

# Item No:

**Report to:** Executive  
**Date:** 27 November, 2007  
**Report of:** Executive Member for Regeneration  
**Subject:** Regeneration Projects Revenue Expenditure  
**Wards:** All

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise the Executive of the Regeneration Projects revenue expenditure for the financial year 2007/08, and to seek approval to allocate funding towards specific budget headings.

## 2. Consultation

- 2.1 In preparing this report the Regeneration and Partnerships Service Unit has been consulted along with the Capital Programme Working Group at the initial budget setting stage

## 3. Background

- 3.1 Each year the Projects Team has a capital allocation in order to facilitate regeneration activity in the major towns of Peterlee and Seaham. However in recent years it has been noted that more feasibility/design work is needed for certain projects. This work cannot be funded from a capital budget, so a revenue stream has been identified this financial year to allow such work to be carried forward.
- 3.2 As well as revenue budgets for the major centres work, a revenue stream has been allocated to the assist the Land and Buildings Programme, and also an Enabling Fund that will facilitate regeneration work that falls outside of the major centres.

## 4. Position Statement and Option Appraisal

The following will identify funding allocated to each area, and will highlight projects that are coming forward under each heading.

### 4.1 Peterlee Regeneration Budget

This year Peterlee has a revenue allocation of £100,000. This will be used to procure feasibility/design works that will link into physical developments identified in the Peterlee Masterplan.

#### 4.11 *Peterlee Environmental Appraisal*

The Peterlee Masterplan has identified that the green spaces within Peterlee are very important to local residents and are very much a part of the town's character. At present there is a lot of open space across Peterlee that is generally under utilised. Although the Masterplan has identified development on some of the open spaces, much of it is likely to remain. It is therefore felt appropriate to undertake an appraisal of all remaining open space in the town to assess its current usage and to identify how it should be utilised in the future. It will also look to highlight important linkages within the town and how these could be improved to allow green corridors to be used as connections in and around Peterlee. A budget of £60,000 has been identified for this project.

#### 4.12 *Peterlee Traffic Impact Assessment*

The Peterlee Masterplan has recommended that in order for the town to improve and progress, there needs to be an increase in population and the town centre needs to grow and improve its offer of both retail and office space. It is anticipated that such volumes of development will cause an increase in the amount of traffic in and around the town. It is therefore felt necessary to undertake a traffic impact assessment. This will involve a review of the Masterplan and its recommended development sites and an analysis of the amount of traffic generated and how this can best be managed. The Assessment will then be used as a tool, when applications for development come forward, to guide any potential transport implications that may arise. An allocation of £40,000 has been identified for this project and it is anticipated that the Highway Authority will take this forward.

#### 4.2 Seaham Regeneration Budget

This year Seaham has a revenue allocation of £150,000. This funding will be used to deliver feasibility/design works that are linked to projects identified as part of the Seaham Regeneration Strategy.

#### 4.21 *Seaham Harbour Investment Project*

As part of the Seaham North Dock project a Community Interest Company (CIC) is being established to manage the new developments that are taking place in the area (pontoons, dock gates, slipway, workshop unit). The CIC (Seaham Harbour Investment Project) is a not for profit company, with any money generated going back to help sustain and maintain the development. An allocation of £10,000 of revenue funding has been allocated to the CIC to help to finance its running for the first year of its operation. It is also anticipated that further assistance to the project may need to be made in future years to ensure that this important scheme has every chance of survival in its first years of existence.

#### 4.22 *North Dock Development Officer*

This will be a continuation of a post developed in the last financial year. The post involved marketing of the North Dock to test demand for mooring and businesses wishing to let units, to undertake educational visits to the site, to ensure that the area is safe for the public, to ensure a certain level of maintenance and to organise events. It is felt that this post has been very useful for the development of the North Dock and is bridging the gap well between phases of physical work to keep local interest in the project. An additional £10,000 has therefore been identified to contribute to the salary costs for this position for a further six months until the CIC is fully operational.

#### 4.23 *North Dock Application Development*

Phase 3 of the North Dock Project is looking at restoring the Heritage Value back into the site. In order to undertake this work a significant amount of external funding will be required. It is anticipated that a large amount of this funding will come from the Heritage Lottery Fund, but other agencies will also need to be approached for match funding.

