

Thaxted Youth Club

Operations Committee, item 9

Committee: Operations Committee

Agenda Item

Date: 29 June 2006

9

Title: Thaxted Youth Club – Request for a Contribution towards New Building

Author: Gaynor Bradley

Item for decision

Summary

Thaxted Youth Club has embarked on a project to build a new Youth Centre at an approximate cost of £194,000. The Club's Treasurer has written to the District Council to request a contribution towards this development. A report was submitted to the June meeting of the Community Committee and Members recommended that a contribution should be made to this project.

Recommendations

That this Committee accepts the Community Committee's recommendation and determines the level of contribution to be made from capital resources towards a shortfall of £60,000 to Thaxted Youth Club to enable this project to proceed.

Background Papers

Letter from Thaxted Parish Council dated 2 May 2006.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	N/A
Community Safety	Provision of a Youth Club contributes towards young people's safety
Equalities	Provides a service for all local young people where access to other services is very limited
Finance	Any proposed contribution towards funding will need to be considered by both the Operations Committee and Full Council.
Human Rights	N/A
Legal implications	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	Thaxted
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

Thaxted Youth Club

Operations Committee, item 9

- 1 Thaxted Youth Club is a registered charity and currently occupies a 19th century building on Broxted Road, it was the old National School, and is owned by the Club. The location of the building has advantages in that it is situated away from neighbours so there are no noise nuisance issues and there is sufficient parking for parents to drop off and collect young people. However, the building is in very poor condition and considered to be beyond economic repair. Therefore, the decision has been taken to demolish the existing building and construct a new one as there are no suitable alternative premises available in Thaxted. A planning application has been submitted to the District Council and this has recently been approved. The Council has received a request for funding at this particular time because the Club would like to be in a position to move forward as quickly as possible on this project.
- 2 The existing Youth Club provides activities for 25 to 35 young people from Thaxted and surrounding parishes on three evenings per week. It has been running for many years and provides a much needed provision for local young people. In the absence of developing a new building the Club would have to close within the next two years. There are no other indoor facilities provided for young people in Thaxted and the Club is run completely by volunteers. Given that Essex County Council has recently reduced the number of directly managed youth clubs in the district to three clubs it is obviously very beneficial for communities to have such facilities run by experienced and committed volunteers. (Indeed the main volunteer has previously received a Community Achievement Award for services to young people.)
- 3 As previously mentioned the overall cost of the project is £194,000. An extensive fundraising campaign has resulted in a total of £134,000 raised to date. Other funding sources are also being identified and applications are being made. However, there is currently a £60,000 shortfall for this project.
- 4 Appendix 1 contains the breakdown of the building costs and Appendix 2 contains details of funds raised to date.
- 5 It should be noted that the report to Community Committee contained a different total figure (it was £150,000) but the scheme has been revised to enhance the development since that report was written. The Club receives regular financial support from the Parish Council and local charities which together with fundraising activities by volunteers keeps the Club on a sound financial footing.
- 6 The District Council has been asked to contribute towards the cost of this project for the benefit of young people in Thaxted and the surrounding areas.
- 7 The Capital Programme agreed by the Council in February 2006 contains no provision for a contribution to this scheme. Therefore, the Operations Committee will need to consider the proposal in the light of the Council's overall capital resource position and make an appropriate recommendation to the meeting of the Full Council on 18th July.

Risk Analysis

Thaxted Youth Club

Operations Committee, item 9

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That insufficient funding will be raised to pay for the new building	low	high	An extensive fundraising campaign has commenced and two thirds of the estimated cost of the project has already been raised.
That the planning application will be refused.	unknown	high	Unknown
That funding this project might set a precedent regarding possible other future applications	high	high	If funding is awarded to this project it might be possible to stipulate that it is considered to be a one off contribution because of the nature and value of this particular project.