

**Report To: Communities Scrutiny**

**Date of Meeting: 30 June 2015**

**Lead Member / Officer: Cllr Huw Jones/Rebecca Maxwell**

**Report Author: Rebecca Maxwell, Corporate Director Economic & Community Ambition**

**Title: Town and Area Plans**

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**1. What is the report about?**

In January 2015, Cabinet agreed recommendations to improve how Town & Area Plans are managed and delivered. This report sets out the evaluation of the remaining Town & Area Plan projects put forward for funding by local Members.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To make recommendations to Cabinet on which remaining projects from Town & Area Plans should receive funding from the Council.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

Cabinet is invited to approve the funding allocations recommended in Appendix 1 of this report.

**4. Report details.**

Town Plans were originally proposed by the Council as a means of setting out local priorities and identifying actions for progressing them. During 2013/14, the Town Plans were expanded to encompass surrounding rural communities to give full coverage across the county. The expanded plans were approved by Cabinet between November 2013 and March 2014.

During the process of expanding the Plans, concerns were raised about the clarity of the policy objectives and consistency of the process for developing the Plans. Members were also keen, in times of increasing budget constraint, that priorities included within Plans were able to demonstrate viable, value for money and worthwhile projects for the benefit of local residents.

A review of the Town and Area Plans process was carried out during 2014 and its recommendations were endorsed by Cabinet in January 2015. At that meeting, Cabinet agreed Member Area Groups would be invited to nominate any remaining Town & Area Plans for funding by the Council and that these would be evaluated against criteria intended to test benefit, value for money and deliverability. This report sets out the results of that evaluation.

Since January, local Members have been supported to develop individual project proposals they believe are priorities for their communities. All proposals were reviewed by Services to check costs and feasibility. Each proposal was required to have a named officer or community representative responsible for ensuring delivery of the project.

Once this work had been completed, the individual proposals were evaluated by the Council's 9 Town & Area Plan Champions sitting as a panel. The criteria for assessment are attached as Appendix 2.

The Champions met twice and scored each proposal against the agreed criteria. The results of the process are set out in Appendix 1. A contingency allocation has been made for projects emerging from the Bodelwyddan Town Plan when it is finalised.

As well as making funding recommendations, the Champions group agreed that review dates should be set for each project to allow funding to be reallocated if, for whatever reason, projects fail to progress. Recommended review dates are shown against each project.

5 project proposals were not recommended for funding. Support will be provided to communities and local Members to identify whether any alternative external sources of funding may enable projects to progress without Council funding. 2 projects were withdrawn.

Monitoring of progress with implementation of agreed Town & Area Plan projects will be carried out at Member Area Groups, supported by the Council's Strategic Planning Team. Approved projects will now be incorporated into relevant Service Plans to ensure delivery in accordance with agreed timescales.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Town and Area Plans are an enabler for the corporate objective of bringing the Council closer to the community. They are also an important mechanism for describing how the Council's overall corporate priorities are being addressed at local level with reference to the needs and aspirations of local communities. Alignment with corporate priorities was one of the assessment criteria.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

A budget was set aside to implement the actions arising from Town and Area Plans. Council agreed in February to remove the annual top up to this allocation and instead agree a final set of projects to spend the remaining amount before the end of the Council term in 2017.

Total funding towards Town & Area Plans since their inception has been £1.94M. Following decisions made by Cabinet in January 2015, a balance of around £821k remained to be allocated. A subsequent allocation of £20k was made to a reduced cost project that had been previously evaluated and rejected on grounds of costs.

Further underspends on other approved projects returned to the funding pool left a balance of around £815k to be allocated in this exercise. The full amount has now been allocated with any other small underspends to be added to the contingency allowance for Bodelwyddan Town Plan projects.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

An EqIA is not considered necessary at this stage. Individual projects will be expected to consider equality impacts in their implementation.

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

Town and Area Plans were developed by local elected Member through Member Area Groups, based on consultations with local communities. The Town and Area Plan Review engaged with a range of Council stakeholders, including a sample of existing Plan Champions and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

This latest evaluation exercise has been based on projects proposed by local Members and reviewed initially by Member Area Groups. The Town & Area Plan Champions have evaluated the proposals and are drawn from each of the MAG areas.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

The total funding allocated for the set of projects recommended for approval is within the agreed level of £815k and it is important that the projects are delivered within the funding limit. Robust procedures are in place to monitor project expenditure.

