

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 28 MAY 2003

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE – QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVE

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of an additional allocation of funding under the Scottish Executive Quality of Life Initiative and to request the Committee to consider and approve, if acceptable, the arrangements to implement the proposals.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 31 January 2003 it was agreed to make a submission to the Scottish Executive outlining a package of proposals which met the criteria for Quality of Life funding. This was based on a provisional total allocation of £1.169 million.
- 2.2 Approval has now been granted and the Community Services Department have been identified as the lead department for a number of projects. Funding for these projects amounts to £340,000 in the current financial year, £410,000 in 2004/2005, and £504,000 in 2005/2006.
- 2.3 In addition to the above, the Community Services Department will have an input into projects being implemented by other departments. Similarly, other departments will have an input into the projects led by the Community Services Department.

3. DISCUSSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 The projects led by Community Services and the available funding can be summarised as follows:-

1. *Promote access to arts, culture and heritage and uptake of improved library provision by young people*

Funding	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
	£20,000	£50,000	£50,000

It is proposed to develop more user friendly facilities for young people in the Dick Institute, Kilmarnock and in other libraries where space and resources are identified. It is hoped to link this funding

to external funding bids to maximise funding available. Appropriate consultation will take place with Education colleagues.

2. Upgrade sports fields, pavilions and halls and encourage increased usage by young people

Funding	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
	£80,000	£100,000	£104,000

Drainage improvement and refurbishment programmes commenced in 2002/03, targeting those facilities with the highest potential demand using a previous allocation of funding from the Scottish Executive. The funding will also be able to provide potential support for sport and activity programmes if required.

Appropriate consultation will take place with colleagues in Education and Homes and Technical Services in respect of their interest.

3. Upgrading of playpark provision for children and teenagers

Funding	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
	£50,000	£50,000	£70,000

This will add to the considerable investment that the Council is already making towards the provision of safe play areas and will form part of the already agreed programme.

4. Improving parks and open spaces

Funding	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
	£50,000	£50,000	£100,000

As Members will already be aware, considerable improvement works have already been undertaken in major parks and this funding will be utilised to carry out further refurbishment of paths, fences and horticultural features. Discussions are ongoing regarding the possibility of linking this funding to a Lottery bid to obtain maximum benefit.

5. Environmental Hit Squads – extension beyond pathfinder areas

Funding	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000

This project will build on the expertise gleaned from the successful deployment of additional staff from Community Services in the pathfinder areas of Shortlees and North West Kilmarnock. The approach taken is for a multi-disciplinary squad comprising operatives from the Cleansing and grounds Maintenance DSOs. The squad identifies areas of ground (either ground to which the public have access or ground owned by the Council) and deals with any issues of neglect/untidiness etc. remedial work includes removal of all rubbish, fly tipping and abandoned structures: cutting and ongoing maintenance. This additional service (which will compliment existing services) will secure and sustain environmental improvements which in turn will contribute to an improved Quality of Life. It is proposed that the squads will operate primarily in Lugar/Logan, Muirkirk and the Doon Valley. If additional capacity arises it will be allocated accordingly on the basis of priority.

6. *Anti-graffiti and anti-litter initiatives including dog fouling and abandoned cars*

Funding	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
	£40,000	£60,000	£80,000

This funding will allow the Council to address some high profile issues which are high on the public agenda. It is envisaged that the initiative will be progressed through a combination of provision of physical resources, education and enforcement.

Appropriate consultation will take place with colleagues in other departments to maximise benefits by complementing existing service provision.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Implementation of this report will result in additional expenditure of £340,000 in 2003/04, £410,000 in 2004/05, and £504,000 in 2005/06 with all funding coming from this additional allocation.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All work will be carried out in accordance with appropriate legislation and will assist in meeting Council's statutory responsibilities.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The work being undertaken as a result of this additional funding is in line with the Council's Environmental and Leisure Strategies and policies.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The additional funding is most welcome and will assist in making a significant contribution towards the quality of life of residents in East Ayrshire. The work will build upon and complement many existing services provided by the Council.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) consider and approve if acceptable the proposals contained within this report; and
- (ii) otherwise note the terms of this report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

WS/JS

13th May 2003

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Policy and Resources Committee – 13 February 2003

Any person wishing to inspect the background paper above should telephone 01563 576023 and ask for William Stafford, Director of Community Services.

Implementation Officer – william.stafford@east-ayrshire.gov.uk