

## REPORT TO CABINET

9<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2008

### REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### Portfolio: Social Regeneration & Partnership

#### LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME – Shildon People’s Centre

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report highlights a Local Improvement Programme (LIP) application submitted to and appraised by the Strategy and Regeneration Division. Following endorsement of the project by the Area 4 Forum, this report provides information to Cabinet for determination.
- 1.2 The project comprises of the refurbishment and extension of the Shildon People’s Centre – this includes the erection of a 7m by 5.5m Conservatory, Kitchen refit, Flooring / Carpets, Double Glazing, and 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.
- 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 **£30,737** of LIP funding, which is 66% of the total capital project costs of £46,487.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Cabinet...

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

### **3. 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 This project has been developed by Shildon People's Centre and is located in Shildon. The centre is located in Main Street and was opened in 1984 following the closure of the British Rail Wagon Works. The old police station was brought back into use as the Shildon Centre providing services to help local residents gain new skills, find alternative employment, claim benefits they were entitled to and encourage social activities. In November 2005, the County Council announced that from April 2007, the Shildon Centre would no longer receive Durham County Council funding. The centre therefore closed in March 2007. In July 2007, a new organisation formed called the Shildon People's Centre whose focus would be to continue to offer as many of the existing services as possible. The services are now run from a volunteer base. The centre has run successfully since July 2007 and with the continued support of the initial volunteers and others who have since come forward, the centre is open on a daily basis.
- 3.3 The project aims to refurbish and extend the Shildon People's centre including a 7m by 5.5m conservatory in the yard area, a new kitchen, flooring, double glazing, building and electrical works, furniture, and signage.
- 3.4 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.

### **4.0 CORPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The building is owned by Durham County Council and is leased to the organisation. The Shildon Peoples Centre originally had a 5 year lease, through the appraisal process it was highlighted that to provide security to the improved asset an extended lease would be required, the applicant has discussed this with Durham County Council and this was revised to expire November 2019. We feel that this is appropriate given the investment requested.

## **5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Area Forum 4 has been allocated £456,000 of LIP Capital resources between 2006 and 2009. £117,726 has been allocated to date.
- 5.2 The applicant has requested **£30,737** of LIP funding, which is 66% of the total capital project costs of £46,487 for the refurbishment work. The remaining funding is to be provided by £2,000 Shildon Peoples Centre and £13,750 Sedgefield Borough Council's Neighbourhood Enhancement Fund.
- 5.3 The applicant will manage and maintain the facility; the revenue costs will be funded by income from various sources including service level agreements and room hire.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 The applicant highlighted that a independent feasibility Study was carried out between April and June 2006 involving over 450 residents of Shildon. The research demonstrated overwhelming local residents and agency support for services to continue and highlighted the needs to be addresses within the project for improved facilities to support a wide range of community activities.
- 6.2 The applicant has received numerous letters in support of refurbishment, small donations and an increase in volunteer time.
- 6.3 Young people from Shildon have also completed questionnaires demonstrating how the refurbishment will benefit them by enabling appropriate activities to take place.

## **7.0 AREA FORUM RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 A positive response was received to the proposed project by the Area 4 Forum at it's meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008.

## **8.0 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The application has undergone an appraisal against the Local Improvement Programme criteria. The application has met the key elements of the LIP criteria, and demonstrated links to the Community Strategy priorities.
- 8.2 Procurement – The funding requested represents a grant to an external organisation. The grant is conditional upon the applicant identifying a full quotation / and or tender process for the works.

8.3 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 crime and anti-social behaviour rates within this community.

**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.

**Contact Officer:** Nicola Woodgate  
**Telephone number:** (01388) 824002  
**Email Address:** nwoodgate@sedgefield.gov.uk

**Ward:** Sunnydale, Shildon

**Key Decision Validation:** Not Applicable

**Background Papers:**

<b>Internal</b>		
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 Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils 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"/>