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

Previous reports have highlighted risks relating to unreasonably raising local expectations and failure to deliver. The revised arrangements for Town & Area Plans have been designed to mitigate these risks. Regular monitoring will take place through Member Area Groups with support from the Strategic Planning Team. Designated projects leads have been identified for each project and clear milestones will be established. Review dates have been set for each project and any project failing to progress will have their funding withdrawn for reallocation to other projects or priorities.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Section 2 Local Government Act 2000

## Appendix 1

Project	Score %	TAP Funding Agreed	Match Funding	Review Date
DEE – Betwys GG School/Community Hub	90	£32,000	£37,500	Apr 2016
RUTHIN – Rhewl Pavilion	90	£25,000	£18,000	Dec 2015
RHYL – Coastal Defence Enhancements	85	£96,000	£412,000	Dec 2015
DENBIGH – Lenton Pool Roundabout replacement	85	£20,000	£5,000	Sept 2015
DEE – Canolfan Llys Owain/Pavilion project	80	£50,000	£190,000	Dec 2015
ELWY – Rhuddlan Library/Community Hub	80	£100,000	£0	Dec 2015
ELWY – St Asaph Library/Community Hub	80	£100,000	£352,000	Dec 2015
PRESTATYN – Gateways projects	80	£80,000	£100,000	Dec 2015
DEE – Wernffrwd Improvements	75	£70,000	£523,000	Dec 2015
PRESTATYN – Meliden Play & Pathways	75	£38,500	£38,500	Dec 2015
DEE – Gwyddelwern Community Centre Kitchen	70	£7,575	£7,425	Dec 2015
DENBIGH – Love Lane/Maes Glas Wall repairs	70	£16,000	£4,000	Sept 2015
DEE – Bryneglws Canolfan Ial	70	£25,000	£12,000	Dec 2015
RUTHIN – Loggerheads Car Park Extension	65	£80,000	£170,000	Sept 2015
DEE – Llantysilio Link Path	65	£32,000	£96,000	Dec 2015
DENBIGH – King George’s Field, Nantglyn	65	£13,120	£4,000	Sept 2015
DEE – Llandrillo Playing Fields	60	£7,000	£35,000	Dec 2015
DENBIGH – Carriage Works Café	60	£1,000	£190,000	Dec 2015
ELWY – Cefn Meriadog Lay By	60	£9,855	£0	Dec 2015
Contingency for Bodelywyddan		£11,950	tbc	Apr 2016
<b>Total</b>		<b>£815,000</b>		
<i>Not approved</i>				
DENBIGH – Aberwheeler Footpath extension	50	£25,780	£0	
COUNTYWIDE – Eyesore Sites	50	£60,000	£0	
RUTHIN – Signage Strategy	50	£40,000	£100,000	
ELWY – Lower Denbigh Road Footpath	40	£8,860	£0	
ELWY – St Asaph Riverpath	15	£75,000	£0	
<i>Withdrawn</i>				
ELWY – St Asaph River Sculptures	0	£1,000	£0	
DEE – Cilmedw Employment Site	0	£150,000	£0	

**TAP Project Proposal Assessment Criteria**

**Cabinet has resolved that only revenue neutral projects should proceed.**

Criteria	PASS	FAIL
Confidence level that the revenue implications of the project have been properly thought through	Future DCC revenue implications have been <b>fully</b> considered and are budgeted for	Future DCC revenue implications have not been properly considered or budgeted for

**If the project passes the above test, the following assessment criteria apply:**

Criteria	Score 2	Score 1	Score 0
1. Evidence of Need	Clear and significant evidence of need for project documented	Some evidence of need documented	No evidence of need documented
2. Clarity of Output	It is clear and unambiguous what the project will deliver	An outline of what the project will deliver is documented but further clarity is required.	It is not clear what output the project will deliver
3. Benefits	Benefits of the project are clear, measurable and well-articulated	Limited benefits have been identified	No clear benefits have been identified
4. Impact	Identified benefits will impact on a significant number and wide range of local residents or businesses	Identified benefits will impact on a “community of need” (e.g. sports club, local interest group, particular business sector)	No evidence that benefits will have any significant impact on residents or businesses.
5. Corporate/ECA priorities	Clear and direct link to corporate priority or ECA priority project	Some link/contribution to corporate priority or ECA priority project	No link/contribution to corporate priority or ECA priority project
6. External Funding	Project levers 50% external funding	Project levers between 20% and 50% external funding	Project levers less than 20% external funding
7. Confidence level in lead delivery service/organisation’s capacity/capability to deliver the project	High - Full confidence in the delivery body’s capacity and capability to deliver	Medium - Some confidence in the delivery body’s capacity and capability to deliver but with some reservations	Low - No confidence in the delivery body’s capacity and capability to deliver
8. Confidence level that the project can be delivered within the forecast timescales	High - Full confidence that the project output can be delivered within forecast timescales	Medium - Some confidence that the project output can be delivered within forecast timescales but with some reservations	Low - No confidence that the project output can be delivered within forecast timescales
9. Confidence level that the project can be delivered within the forecast capital costs	High - Full confidence that the project output can be delivered within forecast capital costs	Medium - Some confidence that the project output can be delivered within forecast capital costs but with some reservations	Low - No confidence that the project output can be delivered within forecast capital costs
10. Confidence level that the project will secure the external funding required	High - Full confidence that the project will secure the required external funding.	Medium - Some confidence that the project will secure the required external funding but with some reservations	Low - No confidence that the project will secure the required external funding.