£60,000 has been allocated for the appointment of a firm of consultants to prepare funding applications on our behalf. There is a substantial amount of work involved in their preparation, including a structural survey, public realm design works, planning and listed building consents, restoration appraisal (to determine if for example the coal chutes could be reinstated), full costing etc.

#### 4.24 *Forward Plan*

The Seaham Regeneration Strategy was adopted in 1994 and was a ten-year plan to govern the regeneration of Seaham town centre. As most of the developments within the strategy have either been fulfilled or are close to going on site, it is felt appropriate to commission a new plan to guide Seaham into the future. An allocation of £65,000 has been identified and it is anticipated that both the Town and County Council will add to this pot. A firm of consultants will be appointed to take this forward.

#### 4.3 Land and Buildings Budget

Although there is a substantial sum of money ring-fenced for the Land and Buildings Programme it is ring fenced to project delivery. Therefore a revenue budget has been allocated in order that any feasibility work could be undertaken prior to a programme of activity being established. A revenue budget of £100,000 has been allocated to this project.

In order to commence the Programme it is intended to commission professional assistance to prepare a Development Brief for the village of Thornley, an Economic Appraisal for Wheatley Hill Front Street and an Urban Design Guide for the Johnson Estate in Wheatley Hill. Initial discussions have highlighted that the Programme will be concentrated

on these two villages (a further report is to follow) and it is thought that the work outlined will provide direction and a delivery plan to take the proposals forward.

£80,000 has been allocated for these commissions.

#### 4.4 The Enabling Fund

This fund was established to facilitate projects that fall outside of the two major centres of Peterlee and Seaham. £50,000 of revenue funding has been attributed to this project for this financial year.

Hawthorn Prestige Industrial Estate will be located on the former Hawthorn Cokeworks site in Murton. The Estate forms part of a central zone of development surrounded by a large expanse of open space. It is proposed to commission an appraisal to determine how this open space area could be developed into a country park that would link up with existing walkways and bridleways that join up with Dalton Park. Also as part of this a Green Travel To Work Plan could be established for the new industries created.

£50,000 has been allocated to undertake this work.

## 5. Implications

### 5.1 Financial

The budgets identified have previously been approved by the formal budget setting process. Expenditure proposed will be to level of funding available, therefore there are no additional financial implications on the Council arising from this report.

This finance will act as leverage to bring in wider investment to the District, in the form of private sector developments and regional funding from public sector agencies such as One North East and the Heritage Lottery Fund

### 5.2 Legal

5.2.1 It is not considered that there are any legal implications not otherwise referenced in the report.

### 5.3 Policy

5.3.1 It is not considered that there are any policy implications not otherwise referenced in the report.

### 5.4 Risk

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

## **5.5 Communications**

Any major new projects or developments with existing schemes will be advertised both in the local press and on the District of Easington Council's website. Also partner organisations will be encouraged to advertise projects via their own marketing material.

## **6. Corporate Implications**

### **6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities**

The 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 underused/derelict sites and Brownfield land.

The projects outlined will contribute to a number of the Council's priorities for action, namely: clean tidy communities and building a healthy community.

The proposed works also contribute to units service plan aims of 'developing policy to address socio-economic issues' via the Perterlee Masterplan and the Seaham Regeneration Strategy.

### **6.2 Equality and Diversity**

It is not considered that there are any equality and diversity implications not otherwise referenced in the report.

### **6.3 E-Government**

It is not considered that there are any e-government implications not otherwise referenced in the report

### **6.4 Procurement**

It is not considered that there is any procurement implications not otherwise referenced in the report.

## **7. Recommendations**

### **7.1 It is recommended that the Executive:**

- Endorse the proposed expenditure outlined within this report
- Authorise the Director of Regeneration & Development to progress the schemes, with the Regeneration Projects, to facilitate developments in the District that support local strategies and priorities

Background Papers:

Peterlee Master Plan – Regeneration Section

Seaham Regeneration Strategy – Regeneration Section

Land & Buildings Audit – Regeneration Section