

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SPECIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 23 FEBRUARY 2005

QUALITY OF LIFE FUNDING

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek committee approval for the allocation of Quality of Life funding.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 8th February it was agreed to allocate Neighbourhood Services Department £534,000 for 2005/06 from the Council's total allocation of £1,634,000. The provisional allocations for 2006/07 and 2007/08 are £382,000 and £381,000 respectively.

It is now a matter for this committee to consider how this funding should be distributed across the various services provided by the department having regard to the criteria specified by the Scottish Executive, namely improving opportunities for children and young people and improving the local environment. It is therefore suggested that for the financial year 2005/06, the funding be distributed as follows:-

Library Materials - £80,000

It is suggested that £80,000 of the funding be allocated to the Library Service for the purchase of materials specifically for young people and to encourage the use of libraries by young people.

Cumnock Swimming Pool - £90,000

In 2004/05, £90,000 was allocated for support to the operation and management of the new swimming pool at Cumnock. It is recommended that this be continued for 2005/06 and this is the subject of a separate report at Agenda Item 3 on this Agenda.

Environmental Issues - £155,000

Quality of Life funding provides a number of opportunities to address a range of environmental issues including the continued provision of a hit squad in the Cumnock area, removal of abandoned cars, graffiti removal and servicing of dog bins at the existing level.

Leisure Development - £40,000

This funding would be used to support the very positive work undertaken in partnership with various sporting bodies to provide Community Development Officers.

Improving Parks and Open Spaces - £100,000

It is recognised that parks and open spaces contribute significantly to the environment and therefore it is suggested that the same level of funding as has been allocated in previous years be continued for increased levels of maintenance.

Community Safety - £50,000

Allocation of £50,000 from Quality of Life funding could be used to support a range of community safety projects such as the grass fires initiative, Danger Detectives and the community firework display in Kilmarnock. It is proposed to maximise external funding for community safety projects and therefore an element of Quality of Life funding will be used as match funding.

Improvement of Football Pitches, Pavilions etc. - £19,000

In the past, funding from Quality of Life has been used to improve the quality of football pitches and associated facilities. It is suggested that this be continued.

- 2.2 The proposed distribution which has been outlined above reflects local priorities and will greatly assist in the implementation of the Community Plan as well as having significant community benefit.
- 2.3 The distribution of the allocation for 2006/07 and 2007/08 will be the subject of a report to this committee at a future date. This will allow a degree of flexibility when assessing emerging priorities and evaluating existing projects.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The report sets out proposals for the distribution across services of £534,000 of Quality of Life funding which has been allocated to the department.

4. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Expenditure will be in accordance with relevant legislation and Council procedures.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Quality of Life funding will assist in the implementation of a number of strands of the Community Plan.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The allocation of £534,000 from Quality of Life funding is welcomed. Distribution across a range of services will provide significant benefits to individuals and wider communities. The proposals outlined above meet the Scottish Executive criteria for this fund.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (i) Consider and, if acceptable, approve the proposals contained in this report on the distribution of the Quality of Life allocation for 2005/06;
 - (ii) Request the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to submit a report to a future meeting on the distribution of the funding for 2006/07 and 2007/08; and
 - (iii) Otherwise note this report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JS

10th February 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report by Executive Head of Finance to Policy and Resources Committee on 8th February 2005.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers above should telephone 01563 576023 and ask to speak to William Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services.

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