

## **Area South Development Team – End of Year Report**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To summarise the work undertaken by the Area Development Team during 2016/17 to address priorities agreed by the Area South Committee.

To note that a work programme for 2017/18 will be presented to ASC in July 2017.

### **Public Interest**

This report provides an outline of the role and objectives of the Area South Development Team, which includes the provision of an advice and support service for members of the public from Petters House, Petters Way, Yeovil; the delivery of Yeovil Vision, Regeneration and Community Development projects.

### **Recommendation**

That the report be considered and noted.

### **Background**

#### **The Area South Development Plan**

The Area South Development Plan identifies key issues and needs within the town of Yeovil and parishes of Area South and sets out the priorities for the Area South Development Team over the year 2016/17. It is rolled forward annually.

The service plan (see Appendix 1) is divided into 3 sections, which relate to the 3 key areas of work:

1.	Support for the vitality of the local economy, with a focus on Yeovil town centre and improving the physical environment
2.	Community development with a focus on addressing health, social and economic inequalities and the provision and development of community facilities
3.	To continue to provide a high quality accessible front line enquiry service

### **Allocating Resources and Monitoring:**

The Area South Development Plan acts as a working document with regular monitoring by the Area Development Team. It was prepared in May 2016 and was informed by the Area South Members. Monitoring reports are presented to Area South Committee and individual reports on specific projects and service areas are reported to the Committee regularly.

## **A summary of the progress of Key Projects and Services managed by Area Development South in 2016/17**

### *Yeovil Vision/Regeneration:*

- Retail incubation work has been deferred and will be reconsidered by the Yeovil Vision Board once the Yeovil Refresh document has been produced.
- The new Yeovil Vision structure is working well and has generated a keen interest amongst a number of key town centre business representatives. The team continues to support Yeovil Vision meetings, producing all related reports, agendas, minutes and newsletters.
- Renewed negotiations have taken place via the Yeovil Vision Group with Somerset County Council on finding a resolution to complete outstanding works on Reckleford road scheme. Remedial works to the lighting and illuminated signs has been completed by SEC. However, the issue with the licence that allows SSDC to maintain the area is still outstanding.
- The Area South Regeneration Board has focussed on the Hive at the Yeovil Innovation Centre and the vital Yeovil Refresh work, the report for which is due June 2017.
- The bus shelter on Mudford Road was completely replaced in April 2016, as it was in a poor condition. The shelter is well used due to its close proximity to Yeovil College.
- The installation of six gateway signs is complete. Planting has been purchased for two of the locations, Ilchester Rd and the West Coker Rd, members may recall that the Ilchester Rd sign was demolished in a vehicular accident and the West Coker sign has moved from its previous location. The planting will take place during April/May 2017.
- A draft town centre map is almost complete; there are a few details to be confirmed in relation to the future locations of some services. The draft will be presented to Yeovil Town Centre Improvement Group and then the final design will be bought to Area South Committee.
- The NDO has continued to support the Yeovil Town Centre Enhancement Group, the key project of this group has been the Ranger Scheme and the associated work for year 2 of the scheme is complete. A similar funding package is currently being sought for year 3.
- 13 new double litter bins have been purchased for the town centre to replace the bins that have come to the end of their useful life. One of these double bins has been successfully trialled in King George Street for around a year. The bins are durable and require less frequent emptying. This style of will be adopted for any new bins in the town centre in the future.
- The subway at the end of Princes Street was refreshed by being repainted with anti-graffiti paint. The team made a contribution towards the materials and Street Scene carried out the works.

### *Community Development:*

- The ADL has increased community involvement and communication in Wyndham Park by planning and delivering extremely well attended community days, producing community newsletters and providing support to the community association and Wyndham Park Partnership.
- Worked with partners to deliver the first play area at Wyndham Park and open the Innovative Community Hub within an MOD property.
- Worked closely with SCC to plan the two new primary schools needed in Yeovil. This has taken up a great deal of time due to the complexities around land ownership, design, local aspirations and necessary legal agreements.
- Worked with Spark (formally SSVCA) to begin community development work in the new Lufton Key Site.
- Advice and support given to the Yeovil Youth Service Review Group, which is now completely managed Yeovil Town Council.
- Area South Bulletins sent out quarterly to Parish Councils, Community Groups and other interested parties in the Area South area.
- Chair and coordinate the Youth Opportunities Group that is held quarterly. This group aims to coordinate youth provision across the whole district and help avoid duplication

