

Area East Community Planning Sub Committee

Wednesday 22nd February 2006

9.30 am

Council Offices

Churchfield

Wincanton

Somerset

Preliminary Items

1. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th December 2005**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, which includes all the provisions of the statutory Model Code of Conduct, Members are asked to declare any personal interests (and whether or not such an interest is "prejudicial") in any matter on the agenda for this meeting. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 10.

4. **Public Question Time**
5. **Issues arising from the minutes of the 7th December 2005**

This is an opportunity for Members to question the progress on issues arising from previous meetings. However, this does not allow for the re-opening of a debate on any item not forming part of this agenda.

Page Number

Items for Discussion

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 6. Retail Support Initiative (Executive Decision)..... | 4 |
| 7. Community Planning Update..... | 8 |
| 8. Date of Next Meeting | 11 |

The public and press are welcome to attend.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Patricia Johnson** on Yeovil (01935) 462462
email: democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk, website: www.southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 14th February 2006

Area East Community Planning Sub Committee Membership

Chairman George Chinnock

Emma Bourne Dennis Trott
Tim Carroll June Wood
Anna Groskop

South Somerset District Council – Corporate Aims

Our key aims are: (all equal)

- To deliver well managed cost effective services valued by our customers
- To increase economic vitality and prosperity
- To improve the health and well-being of our citizens
- To ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities
- To promote a balanced natural and built environment

Scrutiny Procedure Rules

Please note that decisions taken by Area Committees may be "called in" for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation. This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

Members Questions on Reports prior to the Meeting

Members of the Committee are requested to contact report authors on points of clarification prior to the Committee meeting.

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Information for the Public

The Council has a well-established area committee system and through four area committees seeks to strengthen links between the Council and its local communities, allowing planning and other local issues to be decided at a local level (should members wish to approve planning applications which are outside Council policy the applications are referred to the district-wide Regulation Committee).

Decisions made by area committees, which include financial or policy implications, are generally classed as executive decisions. Where these financial or policy decisions have a significant impact on council budgets or the local community, agendas will record these decisions as “key decisions”. Members of the public can view the Council’s Executive Forward Plan, either online or at any SSDC council office, to see what executive/key decisions are scheduled to be taken in the coming months. Non-executive decisions taken by area committees include planning, and other quasi-judicial decisions.

At area committee meetings members of the public are able to:

- attend and make verbal or written representations, except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- at the Area Committee Chairman’s discretion, speak for up to up to 3 minutes on agenda items; and
- view the agenda reports.

Meetings of the Area East Committee are normally held monthly at 9.30 am on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Council Offices, Churchfield, Wincanton

Agendas and minutes of area committees are published on the Council’s website www.southsomerset.gov.uk.

The Council’s Constitution is also on the web site and available for inspection in the Council Offices.

Further information about this committee can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

6. Retail Support Initiative (Executive Decision)

Group Manager: Helen Rutter, Area Development Manager
Lead Officer: Matt Day/Pam Williams, Regeneration Officers
Contact Details: pam.williams@southsomerset.gov.uk or
matt.day@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01963) 435020

Purpose of the Report

For members to consider six funding requests and be provided with a progress update.

Recommendation(s)

That the following grants be awarded from the Regeneration Budget ringfenced for the Retail Support Initiative:

- (1) £625 to Needful Things Interiors Castle Cary - as a 50% contribution towards the cost of purpose built storage for fabric books and creation of a viewing area.
- (2) £1,000 to Wincanton Wholefoods, Wincanton - as a 17% contribution towards business expansion including equipment purchases and shop fitting subject to the following special condition
“that the tenure and consents for the prospective premises comply with grant conditions”.
- (3) £1,000 to Morpark Wines, Wincanton – as a 50% contribution towards the cost of purpose built shelving and counter modifications.
- (4) £1,000 to The Cunning Artificer, Wincanton – as an 18% contribution towards the refurbishment of the premises to create a more authentic Discworld Post Office.
- (5) £1,000 to Westcombe Stores, Templecombe – as a 13% contribution towards a new counter and vinyl lettering as part of refurbishment to incorporate relocated Post Office
- (6) £487.50 to Bruton House restaurant to assist with cost of replacing existing fire doors – a 50% contribution.

