

Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Partnership

30th June 2016

Port Communities Resilience Fund – Update on Delivery Proposals

Introduction

Since the Neighbourhood Partnership last considered the Fund on 22nd March with the former Mayor attending to answer the questions of the NP on the capital / revenue funding split and delivery plans, the local elections have taken place resulting in a new Mayor and Councillors for ALW ward coming into office, and the need to review the appropriateness of the remit for the Fund agreed in 2015. At the time of preparing this report, this process of further consultation and review is still underway with briefings having been made to the Cabinet Members for Place and Deputy Mayor on 6th June, the Mayor's visit to the ward taking place on 13th June and further meetings with ALW ward Councillors due to be held.

However, senior managers in Place and Neighbourhood Directorates have met following the steers given by Cabinet Members on 6th June, and have formulated an outline approach which builds on the existing remit and activity themes but ensures responsiveness to the NP and wider views of the four villages as to what is needed and will have the best prospect of working for long term benefit and 'resilience' of the area. The principles are set out below, and are put to the Neighbourhood Partnership at this meeting for endorsement and/or further feedback, as it sees fit.

Delivery Plan – Principles and Outline Proposals

- The Fund will be capital only, because this is a legal / financial regulatory requirement related to the use of local authority capital receipts (as explained at the NP meeting of 22nd March) – *except that* up to 10% is allowable for, but strictly limited to advisory, enabling and management activities which serve to 'bring into use' capital assets from projects supported under the scheme, ie. a Fund Manager – either a post within the Council or an external contractor.

Thus, £100,000 would be reserved for this purpose, leaving £900,000 for allocation to projects, *with additional capital or revenue funding sought, wherever possible, from external or internal sources, to match the Fund contribution.*

- Given the firm backing expressed in adopted or draft Neighbourhood and Community Plans for support of community economic development initiatives, the emphasis placed on this in the Fund remit agreed in 2015, and the general desire to see the Fund have a real lasting impact in and across the Port Communities, it is recommended that *at least 50% of the Fund (£450,000) is allocated to the Jobs and Enterprise theme(s)*. The guiding vision would be to provide *a new or better quality infrastructure in at least two villages to support local people gain or regain*

employment, acquire new skills, or start in business or self-employment. This infrastructure could be provided either within a new multi-purpose community 'hub' or involve the conversion of one or more existing buildings for this purpose, and it should aim to enhance and extend the support already provided to local residents and businesses by the current SevernNet Working Project.

To allocate less than this amount is likely to limit the scope and impact of such projects, and the capability to reach out and serve all communities in the ward.

- the 2015 remit highlighted two other Themes, namely *Thriving High Streets* and *Social Impact*, and a range of potential priorities and projects have been identified both by the communities and the Council from shop front and street scene improvement schemes and markets in village centres to new community sports, health and cultural facilities and open space improvements. *As resources are limited, it is recognised that further consultations within and across the communities and stakeholder groups (eg. younger / older people, businesses, clubs & associations, through the NP and a wider community event, is needed to:*
 - establish the 'resilient' vision and priorities for this specifically *capital* spend
 - address questions and challenges around *both the long term sustainability and community and social benefits* offered by projects, in terms of revenue support and/or income generation prospects, the social return on capital etc.
 - achieve the *right balance* of Fund allocation between these Themes, *or perhaps more firmly prioritise one over the other* to achieve maximum impact.
- As a starting point, the Council officer working group is proposing that *at least a third or about 35% of the Fund be directed to Social Impact and about 15% to Thriving High Streets.* The NP is invited to comment and steer on this, and the idea of holding a community conference in October to explore the priorities and exemplar project options further, and using a facilitated Participatory Budgeting method to agree proposals and arrive at a final scheme.