

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

6 FEBRUARY 2013
SOUTH WEST WILTSHIRE AREA BOARD

SWWAB temporary support to the Nadder Valley Chambers of Commerce

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide supplementary information for the Area Board project to provide temporary support to the Nadder Valley Chambers of Commerce (those covering the Mere, Tisbury and Wilton community areas).

2. Background

2.1 On 5 March 2012 SWWAB (South West Wiltshire Area Board), TAPCAP (Tisbury & Parishes Community Area Partnership) and WilCAP (Wilton Community Area Partnership) hosted a Community Planning Event at Dinton Village Hall. Various stakeholders took part in this event, including local residents, Parish Councils, statutory services and voluntary groups.

2.2 As a direct result of this event, SWWAB set priorities for 2012/13 under three main headings:

- Economy, jobs and skills
- Health and the environment
- Housing

Relevant to this report, under the heading of 'Economy, jobs and skills' the following issues were identified:

- Assisting small / medium sized businesses and encouraging new businesses
- Promoting tourism

2.3 Elected members believe that the most effective way for SWWAB to promote economic development is to ensure that the Nadder Valley has effective Chambers of Commerce working in liaison with each other and with the AONB (Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), particularly its sustainable tourism initiative in the region. Chambers of Commerce, or their equivalent, are best placed to identify and support the wide range of mainly small business in the valley.

2.4 There are existing Chambers of Commerce in Wilton and Mere and in Tisbury a Business Association working along similar lines. All three organisations were relaunched with funding support from the LEADER programme. This enabled

them to take on part time clerks and start to expand their membership and activities. This welcome progress is now at risk because of the ending of the LEADER programme, which was only for one year. None of the three Chambers is yet financially self-supporting.

2.5 In order to address these issues, Area Board members have been working closely with Mere & District Chamber of Trade, Tisbury Business Association, Wilton & District Business Chamber and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to formulate a joined-up strategy across South West Wiltshire.

2.6 The three Chambers of Trade/Business Association have now put forward proposals which, if supported by SWWAB, should leave them in a position to continue in a self-sustaining manner within a two year period.

3 Aims and Objectives of the Project

3.1 To assist the local business chambers/association by providing a one-time funding package to bridge the gap between the ending of LEADER funding and their becoming financially self supporting.

3.2 To enable the business chambers/association to expand membership and to improve services to members in order to promote economic development and employment.

3.3 To encourage and promote joint working with the AONB to meet mutual aims of growing tourism in the Nadder Valley region, and into all other areas of South West Wiltshire.

4 Details of Projects

4.1 Mere & District Chamber of Trade, Tisbury Business Association and Wilton & District Business Chamber have each produced their reports according to these criteria; details of these can be found in the appendices.

4.2 South West Wiltshire Area Board, led by Cllr Richard Beattie, produced the following guidance to the business chambers/association for this project:

- The application should relate to a **single named project**.
- The application should provide a **vision statement** – a brief description of the situation the chamber/association expects to have reached by the end of the two year project
- The project should have a **clearly stated set of SMART¹ objectives** which are realistically capable of being achieved by the end of the period. Those objectives are likely to be focussed on improving business prospects and

¹ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Resourced, Timetabled

employment opportunities in the area by building and retaining membership and expanding the services provided to members.

- The project should be **ring fenced** from other activities carried on outside the scope of the project. That means that the SWWAB money should be separately identifiable within the accounts and that activities should be labelled as SWWAB supported or not.
- The project should comprise a set of **discrete actions/activities**
- Each action/activity should have a **timetable, output targets and a budget** but the chamber/association is free to vire between the actions/activities provided such virement is explained in the reporting process
- The application should include a commitment to work in **liaison with the AONB**, particularly on their tourism initiative.

5 Evaluation and Monitoring

5.1 Each business chamber/association will provide reports to South West Wiltshire Area Board on a six monthly basis. The reports will focus on the project as a whole, showing what has been done and providing details of costs and results. The report should also show progress on delivering the actions listed in the original application. The Area Board will meet each business chamber/association after the receipt of each report in order to review progress.

5.2 An outline of the schedule for these reports is given below:

- 1 September 2013 – 6 months report
- 1 March 2014 – 1 year report
- 1 September 2014 – 1 year and 6 months report
- 1 March 2015 – final 2 year report and evaluation

5.3 Representatives from South West Wiltshire Area Board will meet with each business chamber/association to review the reports. All reports will then be made public at the next scheduled Area Board meeting.

6 Funding arrangements

6.1 Each business chamber/association was asked to provide an outline of activities that will be eventually delivered over a period of two years. Based on those approximate outlines, this proposal aims to provide £14,000 to each business chamber/association, with payments made in advance in order to fund costs.

6.2 Funding for this project will be released in two tranches, as detailed below:

- To be released immediately;
 - Mere & District Chamber of Trade = £7,000
 - Tisbury Business Association = £7,000
 - Wilton & District Business Chamber = £7,000

- To be released before the end of the 2013/14 financial year (i.e. before end of March 2014), on condition that approval is given by South West Wiltshire Area Board for this tranche to be released, according to the aims of projects being met;
Mere & District Chamber of Trade = £7,000
Tisbury Business Association = £7,000
Wilton & District Business Chamber = £7,000

6.3 Therefore, the total amount of funding committed through this Area Board project is **£42,000**. The reason for releasing this funding in two stages is to ensure that the project is progressing as intended and to provide a check/balance.

6.4 Any money unaccounted for by each business chamber/association, in line with the criteria provided, will be returned to South West Wiltshire Area Board.

6.5 By agreeing to receive this funding, each of the business chambers/association agrees to the process outlined in this proposal.

7 Recommendation

7.1 It is proposed that the South West Wiltshire Area Board agrees:

To allocate £42,000 to this Area Board Project, according to the terms and process detailed in this report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Project Sunrise, Mere – Mere & District Chamber of Trade

Appendix 2 Tisbury Business Association 2013-14

Appendix 3 Developing WDBC in the Community – Wilton & District Business Chamber

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