

Area West – Draft Strategic Priorities 2019/20

Service Manager: Jan Gamon, Lead Specialist Strategic Planning
Lead Officer: Jan Gamon, Lead Specialist Planning
Chereen Scott, Specialist, Strategic Planning (West/North)
Tim Cook, Locality Manager
Contact Details: chereen.scott@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

To present the draft strategic priorities for Area West as agreed at a workshop in July 2018.

Public Interest

The new operating model will be introduced in January 2019 and the way that area priorities are identified and resourced will change. The Committee's priorities will become a chapter of the council plan with resources pulled from across the organisation in Area + teams. This report gives a summary of the draft strategic priorities agreed at a previous workshop and details of the next steps.

Recommendation

That members agree the priorities to be presented to District Executive for consideration for inclusion in the Council Plan.

Background

The Area+ proposal states that "The Council will become strategy led and data informed", which puts the annual strategic planning process at the heart of driving delivery in the Areas.

The Area+ Implementation plan sets out the new way of addressing area priorities and details how resources will be allocated from across the organisation to improve area working.

Area Plans will be developed for adoption as chapters of the Council Plan in February 2019 and will 'go live' in April of that year. The SLT Sponsor for each area will have an overview of the emerging Area Plans.

Draft priorities were identified by members of Area West at a workshop after the July meeting of the committee.

Draft Strategic Priorities for Area West

The four key priorities identified by members of Area West include the following:

1. Community Transport: Creating improved community transport links (including improvements to access to train services at Crewkerne and Axminster from Chard)
2. Community Safety: Addressing perceived growing crime in Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and rural settlements
3. Housing: Bringing forward Key sites
4. Economic Development: Supporting businesses

Additional discussion points not categorised as priorities included affordable housing, leisure facilities, Stop Line Way and tourism.

Further work on developing these priorities will take place in collaboration with the chair of the committee.

Next Steps

The process and timescale for the adoption of area priorities as council priorities are as follows.

1st Oct: meeting with Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) to share the draft set of 'Priorities On a Page's' (POPs) and seek their input

4th Oct: initial workshop with District Executive

1st Nov: District Executive review of final set of POPs, agree priorities for inclusion on Council Plan
Draft Council Plan then goes through SLT, Scrutiny and District Executive during November.

The SLT sponsor for Area West is Alex Parmley who will be an advocate for the Area Plan through the adoption process and maintain an overview of progress. The SLT sponsor will provide high-level input into the development of Area Plans making sure that they contribute towards the broader aims of the council and take account of relevant regional and national policy.

Resourcing Area Plans

Identifying the resources needed to deliver the Area Plans will need to be done as an integral part of the planning process.

Area+ teams

Area+ teams can begin to be established as soon as the details of the Area Plans are known. Input from Specialists will be needed in the development of the Area Plans, which will help to build familiarity with the priorities. However, many people will not start new roles until January 2019 and the transition period will have an impact on when teams can make a start on delivery.

Budgets

Work will be required to align the area budgets and available resources (capital programme, S106, etc.) with the new Area Plans. There needs to be recognition that resources are finite and will be allocated according to need. Any new work will be assessed in order to establish relative priorities.

Financial Implications

There are no new financial implications arising directly from this report.

Corporate Priority Implications

The priorities have been developed taking into account the SSDC Corporate plan priorities.

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

This is considered on an individual project and programme basis as appropriate. The overall priority is to seek to create more balanced communities where people can live, work and get access to the services and facilities they need on a daily basis. Area working (Area+) helps to improve access to facilities, activities and services, reducing the need to travel.

Equality and Diversity Implications

This is considered on an individual project and programme basis as appropriate. All Area Plans will have an Equality Impact Assessment.

Background Papers: *Area+ proposal, Area + Implementation Plan*
