

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 2017/18 to address priorities agreed by the Area South Committee

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 Regeneration, Community Safety and Community Development projects.

Recommendation

That the report be considered and noted.

Background

The Area South Development Plan

The Area South Development Plan (ADP) 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 2017/18. It is rolled forward annually.

The ADP (see Appendix 1) is divided into 5 sections, which relate to the 5 key areas of work:

1.	Town Centre and Neighbourhood Management
2.	Economic development, job creation and regeneration schemes
3.	Community lead planning and development
4.	Improving access to services and facilities in order to reduce inequality
5.	Community safety

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 2017 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.

Supporting Information

Town Centre and Neighbourhood Management

The Neighbourhood Development Officer (NDO) and Area Development Lead (ADL) have continued to work with the Chamber of Trade and the Love Yeovil Marketing Group to increase the amount of positive media about Yeovil and to organise the major annual events. The existing Super Saturday and Lantern Parade events were even busier this year and feedback suggests that footfall in the town was up by at least a third and one retailer reported a 200% increase in sales on Super Saturday. The first Christmas Market was also well received, so there are plans to hold something similar this year and to also organise a specialist food market in June.

A lot of work has been undertaken this year in evaluating Yeovil Street Markets and investigating possible alternative delivery arrangements. As detailed in previous committee reports, the markets are now in the process of being handed over to our new market partner MSD Markets Ltd. The necessary agreements are all in place and the new operators will begin running the markets by the beginning of April.

Economic Development and Regeneration Schemes

The Yeovil Refresh launch took place in Yeovil town centre on 9th and 10th March 2018. The event was well attended and a number of businesses have been in touch since, who would like to be involved in plans as they develop. A more detailed report on the consultation responses will come to this committee, once the initial consultation period has closed.

The team carry 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. This report is also used by both the Economic Development and Planning Policy teams.

Community Led Planning

The Community Hub at Wyndham Park continues to work well and is used by a variety of groups and organisations. The new school also provides space for larger activities, including the Community Association meetings, the membership of which has grown considerably over the last year.

The ADL has continued to work with Spark to establish a new Community Association on the new Lufton Housing Estate. The Kingfisher Community Association formally adopted their constitution on 15th March 2018 and the dual-use school and community room is on target for completion in June 2018. Work on the legal agreements and dual-use policies is still ongoing and the ADL will continue to help facilitate the discussions between the new association and the school.

The Team have offered advice to parishes wishing to undertake Housing Needs Surveys and West Coker have already completed theirs, which will help the parish identify local need and demand.

The Westfield Regeneration Project is progressing well, with the hall working committee having successfully secured grants from the National Lottery, Yarlinton Housing Group, SSDC and Yeovil Without Parish Council.

Advice has been given to over 30 voluntary and charitable groups and support given to all the local community associations in order to promote local action and improvements. The team also continue to provide a valued funding advice service, which is important in the current highly competitive financial climate.

Improve Access to Services

The team have continued to produce the Area South Bulletins, which are sent out quarterly to Parish Councils, Community Groups and other interested parties in the Area South area. The team also produce Ward and Parish Profiles and the Halls for Hire publication. The Halls for Hire booklet continues to be one of our most requested resources.

The ADL has chaired the Youth Opportunities Group that is held quarterly. This group aims to coordinate youth provision across the whole district and help avoid duplication.

The Petters House front desk has dealt with over 8,500 enquiries including the detailed advice provided to deal with over 5,200 benefits enquiries.

Community Safety

The ADL continues to support the multi-agency Yeovil One Tactical Team who meet on a monthly basis to provide support and direction to the Operational One Team.

Area Development has secured a day a week of an Environmental Health Officer's (EHO) time to assist with supporting the weekly Operational meeting which is based at the Fire Station and deals with complex issues in Yeovil Central and East Wards. The EHO and ADL are also investigating how SSDC might be able to utilise the new community safety powers available to district councils.

Unfortunately, both the Community Safety Manager and dedicated One Team Administrator left SSDC during the past year. However, funding has been found for a new temporary Yeovil One Co-ordinator post and recruitment for this post is currently underway.

The ADL recently assisted Avon and Somerset Police by chairing an Anti Social Behaviour Case Review (also known as a Community Trigger), which is one of the community empowerment tools brought in by the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Appendices to consist of:

Appendix 1: The Area South Development Plan 2017/18 update

Financial Implications

None as a direct result of this report.

Council Plan Implications

The work within the ADP supports the key focus areas of Economy, Environment and Health and Communities.

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