.

Council Plan Implications

The setting of Area North priorities and the work programme of the service is directly linked to the Council Plan.

Carbon Emissions and Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

None directly from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None directly from this report.

Background Papers: *Area Development (North) – Review of 2012-13 and Priorities for 2013-14 – ANC 22nd May 2013; Area Development Plan 2013-14; SSDC Council Plan 2012-2015.*