



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

B142

Cabinet 28 July 2010

Recommendation from the St Edmundsbury Growth Area Partnership Board: 5 July 2010 (Aug10/01)

Cabinet Member:
Terry Clements

Chairman of the Board:
Cllr Terry Clements

1. Growth Area Fund: Update

RECOMMENDED:-

That an early indication be given to the Minister of Housing and Local Government that:-

- (1) the Council and its partners welcomes the retention of Growth Area Funding for 2010/2011 and that the opportunity to now adopt a localist approach in the use of this fund is accepted; and***
- (2) the required statement on local and community engagement will be forwarded as soon as possible.***

An update on the current situation relating to the St Edmundsbury Growth Area Fund was reported.

The Government had allocated a total of £5,857,476 to the St Edmundsbury Growth Area from Growth Area Funds. However, the Council had been notified in December 2009 that the capital allocation for 2010/2011 was to be reduced from £1,825,894 to £1,033,373.

The general situation on progress on the expenditure of the funds was as follows:-

Revenue Fund expenditure

A total of £324,367 was made available for revenue projects over the three year period. At the end of May 2010, approximately £92,000 remained unspent, although approximately one third of this sum was committed.

Capital Fund expenditure

The Growth Area had a total of £4,730,588 of capital grant and, to date, no capital funds had been spent. However, the Growth Area Fund conditions did not require the monies to be spent in the year that they were paid to the local authority. On 8 March 2010 the Board had agreed to allocate funds to the following projects:-

- (i) North-west Haverhill Relief Road;
- (ii) Suffolk Business Park/ Moreton Hall Relief Road; and
- (iii) Green Infrastructure.

Progress on these projects was considered later in the meeting.

A letter from Grant Shapps, Minister for Housing and Local Government, announced that Growth Area Funding for 2010/2011 would be safeguarded at the level set in December 2009. However, before the funds would be released, the Council was required to submit a statement on its approach to securing real local and community engagement and the progress being made in achieving this. The Statement had also to demonstrate how existing residents would benefit from the funding.

The Board welcomed the announcement that the Growth Area Funding allocated for 2010/2011 was to be retained. Members discussed the change in emphasis that a localist approach should now be adopted in relation to the use of Growth Area Funds.

2. Growth Area Green Infrastructure Projects: Progress

RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) approval be given to commit up to £250,000 of Growth Area Funding to the implementation of the identified stage of the Bury St Edmunds Greenway project (Ickworth Park to Nowton Park); and***
- (2) officers investigate potential green infrastructure projects in Haverhill with a view to identifying new projects for funding by the time of the meeting of the Partnership Board in September 2010 with the Railway Walk Improvements scheme being afforded priority.***

The Board had approved an allocation of 10% of the Growth Area Fund, amounting to £440,000 capital funding, based on the content of the Strategy.

On 8 March 2010 the Board agreed to proceed with two projects, namely the development of Bury St Edmunds Local Green Links and the provision of advanced planting for the North-West Haverhill Strategic Development site.

In relation to the proposed green link between Ickworth Park and Nowton Park, a plan was attached as Appendix 1 to the report which illustrated the potential route of the footpath/cycleway and described levels of work required for various sections of it. A broad schedule of works was attached as Appendix 2. The estimated total cost of the scheme was in the region of £250,000, although Suffolk County Council Rights of Way Team, who would be commissioned to implement it, was anticipating this cost would

reduce once work was underway. Investigation work was continuing into extending the Linnet Valley Path by the provision of a link between Bury St Edmunds and Ickworth Park. A diagram indicating the concept of Green Links around Bury St Edmunds was also appended to the report.

The Partnership Board noted that the landowners involved with the North-West Haverhill Strategic Development site did not wish to pursue Growth Area Funds for advance landscaping and tree planting. Officers reported on progress in preparing the following schemes in Haverhill for which Growth Area funding might be made available:-

- (i) Railway Walk : interpretation improvements;
- (ii) Clements School : site restoration; and
- (iii) Hanchett End Business Park : advanced planting.

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