

Area West Committee – 21st November 2012

9. Area West Development Work Programme Overview 2012-13

Strategic Director: Rina Singh - Place and Performance
Assistant Directors: Helen Rutter/Kim Close - Communities
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Purpose of the Report

To present an overview of projects in the Area West Development Work Programme 2012-13.

Public Interest

The Area West Development Service works to address local community priorities in Chard, Ilminster and Crewkerne and the surrounding villages. The report provides outline information on some of the project work being supported in the financial year 2012-13.

Recommendation

To note and comment on the report, highlighting any areas of concern or interest for current or requested activity by the Area Development Team.

Background

The Area West Development Service supports the Area West Committee to work with communities to influence the services that are delivered in our area and to press for improvement wherever possible. Area Committees provide a key mechanism for Councillors to represent the views of their constituents and local organisations in local decisions.

The Area priorities, together with a range of powers and functions delegated to the Area Committee by SSDC form the Area West Portfolio, held by the Chairman of the Area West Committee.

Each year a brief report is made on the work of the Area West Development team, to provide an overview and indicate emerging issues that are likely to be taken up by the team in future.

- Our **targeted** approach allows us to get to the heart of local issues or problems.
- Our **partnership** approach allows us to come up with new solutions, drawing on local and professional knowledge.
- Our relative **autonomy** allows us to adapt or adjust quickly to local changes or issues.
- Our **local presence** improves access to services.

We are able to work at both very local and highly strategic levels.

Annual Report

The way we work

Last year I noted that the SSDC Area system was well placed to promote and enhance “localism” as a way of working, especially when this involves bringing together community led planning and neighbourhood (spatial) planning and delivery to achieve better, more efficient outcomes.

We continue to work closely with Parish, Town and County Councils, with partnerships, organisations and individuals to help make our communities better, safer places to live in, to encourage business and trade, to help develop skills and to improve the health of their citizens.

Our approach is rooted in the uniqueness of each town and village and the different people and organisations that make each place what it is.

Every project, programme or strategy is always in response to local priorities and needs. We take a 'place first' approach that is deeply connected to the aspirations, strengths, creativity, energy, needs and drive of local people.

From this, the roles and responsibilities of those involved can be adopted generally and adapted locally to better meet local needs and to seize opportunities.

Investing our time and effort to promote networking, relationships and joint working between service providers at a local level brings about good responses to local challenges and builds capacity in the community to do more of this over time.

Following the Portas Review, one of the most noteworthy challenges this year has been the call for Town Teams to lead the regeneration of our High Streets.

What we work on

This challenge is being taken up differently, but enthusiastically in each of our main towns. With appropriate involvement from the Area Development Team, local organisations are working together to make our town centres more lively, creative, exciting and useful places that reflect the diversity of our communities.

We support projects in towns and villages that lead to improvement in the health and wellbeing of those living and working in Area West.

This involves creating and managing projects directly or providing planning and development support through work with other SSDC specialist service teams and external partner organisations.

It is a mixed and wide ranging portfolio that reflects both established and emerging local priorities. It also supports the four key goals of the adopted Council Plan for 2012-15;

- a strong economy which has low unemployment and thriving businesses
- an attractive environment to live in with increased recycling and lower energy use
- decent housing for our residents that matches their income
- communities that are healthy, self-reliant, and have individuals who are willing to help each other

Our Resources

The work programme is resourced through the Area Development Team, and an annual revenue budget and capital programme that also includes funding granted from external sources. As with other budgets, these are subject to continual scrutiny to find efficiency measures and savings.

Area West Development Team	
Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager - West
Nicola Doble	PA to ADM - West
Zoe Harris	Area Community Regeneration Officer
Paul Philpott	Area Community Development Officer
Paul Brazier	Area Administration Team Leader
Cathy Gearing	Area Support Assistant
Phil Vose	Area Support Assistant
Juila Levy	Area Support Assistant
Hazel Vincent	Area Support Assistant
Cathy Denslow	Area Support Assistant

Monitoring and Evaluation

Given the range of projects included, the methods of monitoring and evaluation that we use vary. We aim to build appropriate project management methods into all of the projects we undertake, including methods of monitoring and evaluation.

