

NGP Capital applications as at 18 February 2011

A total of 4 capital bids were submitted with an overall funding request of £645,000 thus over subscribed by a total budget request of £330,000. Copies of bids will be made available on request. The applications are summarised below:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Employment Access and Skills Centres in PUSH area

Project Description

The project is to support the infrastructure and improve capacity of employment access and skills centres. It will refurbish and improve existing centres, by providing additional training space, disabled access facilities and updating equipment to enable people to carry out job search and learn new skills. The centres act as a hub for employment related activities, assist in engaging workless individuals and households with the labour market, provide UK online centre IT training facility, job search and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services. The centres aim to integrate with other local services and ensure that there is a joined up approach to working with people in deprived neighbourhoods. The centres are based in deprived neighbourhoods with the highest unemployment and worklessness rates in the PUSH area.

The centres are managed by Wheatsheaf Trust (Southampton central and Millbrook, Gosport and Havant) Portsmouth City Council (Portsmouth) and Eastleigh Borough Council (Meadows Centre).

The capital works can commence in March 2011. They will be co-ordinated by the Economic Development team of Eastleigh Borough Council, with support from the PUSH Multi Agency Task Force. Revenue funding for the next 3 years is available from a range of funding - Section 106, Skills Funding Agency, private trusts and sponsorship, further education, local and central government grants and contracts.

The centres bring together a range of different agencies to provide a co-ordinated approach to employment support and skills services and provide local venues for these agencies to deliver.

Funding Requested: £35,000.

Project assessment criteria:

Key outputs proposed include:

- improved frontages and disabled access to Portsmouth Centre;
- **Southampton Centres** - partition training room to create an additional space for smaller group sessions, job search and one to one advice and maximising usage of existing space in Millbrook Centre.
- Meadow Centre Eastleigh – signage, putting in disabled access, adaptation of office accommodation to training room, seating, ICT equipment.

- Havant Centre – refurbishment to include enlargement of public area and upgrade of heating systems
- Gosport – upgrade of equipment and resources.

It is envisaged that the above improvements will result in 500 people a year will receive help with jobs, training or skills. Of this 50 will participate in pre-employment training (additional 4 courses a year).

Further comments

Whilst the anticipated outcome of this project will potentially benefit 500 people living in areas within PUSH with greatest need, the proposed outputs are predominantly maintenance work. It would appear that this bid is not eligible as the majority of improvement works proposed are maintenance and therefore would be considered as revenue. In addition there maybe ineligibility as some of the proposed works appear to be DDA upgrades which are a statutory obligation for any organisation, and therefore would be considered outside of the remit of NGP. **In summary there are issues around eligibility and the funding requested.**

2.2 Gosport Waterfront

Project Description

The Gosport Waterfront development site is a strategic gateway site covering an area of 13.5 hectares in a mix of ownerships. Just over 50% of the land is in private ownership, 17% is owned by Gosport Borough Council and 29.5% is owned by the Ministry of Defence and County Council. The site is also in close proximity to the main High Street and redevelopment proposals provide the opportunity to significantly enhance both the waterfront and wider town centre.

In order to bring forward the first phases of development it is critical that the retained area of land at Royal Clarence Yard is secured.

The site is currently listed for disposal by Defence Estates and expressions of interest from public agencies are being sought. Gosport Borough Council has registered its interest in the site and the Crown has indicated a willingness to dispose of the site to the Borough.

The purpose of this proposal, therefore, is to secure the funding needed to commission a detailed contamination assessment of the retained land at Royal Clarence Yard, and provide a comprehensive report outlining the issues, required remediation works and associated costs. Key outputs include: comprehensive assessment of the contamination issues on the retained land at Royal Clarence Yard; impact assessment of remediation works on viability of the Gosport Waterfront scheme, including quantification of any potential viability gap.

