

Item no.

Report to: Extraordinary District Council of Easington
Date: 14th July 2005
Report of: Executive Member for Regeneration
Subject: Seaham Expenditure - Financial Year 2005/06

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to both advise the Council of proposed expenditure against the 2005/06 Seaham budget and to seek approval to the works/actions referenced.

2. Consultation

In preparing this report officers in Regeneration and Partnerships have been consulted as has the Chairman of the Seaham Regeneration Member Panel.

Full support for the proposals have been received.

3. Background

Each financial year a budget is allocated to finance those regeneration projects that are outlined in the Seaham Regeneration Strategy. This report outlines the projects that will be undertaken, with approximate costing for each individual scheme, in the financial year 2005/2006

4. Position Statement and Option Appraisal

The following projects will be undertaken using this financial years Seaham budget of £189,670

4.1 Roberts Square Environmental Improvements - £12,000

The District Council carried out environmental improvement works to areas of Roberts Square in 2004/05, as part of a larger package of improvements in the area.

Durham County Council (DCC) were also instructed to undertake some improvement works to the area of land behind Roberts Square, backing on to the A19 Link Road. The DCC work involves: the provision of a footpath to link the area with the town centre link road, provision of a metal railing behind the new footpath construction, installation of forty metres of post and rail fence adjacent to the existing landscape mound, re-seeding the area and a generally tidy.

To date this work has not commenced and accordingly budgetary provision needs to be made for this existing commitment.

4.2 Forward Plan - £20,000

The Seaham Regeneration 10 Year Strategy came to an end in March 2004. To continue the renaissance work it has been suggested a forward plan is needed

governing development over the next 10 years. This proposal was approved in 2004/05, however, due to reviews of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Planning Development Framework it was not taken forward until clarity around these issues was provided. It is considered external grant aid through the County Durham Economic Partnership will be available to part fund this work. A budgetary allocation of £20,000 is therefore now considered appropriate against an overall estimated budget requirement of £30-40,000.

4.3 Life Boat Memorial - £20,000

Funding has been allocated to design, build and implement a memorial to remember those lives lost in a rescue mission off the coast of Seaham. It is proposed to incorporate a memorial in Seaham North Dock, in due course. This project was also approved in 2004/05 and will be taken forward when the North Dock re-development has been sufficiently progressed.

4.4 Marlborough Car Park - £30,000

£30,000 has been allocated to resurface Marlborough car park in Seaham Town centre. This proposal is outstanding from 2004/05.

Works were held in abeyance in 2004/05 due to the Seaham Regeneration Panel requesting consideration be given to a larger scheme. Plans have recently been prepared for the larger scheme and costings are awaited. The original cost estimate was £30,000. Additional external funding will need to be secured to implement any larger scheme. If this is not possible it is proposed to undertake the original scheme.

4.5 North Dock Improvements - £97,670

North Dock improvements have commenced with £326,000 of public accommodation works, financed through the Liveability Fund. The contract for this first phase of works is nearing an end and a formal launch of the re-opening of the Dock is proposed for mid-July.

In order to continue the momentum of the initial phase it is proposed to undertake a second phase of works. These works will substantially open up further areas of the Dock for public use. The value of this work is estimated to be in the region of £100,000. If funding is approved prior to the end of the current contract the Dock Company have indicated they would be prepared to negotiate an extension with the current contractor, to implement the works. The contract was awarded on a competitive basis and the same financial safeguards would again be applied.

The Council contribution to enable the works to commence would be in the form of direct grant aid to the Dock Company. The existing works contract is between the Dock Company and the Contractor.

4.6 Grant Aid for Design Fees - St Johns Square - £10,000

£10,000 has been allocated to provide grant aid for an urban designer to devise a set of design principles for St Johns Square, in order to ensure continuity of design throughout the area. The allocation of expenditure has allowed the continuation of an existing contract. This has previously been endorsed by Management Team and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration. Executive is asked to endorse the action.

4.7 Option Appraisal

If the physical works are not implemented then Seaham will retain a number of areas

of derelict land/land not fit for purpose. This will be to the detriment of the renaissance activity. Similarly, if the proposals are only part implemented there will be a negative impact on the local environment. This will diminish the work undertaken to date by the Council and other regeneration partners.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial

The Seaham budget for this financial year is £189,670. This has previously been approved through the formal budget setting process. Expenditure proposed will be to the level of funding available, therefore, there is no additional financial implications on the Council arising out of this report.

The re-surfacing and improvement of the Marlborough Car Park will reduce the short-medium term maintenance burden by provision of new surfacing etc. Future maintenance will be undertaken via existing budgets.

5.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the report.

5.3 Policy

There are no policy implications arising from the report.

5.4 Risk

A risk assessment has been completed and the necessary actions required to manage the identified risks will be implemented.

5.5 Communications

All works will be communicated via the established framework for the Regeneration of Seaham and the Council's Press and Public Relations staff.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities

The physical development works proposed will contribute to the corporate aim of 'making the district a prosperous, safe, attractive and healthy place to live'. This will be achieved through the improvement of under-used/derelict areas of land.

They will therefore contribute to a number of the Council's priority areas for action, namely: clean tidy communities and building a healthy community.

6.2 Service Plan

The proposed Seaham Forward Plan will assist meet the Unit's Service Plan aim of 'developing policy to address socio-economic issues'. The physical works, which have been identified through a partnership approach, will contribute towards 'bringing forward initiatives to deliver change'.

6.3 Equality and Diversity

There are no equality or diversity issues arising out of the report.

6.4 E-Government

There are no E-Government implications arising out of the report.

6.5 Procurement

There are no specific procurement issues arising out of the report.

7 Conclusion

The report identifies expenditure against the Seaham budget for the financial year 2005/2006 and seeks approval of the Executive to progress the proposals, as outlined.

8 Recommendations

In view of the foregoing information it is recommended that the Executive endorse the outlined expenditure and the actions described in order to continue the renaissance of Seaham

9 Background Papers/Documents referred to

District of Easington Risk Assessment