The majority of projects should already be familiar to some if not all elected members. Many have been the subject of regular and/or occasional committee reports as and when issues arise requiring a committee decision or when important milestones have been achieved.

Therefore, the following tables of projects and support services is presented to give an overview rather than to go into detail. It is both snapshot and in some cases a summary of the work we are supporting.

	Project /Aim	Lead
1	Chard Regeneration Scheme – to support delivery of the agreed Masterplan	AG
2	Revitalise the SSDC Street Markets in Area West	ZH
3	Marketing Crewkerne & Ilminster - to promote to potential visitors in 2012 and beyond	ZH
4	A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD) - to support the delivery of projects identified in the ABCD community plan.	ZH
5	Ilminster Forum - to support the delivery of projects identified in the Ilminster Community Plan	ZH
6	LARC Blackdown Hills & East Devon ‘Making it Local Funding Programme - Grants to local improvement schemes	ZH
7	South Somerset Market Towns Investment Group - to act as coordinator for Chard (PP) , Ilminster and Crewkerne (ZH) in relation to participation in activities and programmes	ZH/PP

8	Community Grant Scheme - to promote and manage the take up of grants in support of local fundraising for projects of community benefit	PP
9	Henhayes, Crewkerne – to support the regeneration of the Recreation ground	ZH
10	Chard Town Team - to support development of the newly formed Chard Town Team and a broad programme to revitalise the town centre.	
11	Swann Precinct, Ilminster - to improve appearance of derelict site in Ilminster town centre	ZH
12	Blackdown Hills AONB officers group - to oversee funding agreement	ZH
13	Rural Housing Needs research – to explore provision of affordable housing in villages of Hinton SG, N Perrott & Combe St Nicholas with Parish Councils	ZH/PP
14	Chard Traders Board (with Chard Town Team); to create a high quality quick reference guide to all town centre businesses and locate in prominent position in Chard Town Centre.	PP
15	Chard Young Peoples Centre - to address long standing tenancy issues, enable an upgrade to heating system, and fundraising for external play area.	PP
16	Parish and Town Council Workshops – to raise awareness of Neighbourhood Development Plans and alternatives.	AG
17	Boden Mill – to support management of site pending redevelopment, including liaison with tenants.	PP
18	Stop Line Way Development – through Tatworth & Forton and Chard Regeneration Scheme	AG
19	Investigate relocation options for Ilminster Community Office – a long standing ambition	AG/PB
20	Chard Working Men’s Club - to encourage the owners to address the deteriorating state of this town centre building.	PP
21	Boden Centre – Increase use by health/wellbeing promoting organisations, ensure income from lettings cover costs	PB
22	Chard Shop Front Grant scheme - to enable Town centre traders to renovate and decorate their shop fronts.	PP
23	South Somerset Community Justice Panel (CJP) – to support CJP transition to fully funded independence	AG

	Regular Support Services	Lead
1	Manage Area and Community Offices – to provide timely advice and other customer services to local residents	PB
2	Monitor and advise community groups with SSDC Service Level Agreements	ZH/PP
3	Funding advice - Signposting community groups to relevant funding.	ZH/PP
4	Community Issues/conflict resolution	Varies
5	Area West Committee - Programme development and support	AG
6	Community Safety Local Action Groups in Area West - Raising and resolution of local community safety issues as needed	ZH/PP
7	Holyrood Lace Mill Management	PB

Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. However it should be noted that projects in the planning stage may not be fully funded. Ways in which funding can be secured are addressed as part of that planning process.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

Appropriate mitigation or change measures are built in to projects.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Equality and Diversity implications are now considered as part of project management. Our aim is to ensure that no-one is excluded from participating in or benefiting from any of the work we undertake on grounds of race, gender, disability, faith, age or sexual orientation.

Background Papers: *Area West Development Work Programme Overview 2011-12*
