

Area West Committee – 17th October 2007

## 8. Progress Report on the Priority Projects of ‘A Better Crewkerne & District’ Community Plan

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### Purpose of the Report

To advise members of the progress of the Crewkerne and District Community Plan and update members of wider community regeneration issues in Crewkerne.

### Recommendation

That members note the contents of the report.

### Background

The Crewkerne & District Community Plan was launched in July 2006 at an exhibition in Victoria Hall, Crewkerne. It identifies local issues in Crewkerne and the surrounding villages and suggests appropriate projects to address the concerns of the local community.

The area covered by the Community Plan includes Crewkerne town and the following parishes of Chiselborough, Dinnington, Drimpton, East Chinnock, West Chinnock, Haselbury Plucknett, Hinton St George, Lopen, Merriott, Misterton, Mosterton, North Perrott, South Perrott, Wayford and West Crewkerne.

‘A Better Crewkerne & District’ (ABCD) have scoped out a number of priority projects and have established working groups to drive those projects forward. It has been formally agreed with the Market & Coastal Towns Association (MCTA) that the remaining grant will be allocated to professional support and funding feasibility studies.

### Report

ABCD have set up a number of working groups to progress the priority projects outlined in the Community Plan. Since ABCD’s report to members in July 2007 the working groups have convened a number of times and have kept the ABCD Steering Group informed of their progress through regular updates. The current status of the ABCD projects is as follows:

#### Joint Community Facility for Youth, Arts and Sport

This project has resulted from the need identified in the Community Plan for enhanced leisure and recreational opportunities for residents, particularly young people, and to support the development of a dedicated community arts venue to host a cinema, performing arts etc. The present accommodation used by the football, cricket and rugby clubs is no longer appropriate as is the West One building, the venue for a thriving senior and junior youth club along with a playgroup, crèche and out of school club. ABCD hope to provide a new space, which will provide facilities for both the sports clubs and the users of West One within the centre of Crewkerne. The Working Group has agreed a design brief and invitations of interest have been sent to nine architectural practices. A

consultant has been employed to investigate the feasibility of the proposed project and to draw up a business plan that can be used to attract funding for the project.

### **Crewkerne Urban Development Framework (UDF)**

The Community Plan highlighted the importance residents place on both the green spaces and the built environment of the town. ABCD identified the need for an Urban Development Framework which will set out guidance for the future development of the town centre and will include advice on design principles, environmental improvements and development opportunities. In addition it will take into account accessibility, transport and traffic management in relation to proposed new developments. With expert help the UDF Working Group have decided to commission a consultant to carry out a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), which they would seek to be adopted by SSDC as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The CAA in turn will inform the Conservation Area Management Plan and these two documents will lead to the production of a community based Urban Design Framework. With the support of Adron Duckworth (Conservation Manager, SSDC) ABCD plan to commission a consultant to carry out the CAA within the next couple of months.

### **Developing the Marketing of Crewkerne and the locality as a Business Location**

The Chairman of the Crewkerne & District Chamber of Commerce is an active member of the ABCD Steering Group and the CALIBRE (Crewkerne & Locality: Industry, Business & Rural Enterprise) project. Since the ABCD report in July, CALIBRE and the Crewkerne & District Chamber of Commerce have continued to actively promote the town's businesses through regular updates on the town's website ([www.CrewkerneTown.co.uk](http://www.CrewkerneTown.co.uk)) and press releases to the local newspapers. The town website also includes separate ABCD pages which are regularly updated, as well as a wide variety of information useful to local businesses. It was agreed at the September ABCD Steering Group meeting to use some of the MCTA money to help fund a new look 2008 Business Directory, which will link directly with the town website's online directory. The 2008 directory will be extended to include businesses in neighbouring villages and will form part of the Chamber's 'New to Crewkerne' business pack. CALIBRE and the Crewkerne & District Chamber of Commerce organise regular networking events for local businesses, these are proving very successful and have included a Business Breakfast with David Laws MP. The number of local businesses signing up to CALIBRE through the website continues to grow.

### **Crewkerne Youth Fair**

The Crewkerne Youth Fair was discussed at the ABCD Steering Group meeting in September. It was agreed that although the aim of the event is to recruit people to volunteer for one of the many youth organisations based in and around Crewkerne, the day should also include entertainment and activities for young people. A small working party has been set up to progress this event and young people will be recruited to help with the organisation, the event is planned for early 2008.

### **Community Plan Update**

One year has passed since the publication of the ABCD Community Plan. The Steering Group are working on an update for the public which will give information about the progress of the projects identified in the plan. The update will take the form of a newsletter.

## Notice and Interpretation Boards

Through the Market Town Investment Group, Crewkerne will receive three new interpretation boards with maps. Members of the ABCD Steering Group have been working with representatives from MTIG, SSDC, the Town Council and the Local Information Centre on the design, style and location of the boards and are looking forward to their arrival in the town.

## Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for Area West Committee.

## Implications for Corporate Priorities

By promoting and supporting regeneration in our market towns such as the production of the Crewkerne & District Community Plan, SSDC will be addressing several of the Corporate Aims 2005 - 2012:

- Objective 8 “work in partnership with the public and private sector in developing and delivery of the Market Towns Vision”
- Objective 9 “Identify and address the particular issues affecting rural areas”
- Objective 15 “Increase to 65% by 2010 the people who feel engaged in and can influence decisions that affect their communities”

**Background Papers:** *Progress Report on the Community Projects of A Better Crewkerne & District 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007.*  
*Progress Report on ‘A Better Crewkerne & District’ and the Community Plan Projects 17th January 2007*  
*Progress of the Crewkerne & District Community Plan and associated projects 18th October 2006*  
*The launch of Crewkerne & District Community Plan 19th July 2006*  
*SSDC Corporate Plan 2005-2012*  
*MCTi Work Programme 2006-2007*  
*A Better Crewkerne & District “Critical Activities” 2006/07*

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