

11. Area South Community Forum (Executive Decision)

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Strategic Director – Place and Performance
Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Assistant Director - Communities
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area Development Manager - South
Lead Officer: Natalie Ross, Community Development Officer
Contact Details: natalie.ross@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462956

Purpose of the Report

To update members on the results of the Area South Community Forum and to agree the allocation of the service enhancement budget.

Recommendation

That members agree to fund the most popular projects as voted for by the community forum members.

Background

Joint Area Committee - South agreed to allocate £40,000 to the Area South Community Forum to help provide improvements to council services provided in Area South. It was decided by the community forum on 1st October 2009 that this funding should be used to enhance the Countryside, Streetscene, Octagon Theatre, Town Centre Partnership and Environmental Health services.

The Service Managers of these five services then investigated projects that they could implement that would achieve the enhancements or improvements suggested by the forum members during the meeting on 1st October 2009.

At the subsequent forum meeting on 3rd December 2009, four Service Managers presented proposals for consideration. The forum members then voted on which proposals they considered to be a priority for their area. Unfortunately, Environmental Health could not put forward the proposal to extend the Handyman Service as the department are currently investigating a new way of delivering this service.

Results

The forum members were each given 5 dots that they could use to select the proposals that would best achieve the desired improvements for their area or neighbourhood (see *Appendix A for the full list of proposals*).

The most supported projects were:

Project	Votes	Cost
Countryside Service		
Employment of an Assistant Ranger for 6 months	7	£12,919
Tree Planting Scheme	8	£2,000
Funding for Apprenticeship Scheme	6	£5,444
The Octagon Theatre		
Funding to set up Arts and Craft Markets	11	£6,000
Set up two community choirs	11	£2,500

StreetScene Service		
Deep cleaning of four identified residential areas in Yeovil	17	£5,400
Yeovil Town Centre Partnership		
Funding for Street Pastor project	10	£1,800
Opening of Yeovil Night Shelter over Christmas	12	£300
Four units to provide community safety messages via mobile phones	6	£5,890
Funding for Yeovil Crime Reduction Team	8	£1,200
	Total Cost	£43,453

The combined cost of these projects is slightly over the £40,000 allocated for this year. However, one of the projects that was supported by the forum last year was completed well under budget and this money has been carried forward to this year creating a budget of £43,604.

The town center location appears to have been popular with the forum members and the evaluation forms were all very positive about the evening. Comments included 'very positive, a lot of good work being done', 'very interesting presentations' and 'I think it is a good idea to involve the public with choices'.

Financial Implications

If £43,453 is spent from the service enhancement funds, there will be £151 left in the budget for this financial year.

Corporate Priority Implications

The Area South Community Forum contributes to the following Key Target Areas:

4.20 Increase % of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality

5.6 Increase the % of people who feel informed about the council and its activities

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Background Papers: None