

Committee: Community & Leisure Committee
Date: 2 November 2004
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: Use of Golds Enterprise Zone, Elsenham for temporary Museum storage
Author: Carolyn Wingfield (01799) 510333

Summary

- 1 This report assesses the use of unoccupied units at Golds Enterprise Zone (formerly Gold's Nursery) Elsenham as a temporary storage for Museum collections, due to the lack of capacity and unsuitability of the current store at Newport, and while it is impossible to progress a permanent solution (the proposed Resource Centre).
- 2 The report assesses the one-off costs of adapting the units for Museum use and the ongoing revenue costs which would be incurred under the terms of the Council's lease while the units are occupied by the Museum and unavailable for commercial let. Other issues of service operation, security and staff time are also considered.

Background

- 3 Resources Committee 23rd September requested that spare units at Golds, Elsenham be considered as a temporary solution to the Museum Service's storage problems, and that the Resource Centre project be put on hold pending a feasibility study of the Museum Service's long-term financial sustainability.
- 4 The Golds site had already been ruled out as a location suitable to develop the Resource Centre due to the complex and onerous lease arrangements, which expire in 2009, and the unsuitability of the small units for adaptation to the proposed Resource Centre building.
- 5 The current lease for the Golds site requires the Council to pay rent to the owners irrespective of whether the units are let. The Council's costs are recovered when the units are let. If the Council occupies the units there would be no opportunity to recover these costs and the costs would continue to be borne by the Council as though the units were empty.

Capacity

- 6 Four small units are currently available and two further units are likely to be vacated shortly, making a total of six units which the Museum could consider for storage. Of these, three adjacent units (3,5, and 7) could be internally linked to form one premises of total floor area 261 m². Two further units, 22 and 24, could also be linked with a combined floor area of 140 m² to make a

total of around 400 m² available, just enough for the contents of the Newport store and the four horse-drawn vehicles to be removed from private storage at Hempstead, but not allowing much additional space for future incoming archives from major excavations. A further unit, unit 6, offers further standalone accommodation of 59 m².

- 7 This means that unless at least five units were taken, the Museum would still need to retain some space in the Newport store, and so the costs of running the Newport store (£5,380 for 2004/05) could not be used to offset the (far more expensive) costs of Golds.

Structure of Buildings

- 8 The Units are of basic masonry construction with insulated metal-sheeted roofs and large metal roller doors (which may make environmental control more difficult) as well as staff doors. Alarms have to be fitted at occupier's expense. There is some plasterboard at the top of internal walls and skylights in the roof, which may require additional insulation and security measures. The Golds units therefore offer some improvement on the Newport store in construction, but still do not meet the standards of security and environmental control required for a permanent solution. There is no known risk of flooding at Golds.

Rent, Rates and other revenue costs

- 9 The total cost of commercial rent, service charge and unified business rates for the three units 3, 5 and 7 is £ 38,019. There is the possibility of the first three months rent-free provided the Museum undertook refurbishment of the units itself. There would be additional revenue costs, summarised under 10.

Conversion and Removal Costs for Museum purposes

- 10 Work would needed to bring the units up to standard for housing Museum collections and insurance even on a short to medium-term basis, including installation of dedicated-line direct-dial alarm systems for intruders and fire detection, heaters and some upgrades to security. As individual units or blocks of adjacent units would have to be fitted separately, it is clearly not as cost-efficient as fitting out one large building. It is stressed that the measures set out in this report are complying with basic standards as in place at the existing Newport store. Estimated costs for fitting out and continuing to occupy between one and six units are summarised in the table below. A minimum of 340 m² of floor space are needed to replicate Newport, plus additional space for four horse-drawn vehicles in private store, the large hayrick base and some expansion to resolve current overcrowding and incoming archaeological archives. 400 m² would be a more realistic minimum area for short-term use, as outlined in 5 above.

Costs pro rata	1 unit Unit 3	2 units Unit 5	3 units Unit 7	4 units Unit 22	5 units Unit 24	6 units Unit 6
Unit area	87 m ²	87 m ²	87 m ²	70 m ²	70 m ²	59 m ²
Cumulative area	87 m ²	174 m ²	261 m ²	331 m ²	401 m ²	460 m ²
One-off set-up costs						
Intruder alarm	1,764 ex VAT est.			1,398		1,096
Fire alarm	1,500 est.			1,500		1,000
Extinguishers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Dehumidifiers + environmental monitoring (1)	900	900	900	Total evacuation of Newport store would allow existing equipment to be relocated to Golds		
Upgrade physical security (2)	445	445	445	445	445	445
Electric heaters	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Hire of vehicles, equipment and labour to move collections	1,000 est. Costs may vary acc. to what is moved first			800		400
Purchase of new racking	1,000 est.			Total evacuation of Newport would allow existing racking to be relocated		
TOTAL SET-UP COSTS (nearest 0)	12,600			6,790		4,040
Staff time hrs (3)	400 hrs est.			400 hrs est.		50 hrs est.
Revenue on-costs per year						
Rent + Service Charge (4)	8,843	8,843	8,843	7,141	7,141	6,051
Uni. Bus. Rate April 2004	3,830	3,830	3,830	2,371	2,371	1,664
Electricity: lights, heating and equipment	1,200 (based on Newport pro rata)			650		270
Phone lines (5)	150			100		50
Water rates (5)	300			200		100
Alarm and fire systems service	484			464		444
TOTAL REVENUE COSTS (nearest 0)	40,150			20,440		8,580

- (1) Units need to be monitored first to gauge temperature and humidity levels. It is likely that at least one dehumidifier (typical costs around £750 for volume of air in unit) will be needed, plus additional lower-cost monitoring equipment such as thermohygrographs or data loggers for temperature and relative humidity (RH), grills and pest traps for insects, and spraying of premises with permissible insecticides to protect organic objects. Dehumidifiers will need to be of sufficient capacity to cope with the volume of air and environment (hence cheaper domestic versions are unsuitable) and must be fitted to drain to the outside of

the building. In addition insulation on metal roller doors may be needed but has not been included.

