

## **TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 9 JANUARY 2014**

### **‘EVERYDAY TELFORD - PRIDE IN YOUR COMMUNITY PROGRAMME’ – INVESTING IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES**

**REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR SHAUN DAVIES**

#### **PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT**

##### **1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The ‘Everyday Telford - Pride in Your Community’ programme, and Infrastructure Investment Fund is a resident focused investment programme to be delivered across the borough over a period of 2 years to complement the Council’s business and housing growth agenda. The programme will have a significant positive impact on existing communities and will help ensure that the borough is an attractive place for people to live and to locate businesses. The 2 year £8m capital and £1.5m revenue investment will deliver Community focused Environment and Infrastructure improvements and enhance training and employment opportunities for our residents.
- 1.2 The report also outlines proposals for the delivery of the ‘Ward Cooperative’ Fund for 2014/15 and 2015/16 including an increase to the budget of £108,000 for these 2 years.

##### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That £8m capital and £1.5m revenue over 2 years, is allocated to support the delivery of the ‘Everyday Telford - Pride in Your Community’ programme and the Infrastructure Investment Fund, to enable the delivery of community focused environment and infrastructure improvements and enhance training and employment opportunities for residents across the borough. The programme will include improvements to Residential areas, District Centres, Borough Towns and Employment Areas.**
- 2.2 **That the £8m capital investment outlined above is allocated as follows;**
- **£6m to implement the ‘Everyday Telford - Pride in Your Community’ programme to be delivered across the borough with Sutton Hill assigned as the Pilot for the full programme roll out**
  - **£1m to improve the Hollinswood Centre as a continuation of the District Centre improvement programme**
  - **£1m to establish a ‘community enabling fund’ to provide match funding to local capital projects of community significance**
- In addition, the Council is also committing £2m pa for the two years of this programme for improvements to the roads network over and above the allocations we receive from Government, making the total capital investment from Council resources for roads and environmental improvements £12m over this 2 year period.**
- Further reports that detail the investment within Sutton Hill and the delivery of the ‘community enabling fund’ will be brought to Cabinet for approval in early spring 2014.**

**2.3 That the 'Ward Cooperative Fund' continues to be delivered within its existing format and that the funding available is increased to £108,000 from £54,000 allowing funding to be allocated to each ward on the basis of £2,000 per ward member. The additional £1,000 per ward member will be allocated for spending on environmental improvements that support the delivery of the Infrastructure Investment Fund and 'Pride in Your Community' programme. Any funding that has not been committed by the end of the financial year will be reallocated to support community based projects that support the delivery of Council priorities.**

### **3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Neighbourhoods are safe and clean Business Supporting, Business Winning Council Education and Skills
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</b>	Commencement of engagement activity relating to the Pride in Your Community Programme early 2014 Commencement of the Infrastructure Investment Fund April 2014	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>		There are significant financial implications arising from the proposals within this report which are detailed in paragraph 6.
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes	The Council has the power to take reasonable action for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area. It will also be necessary to ensure that specific actions and activities are also within the Council's powers and within Council policy before they are finally decided upon.  Ongoing legal advice will be provided in respect of the development of the scheme and advice will also be provided in respect of individual projects.
<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	No	
<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	Yes	Residents across the borough will benefit from the Infrastructure Investment Fund and the Pride in Your Community programme. A dedicated element of the Infrastructure Investment Fund will be allocated in Sutton Hill as a pilot area. Hollinswood Centre will be the focus of the District Centre investment programme.

### **PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **4 Bringing Together Physical and Social Regeneration**

4.1 Telford & Wrekin Council's plans to deliver growth within the borough are well underway with a £250m private/public sector programme in 'Southwater' Telford Town Centre, 800 new homes delivered in 2011/12 and a £200m Building Schools for the future programme in progress. This investment will have a positive impact across the borough through new

business and employment and skill development opportunities, and marks a new phase in the history of Telford & Wrekin as a 'new town'. It is vital that the benefits of growth are felt across the borough and that investment isn't just focused in the Town Centre.

