

Item 6

REPORT TO CABINET

27th September 2007

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Portfolio: Social Regeneration & Partnership

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME – Spennymoor Settlement Regeneration Project

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report highlights a Local Improvement Programme (LIP) application submitted to and appraised by the Strategy and Regeneration Section. Following endorsement of the project by the Area 1 Forum, this report provides information to Cabinet for their consideration.
- 1.2 The aim of the project is to completely refurbish and modernise the existing facilities at the Everyman Theatre to enable the Spennymoor Settlement Association to provide extra arts and community based activities and therefore ensure that the building can increase its usage and have its future safeguarded.
- 1.3 The project meets the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) eligible 'Regeneration' Definition. ✓
- 1.4 The project has also demonstrated links to the key LIP criteria of meeting elements of the Community Strategy and community consultation. ✓
- 1.5 The applicant has requested **£142,000** of LIP funding, which is 57% of the total capital project costs of £250,000. See information contained in Section 5.0 – Resource Implications.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Cabinet...

- 2.1 Approve the application for LIP Funds based upon the information provided in the report.

3.0 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The purpose of this programme is to improve community assets and support community engagement in the regeneration of local areas. As part of this, local communities can propose projects against set criteria

agreed by Cabinet. Through this programme resources will be released to improve sites and improve the usability of community facilities and buildings across the Borough.

Background – Application and Applicant

- 3.2 The Spennymoor ‘Settlement’ was set up in 1931 to support unemployed miners and develop local creative talent. Due to its success it became known as the ‘Pitman’s Academy’. In 1939, a new theatre was built by out-of-work miners to provide a venue for the Everyman Theatre Company which became part of the wider Settlement Association based in O’Hanlon Street - Spennymoor. The building includes a theatre stage and main hall with sound and light equipment and dressing rooms. No major work has been carried out on the building since 1939. The building was granted Grade II Listed Building status in 2004.
- 3.3 The focus of the project is to improve the building and reconfigure the internal layout and exterior setting to expand the available use of the building to more community arts and also non-arts based organisations.
- 3.4 The building and grounds require considerable attention to bring them up to an acceptable standard and enable additional use to take place. Internal works will include a new layout providing modern male/female and disabled toilets, a new enlarged kitchen facility, new changing rooms with toilets and the relocation of the boiler room incorporating a new boiler and heating system. The Theatre will also benefit from new intruder and fire alarm systems and new security and emergency lighting.
- 3.5 External works include re-pointing the whole building, replacing rainwater goods, improving under-floor ventilation, replacing windows and improvements to the main entrance and signage.
- 3.6 The current derelict garden area adjacent to the main building will be completely revamped with new hard and soft landscaping, garden furniture and a sculpture feature. The planned level access will permit the Settlement to provide additional outdoor activities for elderly and disabled users. This element of the project is subject to a grant from CDENT.
- 3.7 The Settlement Association currently holds a range of activities based around visual and performing arts. The drama group performs at the Everyman Theatre on a regular basis. On completion of works, the Settlement Association anticipates an extra two drama productions per year, the creation of a new Youth Drama group, and an increase in the number of community groups using their facility. A local history group, a knitting group, and an art group have all stated a wish to use the refurbished premises for their activities. Age Concern has also expressed a wish to offer Tai Chi classes in the main hall, with the view to introduce further activities. Due to the condition of the building and the facilities available these can’t currently be accommodated.

4.0 CORPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In developing the LIP project the Strategy & Regeneration Division have worked closely with the Leisure Services Department to ensure that the facility developed has clear linkages with the proposed Spennymoor Arts Resource. This project is very much a community focused facility, however by linking the Settlement's activity with the planned Spennymoor Arts Resource it is felt that the Settlement could act as a 'feeder' facility for local arts/ theatre and music groups and will compliment the programme of community participation activity that will take place in the new Spennymoor Arts Resource.
- 4.2 The settlement will therefore offer a community programme where as the Arts resource will be offering a more professional programme from trained teachers, facilitators and practitioners to professional touring companies.