- (2) Floor mounted padlock to secure roller metal door properly, improved lock on staff door, bolt on WC door, window bars on WC window. NB skylights may also need security measures, but need further work to assess and cost if necessary.
- (3) Listing, packing collections for removal; supervising loading, removal to Golds and unloading; organising layout and shelving; unpacking collections, condition checking, new location records. Estimated approx. no. of hours.
- (4) Full charge if units refurbished before occupation; discount of three-months rent free offered if client refurbishes unit themselves.
- (5) Accurate estimates have not been obtained for phone lines or water rates, so figures are nominal.

Insurance and Heritage Values of Collections at Newport

11 To place the arguments in context, it should be noted that the insurance value of the collections currently housed at Newport, plus the four horse-drawn vehicles to be moved from private storage at Hempstead, are as follows:

Geology collections (2001 valuation)	£510,000
Horse-drawn vehicles and hayrick base (average of two 2004 valuations)	£ 48,375
Other Social History (tools etc) estimated	<u>£ 15,000</u>
	<u>£573,375</u>

Archaeological finds represent information derived from excavation and specialist costs estimated at min. £2,500,000 (after 2001 analysis)

12 The archaeological collections currently held at Newport exclude the metal and glass finds (currently at the Museum) which tend to be the finds with highest intrinsic insurance values, however a small proportion of stone and ceramic artefacts at Newport will also have moderate intrinsic values (complete pots, prehistoric implements). It is important however to understand the true 'value' of the 'bulk' finds such as potsherds, samples of building materials and bone, which can too readily be dismissed as of negligible intrinsic worth. The true worth of these finds lies in the information and primary evidence which they represent as a result of having been excavated, analysed and processed for long-term archiving in a systematic manner by excavators and specialists. The real cost of replacing the district's current archaeological collection at Newport would therefore be the cost of undertaking excavations on an equivalent number of similar sites throughout Uttlesford, and this could only be achieved at an estimated cost of at least £2.5 million.

13 It cannot be overstressed that notional financial values do not adequately represent the total community value of the heritage and environmental asset which these collections represent, especially where they are the only tangible record of sites, habitats, peoples and ways of life which have otherwise disappeared or been destroyed. Seemingly 'ordinary' artefacts and specimens may be of high 'value' to the parish or community from which they originate.

Public and Staff Access and Facilities

- 14 The Golds units do not offer scope for significantly improving public access, except as ground-floor only storage areas (no stairs). They have the advantage of a toilet and sink in each unit. There is not the opportunity to have a clean, well-lit and heated research/education room as in the proposed Resource Centre, and staff and visitors would have to go between units on various parts of the site if several units were taken over. Regular monitoring would therefore be more time-consuming than with a single building.
- 15 There is good vehicular access to the units and limited parking outside. Golds 9.5 miles from the Museum, travelling time 20 minutes (in each direction), which is at the outer limit considered viable for off-site storage and response times to alarms.

Security and Lone Working Issues

- 16 One advantage of the Newport depot site is that it contains the store within the security of the Depot perimeter fence, with some security lighting and a CCTV camera outside the Depot offices. Museum staff have keys to the gate which is locked when depot staff leave, affording some extra protection for lone working past 4.30 - 5pm. There are some residential houses opposite. Museum staff have of necessity to visit and work at the store alone most of the time, and these measures reduce the risks of lone working to an acceptable level, as well as benefiting the overall security of the store (or proposed Resource Centre). There is no such secure compound at Golds, no UDC presence beyond a storage element in unit 20 at present, and therefore the location is more exposed for both collections and lone workers. There is security lighting and residential accommodation nearby, so the risks are not prohibitive but are higher.

Security and Length of Tenure

- 17 The current lease arrangements which the Council has entered into at Golds expire in 2009, by which point it would be necessary for the Museum collections to be moved yet again to another location, with the costs and physical risks to objects that entails. This means that a permanent solution to housing the Museum's collections would still need to be provided by 2009. The original timetable for the Resource Centre meant that at best the new building could not be operational before 2007, which allows only a couple of years' slippage on the original Resource Centre project to provide an alternative building and evacuate Golds by 2009.

Use of Staff Time

- 18 An interim move to Golds would be costly in terms of staff time, which would divert staff from other specialist work and service delivery to the public. Against this, there is a calculated risk in remaining at Newport, which would also incur staff-time costs if it floods again. The Resource Centre project, if able to proceed, would also require much staff time, but this would be directed into achieving a long-term solution and real improvements to the service to the public. It should also be noted that if only some collections were moved to Golds, and the Newport store to be retained, staff would have two off-site storage locations to travel to and service instead of one.

RECOMMENDED

Committee is asked to consider the following options. It is emphasised that options (a) to (e) inclusive would be only medium-term options until 2009, by which time it would be necessary to have alternative premises (Resource Centre or an equivalent building) to house collections when Golds has to be evacuated.

