



PORTFOLIO: LEISURE SERVICES

CABINET – 6 MARCH 2002

**DEVELOPERS CONTRIBUTIONS:
PLAY PROVISION AT FOREST FRONT, HYTHE**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This request for funds from Hythe and Dibden Parish Council relates to the development of a new play area at Forest Front in Hythe. Attempts have been made to secure further funding from the Lottery but this has not been successful. A funding plan has been agreed with the Parish Council which contains a bid for the use of developers' contributions.
- 1.2 The proposals evolved initially as a response to problems identified with the use of a former play area in Ash Close. Its use had created problems for neighbours as a result of antisocial behaviour. The land's long-term use as a play area was not seen as sustainable.
- 1.3 Following widespread community consultation and the involvement of local agencies, a package of proposals has been developed. These involve the development of the land at Ash Close for much needed affordable housing, and the provision of new play facilities close by at Forest Front. These new play facilities will include separate skatepark and toddlers play areas. With these facilities, the new scheme will add considerable play value over and above what was previously present.
- 1.4 The proposals for the development of Ash Close for affordable housing and those for the play area have both received planning permission. The former is subject to Agreements being in place to ensure all proceeds from the transfer of the land to a housing association are used for improving play facilities on the Netley View Estate. Cabinet have previously considered the detail of this issue (Report I 5th December 2001).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 With the Lottery bid being unsuccessful, there is a need to secure the future of the scheme promptly. This will allow the Housing Corporation funding for the dwellings to be applied in this financial year.
- 2.2 The need to draw upon existing developers contributions to assist in funding this scheme does have implications for other potential schemes for recreational facilities elsewhere in the Parish. This has been discussed by

the Parish Council and support for the Forest Front scheme has been confirmed.

3. ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 This is a complex project involving two sites, affordable housing and a new provision. The outcome is a scheme that will add tremendously to the opportunities for children and young people in this area of Hythe. It is also a scheme that has had the benefit of extensive community involvement in its creation. This is an exciting project in an area that requires provision. The extent of working with the local community has set a good example of practice.
- 3.2 As with all requests for the allocation of developers' contributions, the assessments are made against the agreed criteria:

The Director of Environment Services comments are:-

- (a) Is the proposed scheme directly related to the development which it proposes to serve?
- Yes – the scheme will serve new housing developments in the Parish of Hythe and Dibden.
- (b) Does the need for the scheme arise from the development and is it relevant to it?
- Play facilities for young people will serve the whole community
- (c) Does the scheme conform to the adopted Local Plan and Development Briefs for the areas and fall within the terms of the S106 Agreement?
- Yes

The Director of Community Services comments are:-

- (a) Can the scheme be shown to meet the needs of the people in the development area?
- Yes, this scheme has been developed in partnership with the local community. It will meet needs in the community that are not provided for at the moment.
- (b) Does the scheme complement or improve existing or planned facilities in the catchment?
- Yes, there is nothing like it locally and it will provide new opportunities.
- (c) Can the request be accommodated within the funds available, given the known and anticipated requirements within the area for which contributions are held?

Yes, there will be implications for the timings of some other schemes but there are funds retained for other schemes and it is still within the initial allocation within the schedule.

- (d) Is the proportion of funding from contributions reasonable, given the nature of the scheme?

Yes, the lack of success in securing a Lottery award means that there is a need for the funding.

- (e) Is there financial need on behalf of the promoter of the scheme?

Yes, see item d) above.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The capital receipt does not fund the scheme and given the lack of success with a lottery bid, further sources are needed. The Parish Council have made provision for an increase in precept to contribute to implementing the project but it is a significant scheme and additional resources are needed.
- 4.2 The Council has been a prime mover in helping the scheme to be realised. In financial terms this comprises a £10,000 capital receipt contribution from the Holly Close SHG development (included in the £195,000 receipt noted below) and the transfer of the access land for the current SHG scheme at nil contribution. Provision was made through a clawback clause concerning the free land, should capital contributions remove the need for a precept increase. However there is a need for the precept increase and the clause will not need to be enacted.
- 4.3 The total capital cost of achieving this scheme is £275,000. This comprises a cost of layout of £172,000 and a fund for future maintenance of £103,000 made up of an element of the capital receipt and an increase in the Parish precept. The allocation of developers' contributions will be towards the capital costs.

COSTS	£	
Play area	55,000	
Skatepark	107,000	
External works	10,000	
Provision for maintenance	103,000	
TOTAL COST		£ 275,000
FUNDING	£	
Capital receipt	195,000	
Precept	5,000	
Developers contributions	75,000	
TOTAL FUNDING		£275,000

- 4.4 As is apparent from the above, the requested allocation of developers contributions is £75,000. The majority of the funding for this scheme therefore, is external to NFDC sources.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Planning Authority has considered the implications of siting the project at Forest Front and planning permission has been given. As managers of the whole site, the Parish Council are aware of the potential wider impacts and will be working on site to address any issues. The re-location of the play area will have positive benefits for the local environment of a number of residents.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There were continuing problems with respect to crime and disorder problems on the estate, primarily from children and youths. The redevelopment, and consequent removal, of the problematic play area at Ash Close and the creation of an improved facility at Forest Front should have a positive impact. Hampshire Constabulary and other agencies support the package of proposals. The local planning authority also had regard to Crime and Disorder issues in reaching a decision.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Portfolio Holder is supportive of the scheme and the recommendation. Ward members have been party to the close consultation with local people on the scheme and the Parish Council are the project managers and future operators of the scheme. There is extensive local support for the proposals

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the sum of £75,000 be allocated from developers' contributions to enable the implementation of a new play area and skatepark at Forest Front, Hythe.

For further Information contact:

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Background Papers:

Published reports

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