

Area East Development Plan and Budget - Half Year Progress Report

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Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on the progress of projects taking place in Area East, including those resourced through the Area and Corporate Capital Programmes. To give an overview of the Area East Reserve and Grants Programmes at the half way point of the 2017/18 year.

Public Interest

The Area Development Service supports the Council's 4 Area Committees (North, South, East & West) to work closely with local communities to create better places in which to live and work.

Area East Committee has the freedom to use its resources, both financial and through its team of Development staff, to understand what matters to local people and address this by offering support, encouragement and direct financial & practical help. Advice and support to the public is provided at Churchfield Wincanton. SSDC led Regeneration projects are delivered through the Development team.

The report gives a half year position on progress with implementing the Area Development Service Plan and gives Members the opportunity to consider any adjustments they might wish to make at this point during the year.

Recommendations

That the Area East Committee:-

- (1) note the current position on community grants and other project budgets held by Area East Committee.
- (2) note and comment on progress with projects in the Area Development Plan
- (3) note and comment on the current Area East Capital Programme and Reserve

Background

Budgets are approved in February each year. Each of the 4 Area Committees has delegated responsibility for monitoring budgets within its control. Area East considers all decisions relating to grant requests over £1,000, its Capital Programme and the allocation & spending of its Reserve. The Executive continues to monitor all budgets on a quarterly basis.

The Area East Committee focuses its resources to address local needs in order to promote improved quality of life in Area East. The Area Development Plan 2017/18 contains a set of local priorities, agreed by the Committee and a work programme with targets, to carry these forward throughout the year. A half year progress report is brought to the Area Committee.

Area Development Plan

Area East priorities for 2017-18 and progress against projects in the Area East Development Plan are attached in Appendix 1.

The Area Development Team consists of 3 Neighbourhood Development officers (NDOs) who divide their time across patches and leading on particular themes. In addition there are 2 part time Community Support Assistants (CSAs). Lead responsibilities are summarised below:

	Place Leads	Theme Leads
Tim Cook (30hrs) AD Team Lead & NDO Communities	Wincanton Rural areas (shared)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community research & plans• Community grants programme• Community buildings• Rural services
James Divall (18.5hrs) NDO Communities	Bruton Milborne Port Ilchester Rural areas (shared)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health & wellbeing• Local Information Centres (LIC)
Pam Williams (28hrs) NDO Economy	Castle Cary Wincanton High Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic & business development• Infrastructure projects• Wincanton Town Team & Retail Support Initiative
Jackie Hatcher (29hrs) CSA	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Car park and shop audits• Public front desk• LIC adviser• Officer project support
Terena Isaacs (35 hrs) CSA	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Car park and shop audits• Public front desk• RSI & community grants• Officer project support

Members can see from the table in Appendix 1 that the considerable resource, in terms of officer time needed to support establishing the mobile banking service in light of bank branch closures, has resulted in delays to some other work. Some elements of work in priority area 1 have been slowed down as a direct result. Transformation has also started to have an impact on staff time in Area Development and is clearly a consideration when taking on new work.

Funding Overview

Appendix 2 gives a summary of all project and grants budgets for 2017/18. Appendix 3 gives an overview of all funding awards made from AEC budgets within the first 6 months of the 2017/18 year.

Area East Capital Programme

The Area East capital programme supports investment in new or existing, locally important assets. These may be SSDC owned, community owned or privately owned. In the last 2 categories support will normally be via a grant scheme. Fuller detail on the spending across the capital programme is attached at Appendix 4. It shows live projects, their funding allocation and spending that took place to end of September 2017 with a progress report from the lead officer. In summary this shows that there is a total of £31,738 unallocated to projects & available for local priority schemes in 2017/18. In addition there is an allocation of £3,500 in the Parish Infrastructure Fund.

Community grant applications for capital projects are considered twice a year in June and December. If a grant request is urgent it may be considered at other times by agreement with the Chair and Vice Chair. At present there is £12,934 unallocated in 2017/18 for community capital grants (within the £31,738 mentioned above) and available for awards in December 2017.

Area East Reserve

At the start of the year there was £49,190 in the Area East Reserve. Most of this is ring fenced for specific projects leaving £3,460 unallocated – see Appendix 2 for details.

The *Community Planning project budget* is only available to communities with endorsed parish/community plans but can be used for assisting the delivery of a range of priority projects where community grant budget is not available. Proposals can come forward in any month from this allocation.

The *derelict site* funding is available for essential works on a number of sites in Castle Cary with “at risk” historic buildings, it can be used if the owner is unwilling to comply with the relevant Order

Small Community Grants

A small fund is set aside each year to support community projects. In addition a sum of £10,000 of health and wellbeing money supports project delivery from the Balsam Centre. The latter is subject to separate reporting and award by the Committee against an agreed work plan. See Appendix 3 for details of spending to date this year of community and other small grants.

Area East Discretionary Fund

This annual budget is used, at the discretion of Members, to support partnership work, attract external funding and other regeneration work. Details of how this has been allocated is shown in Appendix 2.

Financial Implications

The level of Area East funding is shown in the body of this report, and in the Appendices. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

Council Plan Implications

The Area Development Plan and resources allocated by Area East Committee are in compliance with the current Council Plan.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None arising directly from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Area East Development Plan 2017-18.