- a) All six available units at Golds are occupied by the Museum Service, allowing total evacuation of Newport and private storage at Hempstead, with sufficient capacity for incoming archaeological archives over the next few years.
Set-up costs £23,430, plus additional annual revenue costs of £67,170.
- b) Five units at Golds are occupied by the Museum Service, allowing total evacuation of Newport and private storage at Hempstead, but little capacity for incoming material.
Set up costs £19,390, plus additional annual revenue costs of £60,590.
- c) Three units at Golds are occupied by the Museum Service, allowing evacuation of Newport's ground floor only (most at risk from flood), and of private storage at Hempstead, but requiring retention of Newport for other collections and splitting collections between sites.
Set up costs £12,600, plus additional annual revenue costs of £40,150.
- d) Two units at Golds are occupied by the Museum Service, allowing evacuation of Newport's ground floor only (most at risk from flood), but not horse-drawn vehicles in private storage at Hempstead, but requiring retention of Newport for other collections and splitting collections between sites.
Set up costs £8,590 in total (£6,790 and additional one-off cost of £1,800 for dehumidifiers and environmental monitoring, if existing equipment needs to be retained at Newport) plus additional annual revenue costs of £20,440 approx.
- e) One unit at Golds is adapted for Museum use, initially to take the horse-drawn vehicles from private storage at Hempstead. Any surplus space could act as emergency storage for items most at risk in the event of the Newport store flooding again this winter, and/or overspill for incoming excavation archives which cannot be accommodated at Newport.
Set up cost £4,940 in total (£4,040 and additional one-off cost of £900 for dehumidifiers and environmental monitoring), plus additional annual revenue costs of £8,580.
- f) Do not take any units at Golds immediately, but continue investigating options for a permanent alternative, i.e. Resource Centre or equivalent. The option of taking one or two units at Golds remains as last resort if severe flooding occurs at Newport again before a permanent solution can be found. Though all cabinets and storage units on the ground floor have now been raised to keep them above likely flood levels, this involves continuing risk to collections from humidity, and to the wooden floor at Newport from repeated saturation. The same interim risk would have applied if the Museum Service had been able to proceed with the Resource Centre project immediately, due to the time such projects take to complete.

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee
Date: 2 November 2004
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Thaxted Festival Grant
Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of a funding request from the Thaxted Festival Foundation for an annual grant of £3,500 per annum for three years and recommends that Members determine the application.

Background

- 2 Following a presentation to this Committee, it was requested that the Community Development Manager meet with representatives from the Thaxted Festival Foundation (the Festival) and write a report for the committee.
- 3 The Festival is an annual event that is considered to attract audiences from Essex and beyond. Thaxted is not the ideal venue for a festival as it is a relatively small community, is unable to attract many local sponsors and relies on the local church as its main venue for hosting concerts.
- 4 The Festival has only remained financially viable due to the fact that it is staffed by volunteers and has received financial support from the Council, Essex County Council, the Eastern Orchestral Board and the Eastern Arts Council.
- 5 It is recognised that the Festival is an economic asset to the local community and beyond as it both promotes culture and tourism and has associated economic spin-offs for the local community.
- 6 The Council funded the Festival in 2004/05 to the sum of £2,000. In the past, the Festival was funded on a three year rolling basis from the Voluntary Organisation Support Grant (now the Contributions Fund Scheme).
- 7 The table below sets out both the actual and predicted income and expenditure for 2003-2005

	Description	2003	2004	2005 (Draft)
Concerts		15	16	16
Tickets Sold		4379	4741	4550
Income		£	£	£
	Tickets	40.2	52.9	45.0
	Commercial sponsorship			
	Concerts	4.5	4.5	5.5
	Education Projects	1.5	3.0	1.5
	Subscriptions, donations etc.	27.4	26.4	22.2
	Public Funding	16.7	13.1	11.5
	TOTAL	90.2	99.9	85.7
COSTS				
	Artists Fees	51.8	52.3	49.5
	Concerts			
	Education Projects	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Other Costs	30.8	34.0	35.0
	TOTAL	88.6	92.3	90.5
Surplus (Target = £3.5k)		1.7	7.6	(4.8)

- 8 Members will notice that the surplus achieved in 2004/05 was far greater than anticipated; this was as a result of successful talent scouting and the subsequent booking of the Jazz musician – Jamie Callum – before his “rise to fame”. To this end, it is impossible for the Festival to predict ticket sales and it is considered that £45,000 is a realistic target.
- 9 The Festival endeavours to attract people of all ages and in 2004 ran school 3 day projects, which are led by teams from the orchestra. In addition it offers concessions to its concerts (758 were provided this year at approximately £3/ticket) and it hosts a concert for people with special needs.
- 10 The Festival is concerned that without the support of continued funding from the Council, it will have to reduce its Artists fees. In addition, it will not be able to build a small surplus to provide for the eventual replacement of chairs and staging; the current cost for this provision has been estimated to be in the region of £50,000.

Potential Options

- 11 The Council could elect to provide no grant at all but it is considered that this could have a detrimental effect on the long-term viability of the Festival and the associated economic spin-offs. In addition, the Council has been recognised in the past as being one of the major sponsors and its contribution

has been well advertised in all the promotional literature connected with the Festival.