Subject to the following standard conditions:

- (a) The grant award may be used by SSDC for promotional/publicity purposes.
- (b) Grants are paid for approved works/purchases on production of receipted invoices.
- (c) Awards are subject to an interim report (within 9 months) and final report being submitted.
- (d) Applicants will normally be expected to draw down the grant within six months of the offer

Update

During the last month retail visits have been undertaken to retailers in Wincanton, Bruton, Castle Cary and some of the parishes as part of the Retail Support Initiative scheme. During these visits other key projects have been highlighted, ie. Connecting Somerset Broadband and IT support, training opportunities and highway schemes.

The visits have resulted in 6 funding applications, which suggests that the timing of proactive visits immediately prior to the Sub Committee is helpful in increasing the profile of the scheme and providing a quick turn round on applications.

At the December meeting Members approved delegated authority to withdraw a grant to deal with specific concerns about a business in Wincanton. Immediately after the meeting the Gift Horse Trading Co confirmed that they did not intend to draw down their grant as they were looking for alternative premises. It is understood that they have now moved to an out-of-district storage (non-retail) unit.

The concern about the potential for businesses to 'move on' is such that the Regeneration Officer is currently investigating ways in which grants may be tied until the pay back period has lapsed. It is believed that this is important because the current system is very person-dependent - this work is ongoing and will include other grants.

It is regrettable that the number of empty shops in Wincanton is escalating although it is understood that there is considerable interest in some of these units. Whilst respecting commercial confidentiality, where acceptable the Regeneration Officer has been actively signposting interested businesses to owners of these premises.

Funding applications – see schedule below

Financial Implications

The sum of £11,157 remains unallocated in the Regeneration Budget ringfenced for the Retail Support Initiative. If Members approve the recommendations in this report the remaining budget will be £6,044.50.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

This work contributes to the priority

To increase economic vitality and prosperity

Background Papers: Area East Committee May 2004, April 2005, June 2005
Community Planning Sub Committee September &
December 2005

Funding Applications

Name of business	Total Project Cost	Other funding	Grant requested	Purpose of grant	Need identified & Assessment Score	Comments
Needful Things Interiors	£1,250	50% own funds	£625	Purpose built storage and display of pattern books	Gift shop with soft furnishings established 6 years 25/32	Distinct area for soft furnishings within shop. Proposal will vastly improve circulation
Wincanton Wholefoods	£6,000	83% own funds	£1,000	Assist with business expansion shop refitting and equipment purchases	Established 4+ years looking for additional premises 26/32	Additional conditions to ensure prospective premises/trading meets grant criteria
The Cunning Artificer	£5,433	82% own funds	£1,000	Assist with refurbishment to incorporate bank screen, counter front etc recarpeting and lighting	Unique business which genuinely attracts people to the town 26/32	Using reclaimed materials
Morpark Wines	£2,000	50% own funds	£1,000	Contribute towards second phase of refurbishment including shelving and modification to counter	Long established business change of ownership within last two years keen to develop business 26/32	Grant of £124. Previously awarded for phase one works in Jan 2005

Name of business	Total Project Cost	Other funding	Grant requested	Purpose of grant	Need identified & Assessment Score	Comments
Westcombe Stores	£7,755	87% own funds	£1,000	Contribute towards a new counter as part of refurbishment to incorporate new Post Office	Established 3 years, taking on PO due to existing losing PO support 26/32	PO contributing additional £6687
Bruton House	£975	50% own funds	£487.50	Assist with cost of replace existing fire doors	Business open 1 year. Need to upgrade doors to comply with insurance req. 23/32	One of the town's most distinctive buildings at the junction of High St and Patwell St.

7. Community Planning Update

Group Manager: Helen Rutter, Area Development Officer Portfolio
Lead Officer: Tim Cook, Community Development Officer, Area Development
Pam Williams, Regeneration Officer, Area Development
Matt Day, Regeneration Officer, Area Development
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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on Community Planning work in Area East.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Background

This report provides a further update on progress of Community Planning in Area East.

Report

This is a crucial time for Parish Plan groups funded through the Vital Villages programme as this has scheme has now closed and the Countryside Agency is keen for all projects to be completed by the end of the financial year.

