

Area West Committee – 20th January 2010

## 9. The Neroche Project (Executive Decision)

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### Purpose of the Report

To provide information about the achievements of the Neroche Landscape Partnership Scheme from 2006 to date, highlight legacy proposals for the next 5 years to 2015 and to consider a request for financial support.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that South Somerset District Council contribute £3,000 per annum for five years making a total of £15,000 beginning in the next financial year.

### Background

Over the past four years South Somerset District Council has allocated a total of £10,500 to the Neroche Landscape Partnership. This funding agreement along with funding obtained through the lottery and from other key partners will cease in March 2010. The allocated funds helped deliver a range of projects, many of which have had a direct benefit on the South Somerset area. Details of those projects and their outcomes are attached to this report in the appendix at pages 10-12.

### Future Plans for the Neroche Landscape Partnership

The Neroche Landscape Partnership plans to build upon the beneficial work that has been carried out so far and has plans to deliver five legacy projects over the next five years. Those projects will bring a range of benefits to the South Somerset section of Neroche and will help the District Council meet a number of Corporate Priorities.

Increased Economic Vitality and Prosperity by:

- Providing forestry apprenticeships to local young people
- Setting up an innovative longhorn cattle grazing programme that provides an income for local farmers and supplies local meat to local suppliers.

Enhance the environment, address & adapt to climate change by

- Actively managing sites to provide important butterfly habitats as part of the longhorn cattle grazing programme

Improve housing, health and wellbeing of our citizens

- Walking and active recreation in and around the Castle Neroche area
- Increased Forest School activities for school children across the area

Details of those projects are outlined in the appendix at pages 10-12.

To enable the Neroche Forest Partnership to continue its work and deliver new projects they are asking partner organisations to continue funding beyond April 2010.

### **Financial Implications**

Currently there is £60,358 in the unallocated Area Capital Programme. If members support this application and award an annual contribution of £3,000 for five years beginning in the next financial year, there would be £45,358 remaining in the unallocated Area Capital Programme.

**Background Papers:** *The Neroche Project – Area West Committee July 2004*