- 12 The Council could consider providing a one-off grant of £3,500 which could be reviewed annually or alternatively it could insist that the money is ring fenced for the renewal of staging and chairs as appropriate.
- 13 The Council could consider sponsoring the education element of the Festival and determine a level of appropriate funding. It currently funds the Festival at a rate of £2,000 per annum.

Comment

- 14 It is generally considered that the Festival provides an economic and cultural focus of international re-known for the district. Comments from Festival attendees suggest that there is a consensus that the Festival should continue and encourage new artists into the musical arena.
- 15 By continuing to fund the Festival, the Council would be contributing to fulfilling the Quality of Life Plan through encouraging participation by young people in activities in Uttlesford and supporting the continued economic prosperity of the area.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee determine a level of appropriate funding.

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee
Date: 2 November 2004
Agenda Item No: 7
Title: Community Project Grant Scheme
Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with recommendations from the Grant Review Task Group following discussions with Town and Parish Clerks from the four main centres. It recommends that the Community and Leisure Committee endorse the Task Group's recommendations.

Background

2 At the meeting of the Community and Leisure Committee on 7 September 2004, Members requested that the Grant Review Task Group meet with Town and Parish Council Clerks from the four main settlements to explore ways of improving the fairness of the grant schemes and to discuss general grant funding and that a report be submitted to the November meeting of this committee.

3 A number of grant schemes available to Town and Parish Councils from the Council have either been abolished or curtailed, namely:-

(a) Community Support Grant Scheme (now known as the Community Project Grant Scheme) – Capital Funding Grant Scheme. Formally, any Town or Parish Council undertaking concurrent functions (i.e., functions which could be exercised by either the Town or Parish – and, which, if not exercised by the Parish might have to be undertaken by the District) could apply irrespective of population. This scheme was abolished in 2000 following a Best Value Review.

(b) Community Project Grant Scheme – this capital funding scheme has been restricted to Parishes with a population of less than 1,000; the 17 excluded parishes contain a population of 51,573 out of the District's total of 69,395 (i.e., approximately 75% of Uttlesford's population are excluded).

(c) Promotions of Local Centre's Scheme - £4,000 capital funding was allocated each to Great Dunmow, Saffron Walden, Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted for promotion of their town centres with a further £4,000 reserved for the promotion of town centres in the district as a whole. The scheme was administered by the respective Town/Parish Council under guidelines set by the District Council. Whilst this scheme was abolished this financial year, £4,000 has been set aside for the district wide promotion and this budget is managed by the Leisure Manager.

(d) The Leisure and Cultural Grant Scheme is available for talented individuals, non-profit making organisations and local charities providing services to or for the community and for the purpose of assisting the arts, sports and cultural clubs.

Why Grant Aid Should be Considered?

4 There is a view that the current grant schemes only "favour" 25% of the population as 75% of the Town and Parish Councils in the district are currently ineligible for any Council grants.

5 It is considered that Town and Parish Councils are well established, statutory, elected bodies – the closest tier of government to the people and therefore well placed to be aware of parishioner needs in relation to facilities and services. In addition, they undertake economically many functions, thereby providing added value, which would otherwise have to be provided by the

Council. By working in closer partnership, it is considered that even more could be achieved.

- 6 There is a concern that because Town/Parish Councils for the urban parishes have larger budgets that there is an expectation that they should receive no grant funding from the Council. In addition, there is a concern that urban parishes also have to provide many more services, and therefore, have a higher level of Council Tax to raise than those of a predominantly rural parish.
- 7 With regard to added value, it was agreed that residents of rural parishes enjoy the facilities and services provided in the “hub” parishes but do not contribute to the costs – which enables their Council Tax to generally remain at much lower levels.

Potential Solution

- 8 The Task Group consider that in order to redress the balance that Members need to consider the following:-
 - (a) Reintroducing a grant scheme that operated along the same lines as the Promotion of Local Centres Grant Scheme; the Task Group consider that £4,000 capital funding per centre (the Urban Parishes Scheme) would be an appropriate figure for the Community and Leisure Committee to consider recommending. This would cover Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet, Saffron Walden and Thaxted (combined population of 29,705)
 - (b) The existing budget of £24,000 capital funding for the Community Project Grant Scheme be opened up to all the remaining parishes irrespective of their population size.
 - (c) To avoid confusion, merge the former Promotion of Local Centres Grant Scheme into the Community Project Grant Scheme by increasing the budget by £16,000 and ring fence this amount for use by the four main centres.
 - (d) All applicants would be expected to have raised at least 50% matched funding.

Conclusion

- 9 The Task Group consider that by increasing the budget by £16,000 and by opening up the existing Community Project Grant Scheme to all Parishes (regardless of size), that the Council would redress an apparent existing inequality in relation to grant provision.
- 10 It is also considered that the district would further benefit financially as all the Town and Parish Councils would be able to lever in monies from other bodies where there some pump priming from the Council in the first instance and due to the fact that all projects will be expected to raise 50% matched funding..

RECOMMENDED That the Task Group recommend that the Community and Leisure Committee recommend to the Resources Committee that;-

- (a) That the existing Community Project Grant Scheme budget of £24,000 capital funding be increased by £16,000 (ring fenced for the four main settlements)
- (b) That all Parish Councils in the District be eligible to apply for funding irrespective of their population size.
- (c) All applicants would be expected to have raised at least 50% matched funding.

