

Item 6

AREA 2 FORUM

6th November 2007

Report of Assistant Chief Executive

Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme

Application - Dean Bank and Ferryhill Literary Institute – 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 to the value of £249,855, 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:** Ferryhill – Community Education and Leisure
- **Name of Applicant:** Dean Bank & Ferryhill Literary Institute
- **Brief Description of Project:** The project aims to provide a 2 storey extension to provide a learning suite. This will involve the realignment of the public / emergency staircase. A total of 19.8 metres square additional space will be provided. The project will also create a raised stage in the main hall.
- **Requested from LIP:** £ 50,000 (36%)
- **Total Estimated Project Cost:** £139,322
- **What will the LIP be used for:** The re-alignment of the original staircase would release space allowing a new learning room to be developed. A raised stage in the main function room has been proposed to enhance the activities which currently take place in this room. In order to create the stage, it is necessary to move the current administrative office and remove an inner wall.
- **Impact of the Project:**
The applicant has stated that the current space available for this type of learning is insufficient to meet the demand of the area for learning. The project would create a learning suite which will provide a friendly learning environment away from the classroom atmosphere and a

crèche facility. The project will also provide a raised stage in the main function room. This room attracts heavy usage already and requests have been made from the current users for a raised stage area to give audiences a better view of presentations and entertainment.

- **Evidence of need and community support:**
The applicant has outlined that the project was mainly developed as a result of local knowledge. The trustees and management committee are all community voluntary workers heavily involved in community work – the applicant has indicated that this has given them an insight into what is lacking in Ferryhill. An article has been published in the Ferryhill Chapter inviting people onto various new courses including IT courses, First Aid, Food Hygiene and The Digital Camera / Computer course. The response was good with 57 people requesting further education. These courses are now being provided within the existing accommodation.
- **Value for money and Revenue implications:**
The applicant has applied for £50,000, which is 36% of the total project costs. £50,000 of their own funding will be put into the project and they are applying to CISWO and Durham County Council's Supplementary Grant fund for the remaining £39,322. The applicant has indicated that the future revenue costs will be funded by income from room hire charges although the details of this are still to be confirmed. The Strategy & Regeneration Division will work with the applicant to identify other opportunities for additional 'match funding' to be brought into the project. All elements of the project will go out to tender if the project is approved by all funders.
- **Additional Comments**
Following the initial appraisal of the project, there are a number of issues to be addressed regarding this project. An envisaged programme of use for the new learning suite is yet to be provided. An IT suite currently exists in the same area of the building which is currently not being utilised due to lack of equipment. The activities which have been identified to demonstrate the need for the new area are now being provided within the existing accommodation of the building. We would therefore need to fully establish the added value of the project before it could be progressed further. With regard to the consultation undertaken to date, the Strategy and Regeneration section will work with the applicant to clearly establish how the group have taken into account public views in the project.

Subject to discussion and agreement by the Area Forum to progress the project, the Strategy & Regeneration Division will work with the applicant to resolve the above issues, and clarify any additional points raised through the Area Forum process.

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.	£93,455 approved
• Ferryhill LADDER Centre Technical Study Under development, still to claim grant.	£6,170 approved
• Ferryhill Sports Facility Technical Study Study due for completion end Nov 07.	£10,000 approved
• Mainsforth Community Centre Approved 25 th October 2007	£75,830 Approved
Total	£249,855

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. Approval by Area Forum awaiting decisions on matched funding.

Applications to be discussed at the next Area Forum – 18th December 2007

- Ferryhill Sports Facility Technical Study – Update on the work of the consultants. Study due for completion end Nov 07.

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