The launch of the Community Plan for Keinton Mandeville and its formal adoption by the Parish Council took place at an open meeting on 7th February. The meeting was very well attended and provided an opportunity to encourage local people to volunteer for various projects identified. There is still some work to be done to finalise the main document and produce a summary to be circulated to all residents in March. A copy of the Community Plan for Keinton Mandeville has been sent with this report for members information.

The Queen Camel Parish Plan has been complete and adopted for some time. Theme groups have been established to take issues and actions forward. The Community Development Officer has suggested that a meeting between District, County, Parish representatives and the Parish Plan group be arranged to look at support available to enable projects to move forward. It is hoped that this meeting will take place in March.

As reported at the last meeting the deadline to apply for funds from DEFRA has now passed. The West Camel Living plan group has been successful in applying for funds towards the production of their Parish Plan. More details will be reported at the meeting.

The table below provides an updated overview of the development of Parish Plans in Area East.

Town/Parish	Update	Funding/Support
Mudford	Skatepark project is now underway which has temporarily suspended Parish Plan work.	Parish Council £500 SSDC Further £300 awarded towards printing of the plan.
Queen Camel	Theme groups established and taking work forward.	£4,288 Countryside Agency grant Parish Council 5% min £225
Keinton Mandeville	Community Plan adopted by Parish Council. Summary document in production for circulation in March.	£2,500 Countryside Agency £150 SSDC Parish Council £140.
Carymoor	Parish Plan to be completed and adopted by end of March 2006	£2,500 Countryside Agency Possible request to SSDC Parish Council
North Cadbury	Draft plan completed and is due for consideration by Steering Group and Parish Council in March.	Further financial support will be required to complete the plan.
West Camel	Steering group formed survey completed. Application made to Community Council for DEFRA funding towards plan.	SSDC grant of £350 already allocated.
Holton	Survey being produced with a view to producing a Parish Plan.	Funding not known at present

Wincanton Market Town and Coastal Initiative – Wincanton People Plan

Work on the draft Healthcheck is progressing well (mainly to fill information gaps). It is hoped that a first draft of the town plan will be available in May. Prior to this there will a focus session held with a mixed group of invitees in early March to 'test' emergent findings and begin to develop solutions. This work will be furthered through visits to target groups including schools, a business breakfast, older people, toddler groups etc.

Castle Cary and Ansford Area Strategy – CanPlan

The household survey has been considered by both Ansford Parish Council and Castle Cary Town Council and some alterations have been made as a result of this process. The survey has been finalised, printed and is due to be delivered w/c 13th February.

The Cary and Ansford community plan is a bigger project than any other Parish Plan in the area as it aims to address the aspirations and needs of both a Market Town and a rural parish.

Bruton Community Planning

Bruton The Way Forward Group has agreed that momentum needs to be built again and are currently prioritising aspirations and projects to create an Action Plan and agree a Vision statement.

Current 'live' projects include High Street traffic improvements, a tourism leaflet and a Community Safety Action Team. A consultation on the traffic issues is planned for March.

The Group will meet on a more regular basis (usually monthly) than previously.

Allocation of Community Planning Implementation Budget

Members will recall that in April 2005 the Area East Committee agreed to ringfence £50,000 towards supporting priority projects emerging from Community Planning activity in Area East.

The Parish Plans that have been produced in Queen Camel and Keinton Mandeville have identified a number of actions requiring the support (financial and officer time) of South Somerset District Council among other partners.

It is now necessary to establish the criteria and application process for groups to access this money. Officers would like members views on the following to help establish the guiding principles that should be in place to evaluate schemes and ration this money.

- Should projects be fed through normal grants process or separate form?
- Area committee or via community planning sub committee?
- Can this money be used to match fund the Market Town Vision capital scheme or are they mutually exclusive?

Progress with Market Town Vision

A verbal update will be given by the Area Development Manager at the meeting.

Financial Implications

None

Implications for Corporate Priorities

This work is closely aligned corporate aims:

2. increase economic vitality and prosperity
4. ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities.

8. Date of Next Meeting

To be decided at the meeting.