- 4.2 In some areas within the country regeneration schemes have focused on investing in Town Centres, but have left outlying neighbourhoods and District Centres in a poor state of repair with communities that continue to experience high levels of deprivation. By investing in our environment, infrastructure, and people across the borough, the aim is to ensure that the positive impacts of growth are spread across Telford and Wrekin; that the whole area is seen as a place to invest in, and residents feel a sense of pride in where they live and work.
- 4.3 The 'Pride in Your Community' scheme differs to previous schemes within the borough as it delivers a joined up programme of social and physical improvements, ensuring that a large number of residents have an opportunity to benefit in terms of improved training and employment opportunities, improvements to their local area, and support to help them take positive action to help to improve their neighbourhood.
- 4.4 Although improvements to the physical environment have a key role to play in regenerating communities, for sustainable change to be delivered it is important that resources and efforts are targeted at social regeneration activity. Social regeneration involves tackling longstanding social and economic inequalities in order to support sustainable communities, key to this approach is enabling local people to access employment and training opportunities.

## **5. Infrastructure Investment Fund**

- 5.1 It is proposed to create an Infrastructure Investment Fund that involves a £8m capital investment fund over 2 years (2014/15 and 2015/16) together with £1.5m revenue. This funding will be spent across the borough to help to regenerate communities by investing in improving the physical environment and working with residents to improve the appearance of our neighbourhoods.
- 5.2 The Infrastructure Investment Fund will aim to take the pressure off revenue reactive maintenance budgets, reduce insurance claims, reduce deterioration in our 'New Town' and District Centre/Borough Towns infrastructure, create improvement within our communities and provide a visible and tangible positive statement that the Council is living up to its responsibilities particularly in our most deprived communities, and enhances our 'Destination Telford' approach and image as a business supporting, business winning council.
- 5.3 District Centres are an important resource in terms of providing a local retail and service facility that meets the day to day needs of the local community. A number of District Centres have already received investment including Randlay, Sutton Hill, Malinslee and Brookside. This investment has had a positive impact within those communities in relation to supporting local businesses and providing a focal point for the community. It is proposed to continue this programme of investment by allocating £1m capital funding towards improving the District Centre in Hollinswood. The Hollinswood centre has been identified as a priority within this programme as it has not previously received any significant investment, and has potential to meet the needs of the local community as outlined above.
- 5.4 There are a number of other buildings and facilities across the borough that are of particular significance in terms of contributing towards the overall appearance of our high streets or local centres and that have potential for local employment opportunities. It is proposed to allocate £1m from the Infrastructure Investment Fund towards a 'community enabling fund'.

This fund will be used as match funding towards the capital costs of improving buildings or facilities of significance to the community or of strategic importance in terms of local regeneration, and that safeguard employment opportunities within our District Centres and Borough Towns. A further report will be brought to Cabinet in early spring 2014 which outlines the full details of the scheme. This will outline the criteria and application process and incorporate details relating to the level of match funding required, minimum and maximum levels of grants, and proposals around how the optimum number of schemes can be funded.

- 5.5 Through the delivery of this Programme, the Council must work closely with the community with a focus on seeking to reduce the community's dependency on future revenue budgets while also seeking to engender a greater sense of community pride. To do this, we will seek to deliver this Programme in a different way and we will work in new, innovative ways with business and training providers and Job Centre Plus to:
- Provide opportunities for local people to develop and enhance their skills through working directly on the projects;
  - Explicitly seek to gain employment opportunities – including traineeships and apprenticeships – and to reduce unemployment figures in the borough;
  - Seek to maximise, while complying with all legal requirements, the use of local companies to deliver this programme;
  - Maximise the involvement and ownership of the local communities in which schemes are delivered.

