

# Item 6

## AREA 2 FORUM

11<sup>th</sup> September 2007

### Report of the Head of Strategy and Regeneration

#### Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme

#### **Application - Mainsforth & District Community Centre – Improvements to the Community Centre.**

This report highlights a Local Improvement Programme (LIP) application submitted to and initially appraised by the Strategy and Regeneration Section. The report provides information to the Area 2 Forum for their consideration and comments, which will be used to further develop the project proposal prior to it being taken through Sedgefield Borough Council's decision-making process.

The Area 2 Forum has been allocated £836,000 of LIP capital resources between 2006 and 2009. A total of £278,700 has been allocated to the year 2007/08. A number of projects have been supported in the previous year to the value of £174,024, and there is some additional under-spend resulting from last year, which will be available to the Area Forum for additional project activity.

#### **Project Background**

- **Name of Project:** Improvements to Mainsforth & District Community Association
- **Name of Applicant:** Mainsforth & District Community Association
- **Brief Description of Project:** The project aims to renew the boiler and heating system in the community centre and boxing club. This will enable the centre to install a more energy efficient boiler and zoned heating system with the aim of expanding the available use of the community centre to more community organisations.
- **Requested from LIP:** £75,830 (94%)
- **Total Estimated Project Cost:** £80,830
- **What will the LIP be used for:**  
The refurbishment will include,
  - Removal of existing boiler plant and heating system
  - Removal and safe disposal of asbestos insulation
  - Installation of new gas boiler

- Installation of new heating system with zoned controls enabling heating to be provided to individual rooms rather than heating the whole centre.
- **Impact of the Project:**  
The applicant has stated that although the Community Centre is well used there is additional capacity to cater for more user groups. One of the barriers to this is the cost of heating additional rooms within the building. One system controls the whole building and if one group wants to use space within the building then the whole building has to be heated. With monthly energy costs increasing it has been very difficult for the Community Centre to offer additional users space due to cost implications. By replacing the old system with a new 'zonal heating system' heat will be able to be directed to the rooms in use rather than the whole building.

The centre is the only community facility of its type in the village. Over the past five years the Association have undertaken a range of additional refurbishments including; Installation of a lift, Renewed ladies and gents toilets, Installed disabled toilets to both floors, Refurbished main hall and lounge, New lighting fitted, New windows and a refurbished kitchen.

The renewal of the heating system is the last major part of the overall refurbishment and will help to secure the future of the Community Centre and bring it into even more effective use.

- **Evidence of need and community support:**  
The applicant has outlined that replies to a recent questionnaire indicates the need to have the facility available to the community. Some verbal consultation has taken place with positive results. Further work will be undertaken prior to the project being considered by Sedgefield Borough Council to identify an enhanced programme of use within the centre.

In 1999 a report was commissioned as part of the Area Appraisal for Ferryhill Station - The 'Options for the Future' Report. In relation to the Community Centre the report concluded that, "the building has very high running costs... the costs of running and maintaining the building dictates the activities rather than the needs of the community." By carrying out these works the group hope to reverse that trend.

- **Value for money and Revenue implications:**  
The applicant has applied for £75,830, which is 94% of the total project costs. The remaining capital costs will be funded by a grant that has been applied for from the Co-op Group. The future revenue costs will be funded by income from room hire charges and bar takings.

The Strategy & Regeneration Division will work with the applicant to identify other opportunities for additional 'match funding' to be brought into the project.

Subject to discussion and agreement by the Area Forum to progress the project, the Strategy & Regeneration Division will work with the applicant during the full project appraisal stage to explore a more detail predicted programme of use for the facility in order to maximise the overall impact of the project.

**Recommendation from the Strategy and Regeneration Section:**

That the Area Forum considers:

- The project proposal and how it will meet the priority needs of the Area 2 locality.

**Material considerations:**

**Other applications received from Area 2:**

In taking the above decision the Area Forum is requested to consider the implication of the funding level requested against the following projects that have been received for future determination by the Forum.

**Applications approved by Sedgefield Borough Council to date;**

• West Cornforth Number 66 Project Works Completed and Grant claimed.	£64,400 approved
• Chilton Environmental Improvements Works ongoing, still to claim grant.	£93,454 approved
• Ferryhill LADDER Centre Technical Study Under development, still to claim grant.	£6,170 approved
• Ferryhill Sports Facility Technical Study Study being commissioned.	£10,000 approved
Total	£174,024

**Applications under development**

- Duncombe Heritage Centre Development – Ferryhill. Estimated project costs £200,000. LIP grant requested approximately £100,000. A more detailed project proposal is still being developed with the History Society and the Town Council.
- West Cornforth Community Centre Lip grant requested approximately £90,000.

**Applications to be discussed at the next Area Forum – 6<sup>th</sup> November**

- Dean Bank & Ferryhill Literary Institute £40,390 sought Works proposed to provide more space within the building for community learning opportunities and installation of a stage in the main hall.
- Ferryhill Sports Facility Technical Study – Update on the work of the consultants