Background Papers: Letters from Town and Parish Councils

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee
Date: 2 November 2004
Agenda Item No: 8
Title: E T Foakes Memorial Hall Charity Trust
Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to consider an ad hoc request made on behalf of the ET Foakes Memorial Hall Charity Trust for funding to refurbish the main hall toilets in accordance with Health and Safety requirements, the Disability Discrimination Act and recommends that Members determine the application.

Background

- 2 The Foakes Memorial Hall Charity Trust (the Trust) has to undertake a major refurbishment of the toilets in the main hall in order to comply with Health and Safety legislation and the Disability Discrimination Act. The Trust originally applied for monies from the Community Support Project Grant Scheme but the application was refused as Great Dunmow has a population greater than 1,000.
- 3 The Trust does not just serve Great Dunmow, but organisations and individuals over a wider area; this is reflected in the fact that preferential hire rates are given to voluntary organisations and residents of the Council's area, and not just to residents of Great Dunmow. The Great Dunmow Town Council provides The Trust with an annual grant, currently set at £9,000 per annum.
- 4 The main hall toilets have long been in need of refurbishment as the current space does not provide adequately for people with disabilities or those requiring baby changing facilities etc. In order to help finance the project, the

Trust have been proactive in developing its income stream by undertaking a major review of the fees structure, increasing investment income by transferring investments from Barclays Bank to the Charities Official Investment Fund and actively promoting increased usage of the hall.

- 5 Despite undertaking these measures, the Trust faces considerable financial pressures including the maintenance costs of the building, the major part of which was constructed in 1934; a rolling capital programme for major expenditure to upgrade and meet the facilities of an ever increasing population; recent urgent unplanned maintenance expenditure due to subsidence being discovered in the stage area.
- 6 The Trust requires £27,125 in order to progress this scheme; it has investigated the possibility of applying for grants to at least 12 relevant bodies but it has only been possible to progress applications to three of these bodies for a myriad of reasons. The three remaining applications are as follows:-
 - (a) Essex County Council – maximum grant of £25% of the costs = £6,781
 - (b) Essex Community Foundation – maximum grant of £10,000 and all other finance must be in place before application is submitted and the applications will not be determined until January 2005, no application has ever received the whole amount applied for and the figure is more likely to be in the region of £2,000 to £3,000.
 - (c) “Awards for All” – maximum grant of £5,000, similarly, all other finance needs to be in place before submitting an application.
- 7 The Trust has budgetary provision in 2004-05 of £8,500 towards the cost of the scheme to which they are able to add a further £1,000 from reserves. On the assumption that the Trust received funding from all bodies, there would still be a shortfall of £2,844.
- 8 Had the Trust been eligible to apply to the Community Project Grant Scheme, it would have been eligible to apply for a grant up to £3,500. To this end, the Trust have requested that the Council consider providing an ad hoc capital grant of £2,844 to underwrite the shortfall in available funding.

RECOMMENDED that Members determine the application.

Background Papers: Letters of Request from the ET Foakes Memorial hall Charity Trust dated 24 September 2004 & original application to the Community Project Grant Scheme –9 June 2004.

Committee: Community & Leisure Committee
Date: 2 November, 2004
Agenda Item No: 9
Title: Multi-Cultural Festival
Author: Gaynor Bradley (01799) 510348

Summary

- 1 This report seeks Members support for the proposal to hold a Multi-Cultural Festival in the district during 2005.

Background

- 2 Part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment guidance encourages local authorities to address the issue of providing services for hard to reach groups. In order to partly address this issue it has been decided to investigate the possibility of organising festival to encourage a diverse range of people to participate in a celebration of living in Uttlesford.
- 3 Members and Officers have to date held two meetings with people working with hard to reach groups to plan the process. Those currently involved in the meetings are representatives from the District Council, Council for Voluntary Service in Uttlesford, Essex Racial Equality Council and the Rural Community Council. The existing working group has identified a number of funding sources as well as organisations and individuals to be invited to either join the Steering Group or to provide advice and have involvement in the event(s).
- 4 At present, the format of the festival has not been decided upon it will be a matter for the expanded Steering Group to address, although thoughts, so far, are that the festival could include a number of events and activities around the district leading up to one larger festival event. The larger event could comprise music, dance, arts/crafts and food from around the World.
- 5 Officers are currently investigating which venues might be suitable and available for a larger event and suggested venues are Audley End House/Grounds, Little Easton Manor or Great Dunmow Recreation Ground.

RECOMMENDED that Members agree that a Multi-Cultural Festival be organised in the district during 2005.

Background Papers: CPA Guidance and Working Group Notes

Committee: Community & Leisure Committee
Date: 2 November, 2004
Agenda Item No: 10
Title: Essex County Council Youth Service Provision
Author: Gaynor Bradley (01799) 510348

Summary

- 1 This report updates Members and seeks their views on the changes being made to the provision of Essex County Council (ECC) youth services in the district.

Background

- 2 For information, the Youth Strategy Group is a multi-agency group established to develop a strategic approach to providing services for young people. The Group's current Chairman is a District Councillor and the organisations represented are: Uttlesford District Council, Essex County Council Youth Service, ECC Children & Family Service (Social Services), Connexions, Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services, Uttlesford Youth Forum, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust.
- 3 During the past few meetings the Youth Service has reported that consideration is being given by the County Council to selling two of the existing Youth Centres i.e. Newport and Takeley and concentrating on continuing to provide youth clubs in Great Dunmow, Saffron Walden and Stansted and to provide youth outreach work around the district utilising the Mobile Information Bus.
- 4 Discussions have been held with representatives of both Newport and Takeley Parish Councils, who have also been attending the Strategy Group meetings, regarding how the Youth Service might continue to operate in these areas. Reference had also been made to the fact that some (percentage unknown at this stage) of the funding raised from the sale of the buildings would be re-invested back into the relevant communities for youth provision.

