

Item 6

AREA 5 FORUM

23rd January 2007

Report of the Head of Strategy and Regeneration

Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme

Application - Refurbishment of Middridge Village Hall

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 5 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 5 Forum has been allocated £1,140,000 of LIP capital resources between 2006 and 2009. A total of £380,000 has been allocated to the year 2006/07 of which £183,505 has been allocated to date.

Project Background

- **Name of Project:** Refurbishment of Middridge Village Hall.
- **Name of Applicant:** Middridge Village Association.
- **Landlord:** Middridge Village Association under Trust Deed
- **Brief Description of Project:** The aim of the project is to completely refurbish and modernise the village hall, which is currently underused because of its poor state of repair, to a standard, which will provide an inviting, safe and friendly venue for the use of not only the village but also the surrounding area.
- **Requested from LIP:** £68,965 (92%)
- **Total Estimated Project Cost:** £74,965 (Capital)
- **ODPM Definition:**
The applicant has stated that the building is currently underused because of its poor state of repair. The proposal aims to expand the available use of the village hall to more community organisations.
- **What will the LIP be used for:**
The refurbishment will include, re-roofing of the whole building, repair of rising damp, new central heating and hot water system, complete electrical re-wiring and lighting system, lowering and replacing of the

ceiling in the main hall, new floor in main hall, appropriate disabled access including toilet improvements.

- **Impact of the Project:**

The applicant has stated that the Village Hall is currently in a poor state of repair; there are significant areas of damp that has resulted in a decrease in community use. The hall has undergone only essential repairs during the last 20 years, which has resulted in severe deterioration to walls and flooring. The central heating system is aged and therefore does not supply adequate heat to the range of rooms within the building. The internal lighting is not adequate for certain user groups to carry out their activities. Several groups who have used the hall regularly in the past years have now ceased to use the hall because it's condition.

The refurbishment will help to secure the regeneration of the Village Hall and bring it back fully into effective use. Discussions have taken place with a range of outside agencies such as Pioneering Care Centre Outreach, the Primary Care Trust and CAVOS and they have all expressed an interest in using the facility after refurbishment for a range of community focused activities.

The applicant has stated that the project links to three of the four key community strategy objectives. These are Healthy Borough– Improving the health and well being of the local community, by creating a suitable venue for Local Health Promotions, such as smoking cessation and any other health issues, keep fit and Yoga classes. Attractive Borough– develop and maximise leisure and cultural facilities in the borough. The project will provide Middridge Village and the surrounding area with an up to date, attractive and sustainable facility for a variety of activities. Strong Communities – Creating a safe neighbourhood by helping to combat any anti-social behaviour by providing a facility for the young people in the village to use for various activities.

- **Evidence of need and community support:**

A survey of all 150 houses in the village was conducted in 2005. 51 responses were returned all with positive comments. The majority of the regular activities have ceased due to the poor state of the hall, although the local community is requesting a number of these to become available again. Middridge Parish Council is in full support of the project.

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

- **Value for money and Revenue implications:**
The applicant has applied for £74,965 which is 92% of the total project costs. The remaining capital costs will be funded by funds of Middridge Village Association. The future revenue costs will be funded by income from Village Association activities, a suitable charge for the use of the premises to users and also annual subscriptions. In addition to the above, the National Lottery - Awards for All Fund have awarded £3,500 to fund a new computer suite within the Village Hall.
- **Statutory Approvals:** Requirement of Planning Permission and Building Regulation consent is to be confirmed.

Recommendation from the Strategy and Regeneration Section:

That the Area Forum considers:

- The project proposal, and how it would meet the priority needs of the Area 5 locality.

Subject to discussion and agreement by the Area Forum to progress the project proposal, the applicant will work with the Strategy and Regeneration Division to further develop the LIP application prior to it being taken through Sedgefield Borough Council's decisions making process.

Material considerations:

Other applications received from Area 5:

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.

- Woodham Community Centre – refurbishment of the Community Centre to enable additional activities to be provided - LIP requested £25,200, Total project cost £25,200.

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