

Item 6

AREA 5 FORUM

17th July 2007

Report of the Head of Strategy and Regeneration

Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme

Application - Refurbishment of Neville Parade 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 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 2007/08. A number of projects have been allocated in the previous year for this area, and there is some additional under-spend resulting from last year, which will be available to the Area Forum for project activity.

Project Background

- **Name of Project:** Refurbishment of Neville Parade Community Centre.
- **Name of Applicant:** Friends of Senior Citizens.
- **Landlord:** The Friends of Senior Citizens.
- **Brief Description of Project:** The aim of the project is to refurbish areas of the community centre, which could then safeguard existing users as well as expanding the available use of the Community Centre to additional community organisations including disabled groups, and mother/toddler groups.
- **Requested from LIP:** £34,763(90%)
- **Total Estimated Project Cost:** £38,763 (Capital)
- **What will the LIP be used for:**
The refurbishment will include,
 - Renovation of roof
 - Install a facility to be used as a baby/toddler changing area and accessible toilet facility
 - Install a perimeter fence

- **Impact of the Project:**

The applicant has stated that although the Community Centre has been quite well used in the past, several groups who have used the hall regularly in the past years have now ceased to use the hall because it's condition. The roof, which is currently in a poor state of repair; is a cause of concern as there are significant areas of damp within the main hall. The roof has undergone essential repairs during the last 4 years, which has resulted in having felting replaced 3 times and more recently emergency repairs have cost of £770. Enquiries have been made from a disabled group to use the facility as a games area, the main hall is an ideal location for this activity and could lead to an opportunity to form a games team to compete in the County. The centre is the only community facility in the east area of the town and the applicant is keen to encourage younger groups of the community to use the facility therefore the provision of a baby changing facility could bring mothers with babies/toddlers into the centre to create a Mother/toddler play group. The applicant would also like to encourage more youngsters from the area to use the building, by providing activities such as Karate, Film Shows, and Curling etc., which it is hoped could combat some of the anti-social behaviour in the area. The provision of a perimeter fence would mean that the members of the playgroup could use the rear of the building in safety and it would also offset vandals from targeting the building. The refurbishment will help to secure the regeneration of the Community Centre and bring it back fully into effective use.

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

Letters of support have been received from users and potential users of the building indicating the need to have the facility available to all members of the community. Some verbal consultation has taken place with positive results. Some 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.

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 £34,763, which is 90% of the total project costs. The remaining capital costs will be funded by a grant that has been received from Christ's Hospital Sherburn Trust Fund and fundraising done by the Friends of Senior Citizens. The future revenue costs will be funded by income from the Friends of Senior Citizens, a suitable charge for the use of the premises to users.

- **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.

None to date.

Applications approved to date:

Great Aycliffe Way & Nature Reserve	£183,505
Woodham Community Centre	£25,200
Midridge Village Hall	£76,485

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