Funding Required: £15,000

Project assessment criteria:

This project will help to support phase 1 of the Gosport Waterfront Project which PUSH to date has invested £75,000 and has resulted in a master plan for an attractive and potentially commercially viable scheme. The recently published Strategic Master plan Report for the Gosport waterfront in July 2010, outlines 3 options (Option 1, 'Do Nothing'; Option 2, Growth Guidance and Option 3 the Recommended Master plan). The preferred option, Option 3 is anticipated to provide a total of 3869 jobs is projected on completion of the scheme, with 13,250 sqm employment space, 23,750 sqm retail and 23,000 sqm office space. **The project is eligible for consideration**

3.0 HOUSING AND PLANNING

3.1 Abbotswood, Cupernham Lane, Romsey

Project Description

To deliver 800 dwellings, 40% of which will be affordable and a local centre comprising a convenience store, five shops, public house, community hall, doctors surgery / dentist, full day nursery, office units, 60 bed care / nursery homes and associated parking and a recycling centre; informal and formal open space; area for Nature Conservation; Landscaping and 'Bus Only Link' to Woodley lane. Anticipated outcomes include:

- 29 affordable homes
- 11 of these units to be for affordable renting, 11 for New Build Homebuy and 8 for discount market sale

The project also aims to operate a Trainee Initiatives Scheme which means not less than 6 trainees will be employed by the developer before commencement of the development and to convert some of the larger family units from the new affordable rent tenure to Target Rent making them much more affordable.

Abbotswood is identified within the PUSH Local Investment Plan and work is underway with HCA to determine funding commitments for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Funding Required: £300,000

Project assessment criteria:

Whilst Abbotswood is a priority site in the PUSH area, a view on the bid was also sought from the Housing Theme Lead, who advised that the PUSH housing officers had considered the bid advising that the bid may not meet the value for money criteria. This is because the requested funding to convert homes from new Affordable Rent to social rent, should be cross subsidised through the Housing Association using shared ownership or from other reserves. **There are issues in relation to value for money in this funding proposition.**

4.0 QUALITY PLACES

4.1 Southampton Cultural Quarter Public Realm

Project Description

The £550k project will provide significant public realm improvements to the exterior of Sea City and the City Art Gallery, critical components of the Cultural Quarter.

The Cultural Quarter is a crucial element in delivering Southampton's economic renaissance, attracting £175m of investment and creating 2,000 jobs. Regenerating the northern part of the City centre into a visitor destination will help transform the visitor experience for the City, making the most of the City's strengths: nationally respected performing and visual arts organisations, a uniquely rich heritage, fine parks in the centre of the city and a wide range of creative organisations breathing life into the local creative, social and business economy.

Key cultural elements of the programme are advancing well;

- Guildhall Square has been completed at a cost of £4.5m to deliver a striking public space, providing the perfect meeting place and setting for performing arts shows, exhibitions and an array of exciting seasonal events.
- Sea City Museum, which will deliver a nationally important visitor attraction that will showcase the city's archaeology and heritage collections has started on site.
- Southampton's New Arts Complex. A funding agreement with Arts Council England and a development agreement with Grosvenor to deliver the overarching development have now been signed, and detailed design work is underway

Other aspects are also progressing successfully:

- One Guildhall Square. Completed and now occupied by Southampton City Council and Capita. The building accommodates 700 employees. £20m of private sector investment was secured to deliver the building – contingent upon the delivery of Guildhall Square as a frontage of high quality public realm
- Mayflower Plaza. Planning permission granted, subject to 106 agreements. Potential occupiers being identified. Total private sector investment of £70m anticipated, creating 580 jobs
- Gantry Site development. Phase 1 completed and operational, work on phase 2 (residential) underway, due to complete 2012. Total private sector investment of £10m

Funding Required: **£300,000 PUSH Contribution**, external funding of £250k secured from other sources, total programme cost is £550k

Project assessment criteria:

Once completed, this project will compliment existing and completed cultural elements of the programme with the creation of 2,000 jobs and an additional 1m visits per year to this area of the city, in addition to the 5 million visitors to the City via the significant arrival point of the central station. It also resonates strongly with the PUSH cities first policy and will generate additional job/apprenticeship opportunities in an area where economic inactivity and unemployment is above the national average. **Whilst this project is eligible for funding from NGP, it should be noted that additional leverage has been secured by creating local apprenticeship opportunities for 16-24 year olds in the construction phase.**

5.0 CONCLUSION

It is recommended that both the Gosport Waterfront project and the Cultural Quarter Public Realm (subject to agreeing a condition for the creation of additional apprenticeship opportunities) projects be funded on the basis that they 'oven ready projects' that will further compliment and deliver a wider brief with regards job creation, visitor economy and the public realm.