5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Area Forum 1 has been allocated £836,000 of LIP Capital resources between 2006 and 2009. £278,000 has been allocated for each year's activity. In 2006/07 £54,882 of LIP funding was allocated to two schemes.
- 5.2 An initial report was presented to The Area 1 Forum held 6 November 2006 where the project was supported to a value of £118,106. Following the Forum meeting, the Settlement undertook a detailed Technical Study to examine the costs and establish a more accurate project budget.
- 5.3 The Technical Study, prepared by Sedgefield Borough Council's Property Services Team, has highlighted some additional areas of work to that identified in the original feasibility study undertaken by the Association in February 2005. This includes work to meet necessary disabled access requirements, appropriate electricity supply, security systems / emergency lighting, and building inflation. This has resulted in an increase in the anticipated project costs to £250,000
- 5.4 The first Spennymoor Settlement LIP application requested £118,106 (70%) from LIP for the initial project costing £168,106. Given the increased costs to £250,000, the Settlement is now seeking £142,000 of LIP funding. However, since the date of their first application, the Spennymoor Settlement has been very successful with their fundraising and can now contribute £108,000 in 'matched funding' to the project, reducing the percentage of LIP funding to 57% of total project cost.
- 5.5 A full breakdown of funder's is as follows:

Funder	Amount £
Pilgrim Trust	25,000
County Durham Environmental Trust (CDENT)	20,000
Sir James Knott Trust	5,000
Heritage Lottery (capital grant)	30,000
The Arts Council	18,000
Settlement fund raising	10,000
External Funding Sub-Total	£108,000
Local Improvement Programme	142,000
Total Project Budget	£250,000

5.4 The Association has a 70-year track record of managing activity of the Settlement and their fundraising covers their running costs. A pricing policy for room hire charges is in place to cover the core costs of heating, lighting, caretaking expenses and future maintenance.

5.5 Heritage Lottery has awarded the Settlement a grant of £50,000, £30,000 towards the refurbishment and £20,000 towards the creation of a book celebrating the history and art of the Spennymoor Settlement. An education programme for local schools will look at the social history of the Settlement and the nature of the art work that has originated from the settlement. The Council's Art Development Officer will be involved in the creation and delivery of the education programme.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 From September 2005 to March 2006 CAVOS carried out a feasibility study to ascertain the sustainability of the Spennymoor Settlement. This concluded that there was local support to expand activities provided and identified new user groups. Since that date the Settlement organisation have been actively working to further develop new user groups. This also includes the project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to work with local schools to examine the local history surrounding the Settlement Association.

7. AREA FORUM RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Given the increase in costs since the previous November 2006 Area Forum, the project was presented to the 3rd September Area Forum meeting to ensure the Forum were still happy to continue with support to the project given the increased costs and a £24,000 increased LIP request.

7.2 A very positive response was received to the revised project by the Area 1 Forum and it was recognised how much additional funding the project had secured. The Area Forum agreed to support the progress of this project to the full revised amount requested.

8. **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The application has undergone a full appraisal against the Local Improvement Programme criteria. The application has met the key elements of the LIP criteria, and demonstrates clear links to the Community Strategy priorities.
- 8.2 **Planning** – As Sedgefield Borough Council's Property Services Section have carried out all technical work to date with regard to the building designs / adaptations, discussions are ongoing with Planning Services with regard to both a Planning and Listed Building Consent applications. Applications have been submitted and no grant will be paid until the project has received the appropriate approvals.
- 8.3 **Procurement** - The funding requested represents a grant to an external organisation. The grant is conditional upon applicants identifying a full quotation / and or tender process for the works. The project management is to be undertaken by the Council's Property Services who will carryout a full tender process for the works.
- 8.4 **Crime and Disorder** - In line with the Council's Community Strategy, this project has identified a link with providing activities and support services that hope to result in a fall in anti-social behaviour rates within this community.
- 8.5 **Children and Young People** - The Settlement intends to expand the current user groups to enable more young people to be involved in the organisation and use the building. They intend to facilitate a Youth Drama group to rehearse and perform at the Everyman Theatre. The Settlement also intends to provide rehearsal facilities for a range of music groups including young bands.

9.0 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There has been no previous consultation or engagement with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees regarding this particular project.

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Ward: Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange and Neighbouring Wards in Spennymoor

Key Decision Validation: Amount requested represents a grant of over £100,000 from LIP resources.

Background Papers:

Internal

- 1 Promotion Of The Regeneration Of The Borough
Housing Land Capital Receipts To Support
Regeneration And Affordable Housing Provision

June 2005

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>