

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 12 NOVEMBER 2003

BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICE FUND : TEENAGE RECREATION AREAS

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress being made with the Better Neighbourhood Services funded Teenage Recreation Areas.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Teenage Recreation Project has been funded through the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF) and the outline project approved at the Emergency Powers Committee of 22 November 2001.
- 2.2 The project concept is to provide informal and casual 'kick about areas' for young people in the form of a multi purpose sports court.
- 2.3 Members will recall that at the Community Services Committee of 2 April 2003 it was agreed that in North West Kilmarnock, the location of the Recreation Area would be at Meiklewood Road, Onthank. This facility is almost complete with some minor landscaping and lighting to be provided shortly to complete the facility. Initial informal feedback from young people has been very positive.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Members will also recall that at the Community Services Committee of 2nd April, that the location of the Teenage Area in Shortlees / Riccarton be agreed with the local Councillor. After much consideration and consultation including the Police, it is viewed that the only suitable location for such a facility is on the former red ash football pitch next to Shortlees Primary School. The Head Teacher of Shortlees Primary School has also indicated that the school would make extensive use of the facility during term time.
- 3.2 There have, however, been some concerns from local residents living near the primary school that the proposed location of the area may increase the number of incidents of anti social behaviour within the area.
- 3.3 The Local Elected Member, Provost Darnbrough, Council Officers and the Police and have met twice with a number of local residents to discuss the issues and have also taken some of the residents to Paisley to look at similar facilities.

- 3.4 It is the view of the Local Elected Member, Provost Jane Darnbrough, after consultation with a number of local residents, that the project should proceed at Shortlees Primary School on the basis that the teenage area will be locked at night and options for this are being explored. Also a higher perimeter fence surrounding the project is now to be installed.
- 3.5 If a satisfactory arrangement to lock and unlock the facility can be found, it is hoped to proceed with the project on Shortlees within the next two months, subject to resources for this work being identified.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A total of £100,000 has been allocated to the projects from the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Department has been advised that planning permission will not be required; however it is likely that a building warrant would require to be issued.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Provision of new sports facilities forms part of the Council's Leisure Strategy and also the Community Plan.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The site adjacent to Shortlees Primary School is the best option for the new facility; no satisfactory alternatives have been identified. With appropriate security arrangements in place the Teenage Recreation Area will be a valuable asset to both the school and the community.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

WS/JAG/KH

28th October 2003

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

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