Current Situation

- 5 At the recent meeting of the Youth Strategy Group the Youth Service reported that a decision regarding the sale of the Newport building had not been made. In respect of Takeley it had been established that ECC does not own the building. However, due to the dilapidated condition of both buildings it is unlikely that it will be possible to continue operating from the buildings for much longer.

Newport Parish Council

- 6 Newport Parish Council representatives are concerned that there are no other facilities available for use by young people other than the facilities at Newport Free Grammar School and they are opening negotiations with the School's Head teacher.

Takeley Parish Council

- 7 Takeley Parish Council representatives have indicated that they willing to consider utilising other buildings for youth activities. However, they are currently waiting for the legal agreement to be concluded on the Priors Green development that contains Section 106 funding for provision of community facilities that could be used for youth activities. Therefore, what facilities might be available in the future has not yet been established.
- 8 Both Parish Councils remain concerned as to what level of youth service provision they will have in their areas and the future funding thereof.

Way Forward

- 9 It was generally concluded at the last Strategy Group meeting that the County Council needs to make a decision sooner rather than later regarding the future use of both of the buildings in Newport and Takeley. The funding available for future provision needs to be identified and then with voluntary sector involvement consultation should commence with the young people and other community representatives to establish what the needs are. Investigations into the possible use of other buildings, based on the identified requirements, can be carried out.

RECOMMENDED that Members agree that Uttlesford District Council requests that

- a) A decision regarding the future usage of the Newport and Takeley Youth Club buildings be made as a matter of urgency and whether or not the Newport Youth Club will be sold.
- b) If the Newport building is to be sold then the County Council identifies the percentage of the income received from the sale that will be re-invested in Newport youth provision.
- c) The County Council identifies the future level of funding from the Youth Service revenue budget for the provision of youth services in Newport and Takeley.
- d) The County Council identifies what support it will provide to youth provision in a facility and set out the number of outreach hours and method of operation to be provided in both Newport and Takeley.

Committee **Community and Leisure**

Date **2 November 2004**

Agenda Item No: **11**

Title: **Service Plans, Budget and Council Priorities 2005/06**

Author: **Philip O'Dell (01799) 510670, Diane Burridge (01799) 510580, Mike Brean (01799) 510330, Michael Perry (01799) 510416, Rod Chamberlain (01799) 510508**

Summary

- 1 This report outlines the Committee's initial draft General Fund revised estimates of direct costs and income for 2004/05 and estimates for next year, 2005/06, prepared on the basis of existing approved levels of service. Also included in the report are draft Service Plans, including spending pressures, prepared by those Executive Managers whose services are controlled by this Committee. The report also contains a full set of results from the Prioritisation Working Group set up by the Resources Committee to look at the contribution that services make to the Council's objectives. The Appendices to this report are as follows:

Appendix 1 Base Budget-Committee summary and detailed pages
Appendix 2 Draft Service Plans
Appendix 3 Table of High/Medium and Low Priority Services
Appendix 4 Summary of staff briefing note on Prioritisation Exercise

Background

- 2 The Resources Committee meeting on 24 June 2004 targeted a council tax increase of no more than 5% per annum over each of the next four years, the timescale of the Council's Financial Strategy. In practice, due to both potential capping by central government, and the Council's own policy decisions, an increase of no more than 3% may be necessary for 2005/06. Based on existing budgets and anticipated government funding, this would necessitate budget reductions and/or increased income from charging for services totalling approximately £150,000. This figure assumes no provision for new spending pressures, including known increases in statutory costs. Although the overall position will not be clear until the Resources Committee meet in 18 November, it could be that the Council will need to make budget reductions and additional income in the £300,000-£500,000 range.
- 3 Resources Committee on 24 June also set up a joint Member and officer working group to consider the Council's priorities against the light of tightening financial constraints and Comprehensive Performance Assessment comments on prioritisation.

- 4 Executive Managers, in consultation with their staff, have now drafted Service Plans covering the period 2005-2008, including new spending pressures which will need to compete for scarce Council resources.
- 5 Co-ordinated external consultation is planned on the Council's budget, possible council tax levels, budget prioritisation exercise and the draft Corporate Plan.

Revised 2004/05 Budgets

- 6 The process of revising budgets undertaken in this cycle takes the place of more routine budgetary control reports, with the summarised position being:

	£	£	£
BASE ESTIMATE 2004/2005			2,025,120
<u>Less</u> Internal Charges			<u>804,950</u>
BASE DIRECT COSTS			1,220,170
Transferred to/from Resources Committee:-			
Executive Programme Manager - Q of L (Part Year)			-51,200
Q of L Plan P183 Tourism Marketing Plan			5,000
Q of L Plan P184 Tourism Staffing			9,370
Transferred from Environment Committee:-			
Bridge End Gardens Project Manager			3,900
Transferred from Transport Committee:-			
Income Allocation from Pig Market Charity			-4,000
Adjusted Base Direct Costs			<u>1,183,240</u>
Other Variations:-			
<u>Less</u> Staffing Costs (net)		-6,130	
<u>Plus</u> Other (net)		<u>80</u>	<u>-6,050</u>
Total Variation from Adjusted Base			<u>-6,050</u>
Revised Estimate 2004/2005 – Direct Costs			<u>1,177,190</u>

