

# Item 5

AREA 4 FORUM

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008

## Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

### Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme

#### Application - Shildon People's 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 4 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 4 Forum has been allocated £456,000 of LIP capital resources between 2006 and 2009. A total of £54,112 has been approved to date. Therefore, £401,888 is remaining for 2008/09, the final year of the Local Improvement Programme.

#### Project Background

- **Name of Project:** Refurbishment Programme
- **Name of Applicant:** Shildon People's Centre
- **Brief Description of Project:**  
The project comprises of a refurbishment of the Shildon People's centre – this includes the installation of an external lift to enable easier access to the first floor, the erection of a 7m x 7m conservatory, kitchen refit, flooring / carpets, double glazing, new boiler & furniture for the cells and cafe. Activities which the centre aim to provide as a result include: Healthy eating courses, education courses, First Aid courses, youth activities, yoga, keep fit, mother and toddler, weight watchers, over 60's tea club, and cookery courses.
- **Requested from LIP: £100,803 (98%)**
- **Total Estimated Project Cost: £102,803**
- **Impact of the Project:**  
The applicant has stated that the refurbishment of the centre is essential as they would like to offer a flexible service to meet the needs of local people and encourage new users to the centre to access a broader range of services. They have also stated that the wider impact will be: a reduction in anti-social behaviour as a result of improved provision for young people, improved health and well being through improved local access to information, advice, support and activities and greater access available to people with mobility problems. The project

aims to reduce social isolation, increase social inclusion, and increasing community engagement through increased participation.

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

The applicant has stated that an independent feasibility study was carried out between April and June 2006 involving over 450 residents of Shildon. The research demonstrated overwhelming local resident and agency support for services to continue and highlighted the needs which are being addressed within this project for improved facilities to support a wider range of community activities.

The applicant has stated that they have received numerous letters of support for refurbishment, small donations and an increase in volunteer time. They have also carried out a questionnaire with the young people of Shildon demonstrating how the refurbishment would greatly benefit.

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 establish the detail of the lease arrangements and explore the links with other local community facilities in Shildon.

- **Value for money and Revenue implications:**

The total project cost is £102,803, of which the applicant has applied for £100,803 (98%). The applicant will meet the additional costs.

The issues of future financial sustainability of the centre will be considered during the full appraisal process.

- **Statutory Approvals:**

Planning permission and Building regulation consent requirements are being explored.

The Shildon's People's Centre currently has a five year lease from Durham County Council, who owns the facility. The acceptability of the length of the lease given the requested investment will be further explored through the appraisal process.

### **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 4 locality.

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.

**Material considerations:**

**Other applications received from Area 4:**

**Under development**

Vintage Vehicles Shildon Ltd. Technical Study

**Projects endorsed by Area Forum and awaiting decision by SBC.**

Pilgrim Club Technical Study requesting	£9,000
Shildon Civic Hall Stage Sound and Lighting requesting	£7,727

**Projects Approved to date:**

Hackworth Tennis Courts	£34,999
Shildon Scouts Memorial Field Technical Study	£4,113
Hackworth Park Pavilion Technical Study	£15,000

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