- Updated the Funding File on the website monthly. This is a list of current relevant grants that are available to local groups and charities
- Area South Ward Profiles completed and circulated for all Yeovil Wards
- Continued to support the Community Health & Leisure Team to organise the Bike Fest events.
- Arranged 3 multi-agency community forum events. The forum has been set up to discuss issues such as community safety, youth initiatives, local funding opportunities and community groups. The meetings are flexible to deal with emerging issues and there is plenty of time to network, share ideas and solve problems
- Offered advice to over 30 voluntary and charitable groups and offered support to all the local community associations in order to promote local action and improvements
- Worked closely with West Coker Parish Council on a Master Plan project for West Coker recreation ground including a proposed pavilion building and play park.
- Supported West Coker Village Hall Committee with enhancements to the Village Hall including a new digital inclusion project.
- Funding advice and project support given to Area South Parish Councils and local sports and community groups based in our rural parishes.
- Support to West Coker Parish Council in the development and delivery of the Parish Housing needs survey.
- Support and guidance in the development and identification of funding for new play park provision at both Barwick and West Coker.
- Funding advice and support given to local sports teams to purchase new equipment and develop further participation opportunities including Yeovil Junior Netball, Gryphon West Gymnastics and West Coker & Hardington Cricket Club.
- Advice and support given with funding opportunities for local active living schemes to support our older communities. Groups include Golden Oldies and Yeovil Good Fellowship Club.

#### *Economy:*

- The team provide support for the Love Yeovil Marketing Group (LYMG), the group contributes towards running of a range of events including the annual Christmas Lights switch on. Support is given through assisting with its administration and through officer time to manage some of the associated events. A marketing consultant has been appointed by the LYMG to develop a marketing strategy and continue to promote Yeovil on social media. LYMG are now seeking to appoint a consultant to build a fit for purpose website.
- Supporting year two of Yeovil Half Marathon in Yeovil town centre through a contribution towards the town centre road closure, attending meetings and facilitating the use of an SSDC car park for the duration of the event.
- Supported the Yeovil Super Saturday event in September 2016 in partnership with Yeovil Town Council; the event was a great success and was supported by local voluntary groups. The Yeovil Live voluntary group were responsible for the live music throughout the town centre. Plans have begun for the September 2017 event.
- Carried out quarterly audits of empty premises in Yeovil town centre. This provides a strong database from which to promote and broker new users to available premises.
- The Neighbourhood Officer for economy attended a conference on 'digital high streets' in 2016, the knowledge gained was disseminated to the Area Team Leads and it is recognised that this will form a useful starting point for further work in this area once the Yeovil Refresh work is complete. In the mean time, work has begun to on a 'digital audit' of town centre businesses. More customers are shopping online than ever before and the team will be working to help businesses that are not online or have a poor online presence in 2017/18.
- Ownership details for the neighbourhood retail centres at Westfield, Birchfield and Glenthorne Ave have been established and site visits have been carried out the owners of Westfield and Birchfield along with appropriate officers. Property and Engineering services have agreed to begin drafting design options for Birchfield and Westfield and once these have been received a meeting will be held with owners, tenants, officers and ward members to seek a way forward

and assess the options. Glenthorne Avenue shops are not being pursued at this time due to some potential changes being considered by the owners.

#### *Markets:*

- Support has continued to be given to the Yeovil Market Improvement group (MIG). SSDC joined an organisation called NABMA (National Association of British market Authorities) in 2016. MIG was made aware of the declining state of the weekly markets and were informed that NABMA could offer a free health check through its membership package. NABMA carried out a health check and presented a document containing their observations and conclusions. MIG were presented with the options and a decision was made to appoint a dedicated Task and Finish group to consider these in more detail and present their findings back to MIG. The MIG recommendations for the future of Yeovil Street Markets are detailed in the Market Improvement Strategy Report April 2017.
- In the mean time, the Area South Development Team continues to manage the operational aspects of the markets.

#### *Addressing Health, Social and Economic Inequalities in Yeovil:*

- Ongoing support to targeted communities in Yeovil including Milford, Reckleford, Wyndham Park and targeted engagement in the Westfield 'Our Neighbourhood' regeneration programme
- Provided help and advice to support healthy lifestyles activities and projects in our communities including marketing & communication support as well as ongoing funding advice.
- Officer involvement in targeting digital inclusion & community communication projects running across Yeovil
- Continued support to the community in developing and operating community-led growing projects, such as Milford Community Growing Spaces and Wyndham Community Garden.
- Working with partners, such as Yeovil College, to establish community training courses helping to improve employability and enhance volunteering roles and opportunities.