## 6. 'Everyday Telford - Pride in Your Community Programme'

- 6.1 The Infrastructure Investment Fund outlined above will support the delivery of the 'Pride in Your Community Programme'. The programme will be delivered across the borough but will have a specific focus within high demand areas. The approach within these areas is based on high levels of community engagement and involvement. The aim of the 'Pride in Your Community' Programme is to involve residents in delivering the solutions to the environmental issues within their areas, whilst developing their skills. It is likely that the approach will vary between areas dependent on the levels of engagement but will involve some or all of the following;
- Working with residents to understand the key issues in their area relating to the environment, the causes of some of these challenges, developing joint solutions and prioritising any proposed programmes of work
  - Residents working on the delivery of local environmental projects as both volunteers through the **street champions** programme and through local employment opportunities created through the **Infrastructure Investment Fund**
  - Working with residents to develop a programme of community events
- 6.2 This approach will involve working together with residents, across Council services and with partner agencies to improve the physical appearance within our communities and to help to build a sense of local pride. Officers will work with residents and services to ensure that issues are reported and responded to appropriately, to gather information on local priorities and to support the development of community projects to address local issues.
- 6.3 The Council as part of this programme will continue to roll out the smart phone app '**Everyday Telford**' which will be an exciting leap forward in helping to raise greater awareness of the importance of environmental pride and helping the community to efficiently report local issues in the future.

6.4 As a Cooperative Council pilot area, the working relationships in Brookside between the community and partners are now well established and plans for the regeneration of the centre are well underway. It is therefore proposed to focus on Sutton Hill as the second pilot area, in terms of the delivery of the 'Pride in Your Community Programme'. It is proposed that delivery of a dedicated element of the Infrastructure Investment Fund will commence within Sutton Hill. A further report outlining the detailed delivery of the fund will be brought to Cabinet in early spring 2014.

## **7.0 Ward Cooperative Fund**

7.1 Over the past 2 years the Ward Cooperative Fund has been used to support a wide range of projects across the borough. Often by allocating a small amount of funding Members have been able to bring a great deal of additional value to their wards, either through supporting community groups to deliver activities and events, or by investing in small physical improvements that have had a big impact for the community. Many projects have also been match funded by Parish Councils leading to even greater value being achieved.

7.2 Following positive feedback from Ward Members, Parish Councils and the community it is proposed to enhance the Ward Cooperative Fund for the next 2 years to enable an even greater investment in these small projects across the borough. The scheme will run in the same way as it has for the past 2 years, with Ward Members working with the community to identify projects and submitting their proposals for approval before the end of the financial year. The criteria for projects would remain unchanged; however, it is proposed that the total amount of investment would increase from £54,000 to £108,000 resulting in £2,000 being available per Ward Member, per year for 2014/15 and 2015/16. The additional £1,000 per year would need to be spent on environmental themed projects that support the delivery of the aims of the Infrastructure Investment Fund and 'Pride in Your Community' programme outlined above.

7.3 In previous years some Ward Members have not utilised their full allocation of Ward Cooperative Funding. It is proposed that any funding that has not been committed by the end of the financial year will be reallocated to support community based projects that support the delivery of Council priorities.

## **8. Our Pledges**

8.1 The 'Pride in Your Community' Programme and Infrastructure Investment Fund will enable us to deliver against a number of 'pledges' which are outlined below and in Appendix 1;

***'We will ensure that our Neighbourhoods, District Centres, Borough Towns and Employment areas are Safe, Clean and Well Maintained and promote Pride in our Borough by making a difference through a 2 year investment programme'.***

### **Our Pledge for your Environment and Open Spaces:**

1. We will work with and **enhance our offer** to Parishes to develop existing and new Parish Environmental Teams to deliver **maintenance programmes in high community use areas** such as **litter picking, footpath clearing, minor tree works, bin emptying** and other environmental improvements.

2. We will work with residents to **solve issues around untidy pieces of land** in their local area which are of greatest concern to them and we **will identify sustainable solutions to improve the environmental quality of community open spaces.**
3. We will engage with local people to **improve the environment surrounding existing and future Housing and Commercial developments,** to ensure that regeneration projects and new **developments integrate and complement** existing communities and this forms part of our community deal with developers.
4. We will pro-actively work in the community and with our Contractors to **improve the liveability in our urban areas** and **assess our trees to reduce the negative impact** that unmanaged trees, overhanging branches and hedges have on everyday living.
5. We will give our **local community access to information and support** needed to **address trees on private land in their community.**
6. We will introduce a **system of estate management** by providing a **visible dedicated environmental team** starting in Sutton Hill and to be **rolled out across the borough.**
7. We will engage with our communities and launch an **Environmental Social Responsibility Campaign to include bulk collection promotions to TLC card holders and residents in our areas of greatest need and a free offer to residents over the age of 70yrs across the borough.** We will target education and awareness of the impact of fly-tipping and littering and work with our social and private landlord's to **increase social responsibility in problem areas.**
8. We will engage with the community to identify local areas where litter is an ongoing problem and will **provide more litter bins in addition to the 3,000 bins currently across the borough.**
9. We will ensure **enforcement action is taken against environmental crime** on public open space and where appropriate, on private land across the borough and will **prosecute where possible.**
10. We will **make it easier for our residents to make us aware of environmental issues** in their local area by providing a **free app, 'Everyday Telford'** that enables reporting from mobile phones.