Draft Budgets 2005/06

- 7 The detailed budgets have been prepared at estimated outturn prices and therefore include provision for agreed future pay awards and other price increases. Prior to any further spending pressures being funded or savings proposals being approved by the Council, the detailed figures have been prepared at the existing approved levels of service. The summarised position for this Committee is as follows:

	£	£	£
BASE DIRECT COSTS			1,220,170
Transferred to/from Resources Committee:-			
Executive Programme Manager - Q of L			-60,340
Q of L Plan P183 Tourism Marketing Plan			5,000
Q of L Plan P184 Tourism Staffing			14,360
Transferred from Environment Committee:-			
Bridge End Gardens Project Manager			3,900
Transferred from Transport Committee:-			
Income Allocation from Pig Market Charity			-4,000
Adjusted Base Direct Costs			1,179,090
Previously Projected Items:-			
<u>Less</u> One off Crime Audit	-10,000		
<u>Less</u> One off Equipment	-6,000	<u>-16,000</u>	
Inflation:-			
<u>Plus</u> Pay Award	17,830		
<u>Plus</u> Other	16,930	<u>34,760</u>	
Planned Repairs Programme :-			
<u>Less</u> 2004/05 Programme	-38,200		
<u>Plus</u> 2005/06 Programme	44,200	<u>6,000</u>	
Other Variations:-			
<u>Plus</u> Staffing – Annual Increments	1,900		
<u>Less</u> Staffing – Other (net)	-480		
<u>Less</u> Other (net)	-3,360	<u>-1,940</u>	
Total Variation from Adjusted Base			22,820
<u>Plus</u> Private Finance Initiative <i>(this will be adjusted below the line)</i>			<u>36,000</u>
Draft Estimate 2005/06 – Direct Costs			1,237,910

8 Apart from inflation, also included are amounts to cover other unavoidable variations such as those arising from contractual commitments, any projections for 2004-2005 identified last year, and variations in the planned property maintenance programme. Excluded are any items related to service changes, which would require specific Committee approval. Internal charges will be added to committee budgets when they are re-presented in the January meeting cycle.

9 Fees and charges for this Committee will be examined prior to the next meeting, as part of any budget reduction exercise.

Service Plans and Spending Pressures

10 Appendix 2 contains the full draft Service Plans relating to this Committee's responsibilities. The Service Plans have been prepared by Executive Managers, meaning that there is not a complete fit to the Council's committee structure. The relevant Executive Managers will highlight those parts of their Service Plans relevant to this Committee at the meeting. These Plans will need to be reviewed based on decisions taken during the budget process and revised Service Plans will be brought back to this Committee in January 2005 for final agreement.

11 A summary of the spending pressures for this Committee is given below:

	Ongoing From 2005/06	one-off	capital
	£000	£000	£000
Development of Leisure and Cultural strategy	0	25	0
CCTV upgrade	51	125	0
Cultural services festival/ development budget	5	0	0
Health Initiatives post budget	3	0	0
Additional community grants	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>12</u>
	63	150	12

12 This Committee will be asked to consider whether it accepts that the spending pressures need to be met, either through new or re-directed resources, and to propose a priority order to Resources Committee. The Resources Committee will need to consider these spending pressures in the light of the Council's overall financial position for the next financial year and beyond.

13 A report elsewhere on this agenda gives details of any capital schemes relating to this committee. The revenue consequences of these schemes will be incorporated into the budget summary submitted to the Resources Committee.

14 The Corporate Plan is currently being revised for presentation in draft to the full Council on 14 December. Any revenue budgets relevant to this Committee will be included in the overall budget position reported to the Resources Committee on 18 November, and will then be added to this Committee's budget in the next cycle of meetings if approved by the full Council.

Prioritisation Process

15 Paragraph 3 of this report reminded Members that the Resources Committee set up a Member/officer working group to look at prioritisation. This group has now met several times and have compiled an analysis of front line services based on their contribution to the nine themes in the Council's Quality of Life Corporate Plan. A summary of these themes is given below:

Providing strong community leadership and openness
Protecting and enhancing the environment and character of the district
Improving rural transport
Encouraging appropriate economic development
Improving the supply of good affordable homes
Promoting tourism, culture and leisure opportunities
Improving access to value for money services
Improving community safety and the health of the population
Supporting lifelong learning and developing better opportunities for young people

