

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 11 July, 2016**

## **Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education**

### **Community Capacity Building and Economic Development Support**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To establish a new programme supporting communities and enterprise to engage in regeneration activities, and identify resources.

#### **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet endorses the proposal to expand the Creative Rural Communities model to all areas in the Vale subject to the availability of resources and for the period to 31st March 2020, with any extension of this period being subject to additional resourcing.
2. That the following sums be allocated from the Regeneration Fund over the next 4 financial years: 2016/17 (No contribution needed) 2017/18 (£27,110) 2018/2019 (£29,983) and 19/20 (£34,907), totalling £92,000.
3. That the posts of two full time Senior Regeneration Officers and one part time Regeneration Assistant be created at grades to be agreed by the job evaluation process for the period to 31st March 2020, with any longer period only being agreed should additional resourcing be made available.

#### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

1. To allow the project to commence.
2. To identify resources required.
3. To establish the delivery team.

#### **Background**

2. Creative Rural Communities (CRC) was established in 2004, under the Rural Community Action Programme. This saw a small team of four established to develop the capacity of local communities and businesses in the Rural Vale. The team has grown through the levering in of additional funding from successive European Union & Welsh Government funded Rural Development Plan Programmes. This support has led to a change in regeneration culture in the rural Vale through the

empowerment of rural communities and businesses to determine their own priorities and lead on their own projects. Community involvement in project development and delivery often results in the best fit with need, best use of resources and more sustainable projects.

3. A variety of groups exist in urban areas with a passion for their communities. In many cases they lack the capacity and the ability to effectively engage in regeneration. Few groups are in the position to lead on projects themselves.
4. The bottom up approach to regeneration delivered by the Creative Rural Communities (CRC) team is funded to exclusively act in the 10 rural wards of the Vale. Urban areas are hence at a disadvantage in growing their ability to self-regenerate.

## **Relevant Issues and Options**

5. A recent restructure within Economic Development, bringing together Business Support and Rural Development has further highlighted the linkages between regeneration cultures of urban and rural areas. Twelve years of support for rural areas has led to communities accessing funding and developing projects, following intensive capacity building work over a number of years. Communities have worked to identify priorities and pull together funding such as European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). Planning gains funding under 'Section 106' has acted as an invaluable source of match funding to deliver regeneration projects.
6. It is therefore proposed that the approach to regeneration developed and proved in the rural area since 2004, be expanded to cover the whole of the Vale. This will lead to resource implications and accordingly it is initially recommended that a task and finish approach be adopted until March 2020 to cover the thematic and geographic gaps in coverage. The project will also work with communities of interest in the urban areas across the Vale. It aims to leave a legacy of empowered and engaged communities, which can lead on regeneration and asset management. Skills can be transferred within communities, as has been witnessed in the rural Vale. Low cost volunteer model solutions will be developed such as peer to peer support for businesses and groups.
7. The project will support the Reshaping Services agenda in that it aims to empower communities to deliver projects, services and improvements themselves in a sustainable way, reducing the need for on-going financial support. Means will be explored of harnessing volunteer skills to support enterprise activity. Community planning will also be facilitated in order to prioritise needs. Working in partnership to bring in externally funded support via Business Wales and other agencies will be vital to keeping costs down and maximising the impact of this project.
8. The recent Barry Regeneration forum highlighted the need for a whole town approach to regeneration, involving stakeholders in a bottom up coordinated manner. This can only be achieved if communities are appropriately skilled and empowered to participate in coproduction. In keeping with the rural approach, Communities will be supported to test ideas and new approaches to areas such as the delivery of non-statutory services. The project will call upon the learning and best practice seen in other areas in the Vale.
9. Successive external evaluations of the Rural Development Programmes in the Vale have commended the approach to empowering communities towards sustainable self-regeneration.

10. As part of the restructure of the Economic Development Team, a Principal Economic Development Officer post is being held vacant. Deletion of this post will provide funding towards the new structure. It is proposed that two full time Senior Regeneration Officers would be appointed alongside one part time Regeneration Assistant. These roles mirror existing roles within the CRC team. Community Capacity Building is labour intensive and takes time and the project staffing and timescales reflect this. Helping and advising communities and enterprises, but not delivering projects on their behalf, is at the core of this approach. This new structure will sit within the Creative Rural Communities / Economic Development Team, delivering both community capacity building and enterprise support.

### **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

11. Based on proposed post grades (subject to Job Evaluation), the total cost of the programme of support until 31st March 2020 will be £391,848. This is comprised of existing Economic Development Budget of £237,848 and £62,000 of reserved budget from 2015/16 for this purpose. The project requires identification of a further £92,000. As this project will support the Reshaping Services agenda in achieving community resilience and bottom up regeneration, leading to longer term cost savings, it is proposed that this balance is funded from the Regeneration Fund. Funding will be required over 4 financial years split: 2016/17 - no contribution required, 2017/18 - £27,110, 2018/19 - £29,983 and 2019/20 - £34,907.
12. This project will require deletion of Principal Economic Development Officer position, and the creation of two FT Senior Regeneration Officer posts and a PT Regeneration Assistant Post. It is envisaged that the project would commence in September 2016.

### **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

13. The project will develop more sustainable communities. Groups and businesses will be supported to secure resources and income streams of their own, reducing the need for long term on-going financial support.

### **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

14. None as a result of the report.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

15. An engaged community involved in regeneration will be empowered to develop solutions that could reduce crime and disorder by improving community coherence.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

16. The approach to regeneration in the rural Vale has seen harder to reach groups engaged in the process of regeneration. This project will seek to work with all sections of the community.

### **Corporate/Service Objectives**

17. The project seeks to align with the 2016-2020 Corporate Plan.  
Well-being Outcome 2: An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Vale. The Vale of Glamorgan has a strong and sustainable economy and the local environment is safeguarded for present and future generations.  
Objective 3: Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment.

## **Policy Framework and Budget**

18. This is a matter for executive decision by Cabinet.

## **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

19. No Ward Members have been consulted as this project will cover the whole Vale.

## **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

20. Environment and Regeneration.

## **Background Papers**

External evaluation of the 2011-2014 Rural Development Programme in the Vale.

## **Contact Officer**

Phil Chappell, Team Leader, Economic Development

## **Officers Consulted**

Legal - Committee Reports

Operational Manager Accountancy

Operational Manager for Development Management, Regeneration and Planning

Operational Manager, Regeneration

Operational Manager, Leisure

Personnel Officer

## **Responsible Officer:**

Rob Thomas, Managing Director