#### **Our Pledge for your Highways:**

11. We will **invest more** into our highways maintenance to reduce **traffic disruption, improve road quality and safety on our residential roads.**
12. We will engage with our communities and **undertake local schemes** to improve the quality of **footpaths, white lining on roads, the condition of roundabout signing and unadopted roads owned by the council.**

13. We will **ensure that our roads, footpaths and cycleways are** maintained to an acceptable standard and **provide connections from our residential areas to employment zones.**
14. We will **invest in making key gateways into the borough and industrial estates and employment areas look better** to help improve Business and Leisure visitors perception of the borough and to encourage growth and inward investment.

**Our Pledge to you:**

15. We will **increase employment opportunities** for local residents by offering **traineeships and apprenticeships** with all of the Parish Environmental Teams allowing individuals to learn **new skills and gain employment qualifications.**
16. We will ensure **dedicated support to recruit street champions and snow wardens** and **increase access to training and resources** to encourage people to take responsibility for their local area and to learn new skills to help deliver environmental improvement projects.
17. We will **encourage and support residents** to deliver **local environmental projects** across the borough such as 'adopt a street' scheme and provide **direction and guidance** to the most actively involved members of the community.
18. We will **work in partnership with our local education providers to encourage young people's involvement** in delivering the physical and social regeneration planned schemes across the borough.
19. We will **empower local Ward Members** by giving them **additional funds through the Ward Co-operative Fund to use on improving the environment in their local area.**
20. We will **acknowledge the most active and socially responsible members of the community** by holding events to **thank them for their time and commitment.**

**9.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Financial Implications.**

- 9.1 The total investment of £9.6m in social and physical regeneration outlined in the report is to be funded from an £8m capital investment fund and £1.608m.

**Revenue**

- 9.2 It is proposed to fund the revenue investment from the anticipated early delivery of savings in 2014/15 as set out in the Service & Financial Planning Strategy report also on this Cabinet agenda. The unused element of the one-off funding generated in 2014/15 by the anticipated early delivery of savings will be used to create a provision which will be drawn down to fund the remaining expenditure during 2015/16.
- 9.3 Some of the proposed investments are likely to lead to efficiencies, such as investment in highways which should lead to reduced numbers of insurance claims in the longer term.

## **Capital**

- 9.4 The proposals require the identification of funding for a capital investment fund totalling £8m; £4m in 2014/15 and £4m in 15/16. This fund can only be used to fund expenditure of a capital nature. Financial advice on the final programme of works should be sought to ensure the correct split of capital and revenue works can be accommodated within the available funding.
- 9.5 It is proposed to fund this investment from additional prudential borrowing. However, in order to ensure that this investment does not put additional pressure on the Council's revenue budget, it is proposed that the £4.884m one-off benefit in 2013/14 from the proposed change in calculating "Minimum Revenue Provision" set out in the Service & Financial Planning Strategy, also on this Cabinet agenda, is used to create a provision which will be used to fund the debt charges over the next 12 years. Costs after this period will be built in to the relevant service and financial planning strategies.
- 9.6 In addition to the £8m capital investment fund, the Council is also committing a further £2m pa for the two years of this programme for improvements to the roads network over and above the allocations we receive from Government, making the total capital investment from Council resources for roads and environmental improvements £12m over this 2 year period.
- 9.7 The total investment package is therefore £13.6m being £1.6m revenue funding and £12m capital funding.

## **10 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Cabinet – 23.2.12 – Report – A Cooperative Approach to Working with the Community

## **11 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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