

Martock Parish Council Our Place Martock Programme Annual Update

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Purpose of the Report

This report provides background information on the Our Place Martock programme which is receiving funding from Area North via a three-year service level agreement (SLA).

A presentation will be given at Committee, by the Martock Community Services Co-ordinator, to update on work undertaken during the 2017/18 financial year.

Public Interest

Martock Parish Council has an SLA with South Somerset District Council (SSDC) over a three-year period. As part of the SLA the Parish Council provides regular progress reports. This report, and the presentation that will be given at Committee, will provide an update on work undertaken during the last year.

Recommendation

That Members note the report and note and comment on the presentation given by the Community Services Co-ordinator.

Background

In 2014, Martock Parish Council was accepted into the Our Place programme, a package of grants and support designed to transfer ownership of funding from central government into local communities, so that local people and organisations could identify, develop and manage directly, services needed in that community.

Operation

The programme is funded principally through the Martock Parish Council precept. Research and advisory support was provided by Locality during the development stage of the programme.

The aim of the programme is to fill gaps in services caused by withdrawal of services or the access bar being raised due to economic pressures. Based on needs identified through research and consultation, the programme has developed four key service strands:

- Building self-reliance
- Improving access to services
- Addressing social isolation
- Enhancing employability

Since commencing operation in April 2015, the programme has appointed a Community Services Co-ordinator; Seniors Support Co-ordinator; and Job Club Co-ordinator, and started delivery of a range of services and support for local people.

Service Level Agreement

In March 2016, Area North Committee resolved to award a grant of £12,000 over a three-year period to Martock Parish Council towards the overall costs of the Our Place programme. The first payment of £5,000 was released in 2016. The Year Two (2017-18) contribution was £4,000 with the remaining £3,000 payable in 2018.

The terms of the partnership between SSDC Area North and the Our Place Martock programme are governed by a service level agreement. SSDC's funding contributes towards the staffing costs of the Our Place programme and the SLA delineates the focus of work and the expected outputs and key performance indicators (KPI), in four main areas;

- Residents are helped to access information and services online
- Residents are helped to access information and services at key local points
- Local opportunities are provided that help to reduce social isolation
- Job-seekers are helped into employment

SSDC provides background advice and support for the programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Our Place programme provides quarterly reports and, annually, a budget for the coming year and schedule of funding.

The Community Services Co-ordinator (CSC) will provide an update on work undertaken in the last year, in her presentation to the Committee. Some headlines are as follows:

- 72 people enjoyed the first *Merry Martock* event on 28 December, a seated buffet offering companionship during a time that can be lonely for many people
- A walkers' celebration was held in March, as monthly health walks have reached over 250 walkers since starting 18 months ago. A new volunteer has also been trained, meaning the walk will run all year round
- Martock Friends runs at capacity with a waiting list
- The pop-up *Our Place on tour* visited 13 areas in Martock to tell people about the support services on offer in the community and how to access these
- There was a Health and Wellbeing fair, with over 27 agencies coming together to bring information to the community. Another event is planned for 2018
- Community volunteers were offered first aid and defibrillator training
- Over 400 people now supported into work via the help offered at Martock Job Club since 2013, with many more into training or volunteer positions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The Our Place Martock programme meets SSDC Area North's priority "to promote greater levels of self-help, to promote the sustainability of local services and facilities for all ages". It is an innovative programme at a time when government spending on public services is being reduced.

The Service Level Agreement enables SSDC to be involved as a partner on aspects of the programme, supporting the principle of resourcing communities to find appropriate local responses to local issues.

Financial Implications

There is £8,680 available in the Area North Community Grants programme for 2018-19. Once the third year SLA payment of £3,000 is released, £5,680 will remain unallocated.

Council Plan Implications

The project supports:

Focus One: High quality cost-effective services

Focus Two: Economy

Focus Four: Homes

Focus Five: Health and Communities

Area North Priorities

Jobs and the Economy

Self-help and Community Facilities

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

Access to local information, advice and services reduces carbon emissions produced by travel to centralised locations.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Martock is a linear community extending over nearly three miles, with shops and services in a relatively small, centralised area. Our Place Martock is working to address the needs of residents who find it difficult to reach the services they need – older people, young families, people with disabilities – by delivering information and advice either at home, or as close to home as possible, and by enabling greater use of digital services.

Martock Parish Council has an Equal Opportunities Policy and a Safeguarding Policy.

Background Papers

Reports to Area North Committee, 23 March 2016 and 22 March 2017.