

## **Report to the Cabinet**

**Report reference: C/109/2006-07.**  
**Date of meeting: 5 February 2007.**



**Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services.**

**Subject: Youth Initiatives Scheme - Work Programme.**

**Officer contact for further information: Chris Overend (01992 - 564247).**

**Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 - 564470).**

---

### **Recommendations**

- (1) That the arrangements for the Youth Initiatives Scheme programme, including the specific schemes at Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Matching and Roydon in 2007/08, be approved;**
- (2) That the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services be authorised to release funds for approved schemes on an ongoing basis in accordance with the timetables of works provided by the Parish/Town Councils; and**
- (3) That an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the Youth Initiatives Scheme be carried out by the appropriate Scrutiny Panel, as determined by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the arrangements set out in this report.**

### **Report:**

1. The District Council has included within the Capital Programme a Youth Initiatives Scheme budget of approximately £100,000 per annum for the financial years 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08.
2. The schemes are put forward by Town/Parish Councils and assessed by the Portfolio Holder for their suitability based on the following criteria:
  - Provision of a detailed plan and drawings illustrating what facility is to be provided.
  - Planning and building regulation approval to be obtained where required.
  - Need to be able to demonstrate that scheme will enhance the activities for young people in the area and thus assist the District Council's aims within the Best Value Plan.
  - Financial details illustrating how the costs of the project are made up.
  - Scheme to have been discussed with District Council officers and received their approval for "go ahead".
  - A £40,000 maximum grant.
  - Evidence of joint funding where appropriate and possible.
  - Evidence of some measure of support for scheme locally.
  - No retrospective approvals - applications to relate to new schemes or enhancement/further development aspects of existing schemes.

**2005/06 Programme:**

3. Details of the 2005/06 programme are set out below:

<b>SCHEME</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Epping Town Council - Refurbishment Recreation Area, Parklands, Coopersale	11,965	Works completed September 2005
Chigwell Parish Council - Youth Shelter, Chigwell Row	6,850	Works completed September 2005
Fyfield Parish Council - Sports System - Field Rear of School	17,074	Works completed October 2005
Fyfield Parish Council - Cricket Panels	354	Installed June 2006
Lambourne Parish Council - Sports Area, Abridge	5,750	Planning Application refused by Plans Sub-Committee May 2006 Revised Planning Application to be submitted
Loughton Town Council - Teen Shelters, Roding Valley and Willingale Road	13,510	Works totalling £9,968 completed June 2006 Remaining £3,542 not required
Waltham Abbey Town Council - Games Area Resurfacing, Town Mead, Youth Shelter, Ninefields	39,169	Works to Games Area in Town Mead completed. Youth Shelter at Ninefields still to be installed
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94,672</b>	

4. A number of projects were included in the 2006/07 programme when the scheme was approved, one of which was an application from Buckhurst Hill Parish Council relating to the teenage element (a ball park) of an all ages facility in the Roding Valley Recreation Area. Because of uncertainties regarding the timescale of this project, this has been replaced in the 2006/07 programme with projects at Upper and Lower Sheering Playing Fields, where Sheering Parish Council is in a position to commence works in the near future. The project at Roding Valley has accordingly been transferred to the list of projects included in the future programme (see paragraph 7 below). Given the uncertainties regarding the project at Buckhurst Hill and the length of time which has elapsed since the initial discussion, the Parish Council will be required to submit updated proposals which will be reassessed against the criteria to determine the scheme's suitability.

5. Details of progress in respect of the 2006/07 programme are set out below:

<b>SCHEME</b>	<b>AMOUNT £</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Epping Town Council - Renovation of Skateboard Area	12,000	Awaiting notification of start date from Town Council
Epping Upland Parish Council - Teenage Youth Facilities	35,000	Works completed September 2006
Ongar Parish Council - Refurbishment of Skateboard Area	10,000	Works completed November 2006. Inspection completed. Cheque to be raised.
Sheering Parish Council - Youth initiatives/equipment - Upper and Lower Sheering	31,412	Works completed October 2006. Copy invoice awaited.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88,412</b>	

### Financial Position:

6. Should all the outstanding works in the projects previously identified in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 programmes be completed as anticipated, the total allocated to date and the amount remaining for the remainder of the programme will be as follows:

	£	£	£
Amount included in the 3-year programme			300,000
Less 2005/06 approvals	94,672		
Less amount no longer required by Loughton Town Council	3,542	91,130	
Less 2006/07 approvals		88,412	179,542
<b>FUNDS REMAINING</b>			<b>120,450</b>

### Future Programme:

7. All the Parish/Town Councils were invited to submit applications for further suitable projects, which could be carried out during the remainder of the three-year programme. A list of the projects considered suitable (including the previously referred to works at Roding Valley Recreation Area) is set out below. The total of bids submitted amounts to £113,000 leaving £7,450 within the overall funds. There is sufficient flexibility within the programme for further discussions to be held with other parish/town councils regarding the possibility of other suitable schemes taking place, should need arise.

SCHEME	AMOUNT £
Buckhurst Hill Parish Council - Teenage Ball Park, Roding Valley Recreation Area	35,000
Chigwell Parish Council - Upgrade of Equipment, Chigwell Station Green Area	10,000
Matching Parish Council - Upgrading of facilities, Jubilee Field	28,000
Roydon - Multi-Sport Ball Court - Roydon Playing Fields	40,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113,000</b>

### Benefits of Schemes:

8. The first schemes were implemented in 2005/06 and sufficient time has now elapsed since their implementation for an assessment to be carried out of their success or otherwise. It is therefore recommended that information be sought from the Parish/Town Councils on the impact of the schemes, backed up where possible by 'hard' data. It is suggested that a Scrutiny Panel would be an appropriate mechanism for carrying out the assessment and that this issue should therefore be included within the Scrutiny work programme. If members agree with this suggestion the matter will be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for it to determine the appropriate Panel to undertake the assessment.

9. In some instances reservations have been expressed about the overall effectiveness of the provision of youth shelters. It will be noted that some of the approved schemes include the provision of youth shelters. It is recommended that the Council's Policy and Research Officer who is responsible for the administration of the scheme liaise with the Parish/Town Councils with a view to devising appropriate monitoring arrangements for the operation of youth shelters. The monitoring of the shelters should also form part of the overall assessment to be carried out by an appropriate Scrutiny Panel, as referred to in paragraph (8) above.

**Statement in Support of Recommended Action:**

10. Experience has shown that the provision of youth facilities helps reduce youth nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Such facilities are required throughout the District, but particularly in the more remote rural areas. The projects put forward have the support of the Parish/Town Councils and residents in the localities concerned.

**Other Options for Action:**

11. To agree or reject the proposed schemes. To agree the suggested funding or increase/decrease the amounts within the overall annual budget.

**Consultation Undertaken:**

12. Parish and Town Councils within the District.

**Resource implications:**

**Budget provision:** Capital provision of £100,000 per annum for each of the three financial years 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08.

**Personnel:** Existing provision.

**Land:** To be provided by Parish/Town Councils.

**Community Plan/BVPP references:** Nil.

**Relevant statutory powers:** Local Government Act 2000.

**Background papers:** None.

**Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:** The trial scheme suggests that the provision of these facilities helps reduce youth nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

**Key Decision Reference (if required):** N/A.