#### *Grants and Funding:*

- Allocated full grant budget £11,230 helping to secure £390,664 of external funding to be invested in our local communities.
- Continue to provide a valued funding advice service in the current highly competitive financial climate

#### *Petters House Front Office:*

- Over 8,500 enquiries dealt with at the front desk including detailed advice provided to deal with over 5,200 benefits enquiries

#### *Community Safety:*

- Continue to support the multi-agency Yeovil One Team who meet on a weekly basis at the Fire Station to deal with operational issues in Yeovil Central and East Wards. The dedicated One Team administrator is based at Petters House but works closely with the Police team and other partners from other premises including the Police Station.
- Supported the Yeovil One Tactical Group with monthly meetings in setting direction and management overview of the operational team.
- In addition to the original £50k of PCC Partnership Funding to finance the Yeovil One Team overall income has increased and now stands at £66k.
- Reported crime, as monitored by Police.uk, identifies Area South showing a 3% increase in crime between January and December 2016. Yeovil Central has maintained crime figures at the same level as the previous year when 10% reduction was achieved. The Yeovil One Area is showing a 1% increase.
- Reported Shop Theft and related business crime continues to fall given the multi-agency focus and proactive intervention by the Yeovil Crime Reduction Team which quickly identify possible offenders and attempt to deter rather than catch.
- Police and partners have continued to seek enforcement through the Law Courts and following

the first Somerset Civil Injunctions on 2 prolific offenders, there are more offenders being controlled through Court Orders which place restrictions on their activity and presence in the Town Centre.

- Yeovil CCTV continues to be monitored 24hr a day 365 days a year being involved in over 1000 recorded incidents and more than 220 arrests.
- Given that the move of Yeovil Police Station is now in process the Data Link to CCTV recordings that are held at Petters House, to the Police station, giving the Police instant access to recorded footage at any time will need to be upgraded and rerouted by the Police to ensure access is maintained.
- Continue to support and input to the Community Safety Strategic direction through active participation with the Safer Somerset Partnership and related groups.

#### *“Our Place” – Westfield, Yeovil:*

- Steering group in place to help build a new community hall at St Peter’s Church in Westfield. Support and advice given to the Westfield Community Hall steering group to establish a plan of action, feasibility study and funding applications for a new community hall.
- Support provided to Westfield Academy in enhancing School sports facilities with the aim of better local community access and use in order to improve health and well being. This has included a 3G sports pitch, refurbished sports hall and a new dance studio.
- Targeted road safety project to establish new bus bays at Westfield Academy to help with congestion, pedestrian safety and taking additional vehicles off the highway
- Recycling improvement project targeted in Westfield supported by Carymoor Environmental Trust, which could potentially bring in £8,000 of investment to the community.
- New solar energy installation in Westfield from South Somerset Community Energy aims to tackle long-term fuel poverty for the neighbourhood and local residents. Training programme and help drop in session have been delivered and support large numbers of residents in the neighbourhood.
- Worked with local Ward Member, Westfield Community Association & Yeovil College Student to establish a new ‘Brand Westfield’ project including logos, art work and a promotional digital video
- New communication systems are being developed by Westfield Community Association supported by partners, to help inform local residents of news, local activities and clubs as well as services and support opportunities. These include newsletters, new notice boards, a proposed new web site, linked to brand Westfield, and the introduction of social media.
- Wasteland adjacent to the Co-op is being considered again following renewed interest from the private landowners. Options are being explored for parking spaces to assist with community hall use. Plans are currently being drawn up to scope out the options to present back to both land owners for consideration.
- Supported Westfield Community Association to deliver new environment enhancement projects establishing new planted areas and improved visual green spaces.

#### *Community enquiries log:*

- Approximately 580 support enquiries received by Area South additional to the work included in the service plan
- Enquiries range from supporting local groups with funding advice, supporting the improvement and development of the town market, digital inclusion projects, village hall enhancement advice and support, play park and sports club equipment purchase and advice, Business support, engineering works, community communication support, youth provision and advice, volunteering opportunities and sign posting, signage and car parking.

#### *Appendices to consist of:*

Appendix 1: The Area South Development Plan 2015/16 overview

Appendix 2: Map showing geographical spread of projects across Area South

Appendix 3: Area South staff structure

### **Financial Implications**

Within existing revenue budgets

### **Council Plan Implications**

#### **Economy**

To promote a strong economy with thriving urban and rural businesses we will:

- Lobby for and support infra-structure improvements to enable growth.
- Capitalise on our high quality culture, leisure and tourism opportunities to bring people to South Somerset.

#### **Environment**

To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we will:

- Keep streets and neighbour-hoods clean and attractive.
- Support communities to develop local, parish and neighbourhood plans

#### **Homes**

To work with partners to enable the provision of housing that meets the future and existing needs of residents and employers we will:

- Tackle fuel poverty.

#### **Health and Communities**

To build healthy, self-reliant, active communities we will:

- Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions.
- Target support to areas of need.
- Help people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities.
- Help keep our communities safe

#### **Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

The town centre location of Petters House minimises travel and the carbon emissions associated with it. The quality of regeneration within Yeovil will have a significant impact on future carbon emissions.

#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Equality and Diversity will be fully explored in the implementation of the various projects within the Area Development Plan

#### **Background Papers**

None.