- 16 The nine themes outlined in paragraph 15 relate to specific outcomes, and dovetail with the five themes of Excellence, People, Customers, Community and Communication, which provide a more internally focussed framework for improvement.
- 17 The outcome of the working group's activities is the prioritisation table, structured by High, Medium and Low contributions to the nine themes. The table, in alphabetical order within each category, is shown in Appendix 3.
- 18 Support services do not contribute directly to the themes contained within the Corporate Plan and because of this, and the need to focus resources on front line services, have been included in the Low category of the prioritisation exercise.
- 19 Members who attended the Council Away Day on 9 October will be aware that an exercise was undertaken there aimed at validating or checking the conclusions of the working group. Similarly, an exercise involving the Joint Management Team (JMT) of middle managers was worked through during September. The outcomes of all three exercises have now been compared and there is a consensus on most of the results. Where differences do exist it is felt that the working group's views should prevail, as they went through a much more detailed process and had considerable time and officer support in coming to their conclusions.
- 20 Resources Committee on 18 November will use the prioritisation process outcomes to steer the budget process for the next financial year and beyond. With a shortfall on the budget already identified, as explained in paragraph 2 of this report and many spending pressures being brought to committees, this is likely to involve Resources Committee setting savings and additional income targets to be considered by committees in the January committee cycle, based on officer proposals. To get the full benefit of the prioritisation process being undertaken, these targets will also need to consider the current cost and quality of services, and the Council's future aspirations for each service's cost and quality, based on the priority of each service. This information on current cost and quality is currently being compiled and will be brought to this committee in the January committee cycle to put any savings required from individual services into context.
- 21 It is important to point out that any savings targets or funded spending pressures proposed by the Resources Committee will be on an individual

service basis, as this, rather than whole committee budgets, has been the basis of the prioritisation approach adopted. This means that, unlike previous years, committees will not have flexibility across services in how they make budget reductions, or how they spend additional resources.

- 22 A potential key implication of the prioritisation process is the effect on staff morale and motivation for those whose services are not shown as a High priority. Concern over this has prompted the Chief Executive and the Executive Management Team to hold a briefing for staff across the Council, and to prepare a note for staff to receive detailed briefing from their Executive Manager. A summary of the briefing note is contained at Appendix 4. The key point being stressed to staff is that the placing of their service into the Medium or Low categories, rather than the high category, is no reflection on their individual abilities, commitment or efforts, but is a reflection of the Council's policy priorities and, at a time of limited resources, necessary financial strategy.

RECOMMENDED that this Committee

- 1 Approves and comments as appropriate on the revised 2004/05 budget and draft 2005/06 budget, and submits them to the Resources Committee
- 2 Approves and comments as appropriate to the Resources Committee on the elements of the draft Service Plans relating to this Committee's activities, and in particular the new spending pressures identified and to put those spending pressures into priority order to Resources Committee
- 3 Notes the prioritisation analysis contained in Appendix 3 and submits any comments on this to the Resources Committee

Background Papers: Base Budget Working Papers, Service Plan notes of guidance, Prioritisation meetings files, reports to Resources Committee on 24 June and 23 September 2004

Committee: Community and Leisure
Date: 2 November 2004
Agenda Item No: 12
Title: Draft Capital Programme 2005-06
Author: Nick Harris (01799) 510313

Summary

- 1 In previous years it has been the practice to report the capital programme and funding details only to the Resources Committee. This year, individual Policy Committees have the opportunity to comment on and propose changes to the draft programme.
- 2 This approach is consistent with resolution of the Resources Committee at its meeting on 23 September 2004 that a review of the Capital Programme takes place and a report be taken to all relevant Committees in the November cycle of meetings.

Capital Strategy

- 3 Members will be aware that the Council is required to prepare a Capital Strategy setting out the framework within which the use of capital resources – both financial and physical assets – can be co-ordinated and allocated in accordance with the Council's key objectives. Council approved the Strategy for submission to the Government Office for the East of England (GO-East) in July 2003. GO-East assessed the Strategy as "Good" meaning that the Council will not have to submit a Strategy in the future.

Prioritisation

- 4 The Capital Strategy requires all capital bids to be evaluated by a Capital Strategy Officer Group. Proposed capital schemes and projects are assessed by the Group against
 - The Council's key objectives and priorities.
 - Service Plans and Best Value Reviews.
 - The Prudential Code for Capital Finance.
 - Public Consultation Responses.

The Group are also required to consider:

- Whether the scheme is affordable.
- Whether the capital investment is prudent.
- Whether the project outcome is sustainable.

- 5 The prioritisation described above has not yet been applied to the bids identified in this report but it is considered that seeking input from Members at a relatively early stage will inform the process and help to minimise late submissions.

Asset Management Plan

- 6 Items relating to the acquisition of or improvement to Council buildings and other facilities are also included in the Asset Management Plan, a preliminary draft of which has been submitted to Go-East for initial appraisal.

Proposed Draft Programme

- 7 The detailed figures are attached at Appendix CP1.

Cinema Provision at Council Offices

At its meeting on 24 June the Resources considered a report by the Performance Manager informing Members that as an alternative to providing a facility in the Council Offices, the Council could consider contributing to the cost of a similar facility being considered by Saffron Walden High School. Any decision would be subject to a feasibility report that will be presented to the Resources Committee on 18 November. Pending the publication and consideration of this report the £80,000 of funding has been carried forward to 2005-06.

Community Project Grants

At its meeting on 7 September this Committee approved the setting aside of ring fenced additional capital resources of £12,000 per annum for three years to enable Uttlesford Community Travel to acquire new vehicles.

Takeley Day Centre – Upgrade Heating

The current system is part of a small district heating scheme that does not provide sufficient flexibility.

CCTV System – Essential Upgrade

As required by the Quality of Life Corporate Plan a review of the CCTV system is being undertaken. The consultants engaged to undertake the review have produced their interim findings and are now working on their final report for presentation to this Committee in January 2005. Their interim findings suggest that investment of £125,000 is required.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee considers its 2005-06 draft capital programme as set out in this report and indicates any further schemes and projects that it wishes the Capital Strategy Officer Group to evaluate.

Background Papers: Service Plans, Draft Asset Management Plan