

Programme Review

Programme Title	New Town Capital Grant Programme
Manager	Sally Roden
Approved Timescale	1 April 2008 to 31 March 2011
Scrutiny Committee	Community Services
Committee Date	July 1 st 2010

Recommendation
<p>The Executive Councillor is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Note the progress and achievements to date of the New Town Capital Grant Programme.2 Include a bid of £125,000 to be considered in the Medium Term Strategy process to extend the programme to 2013 in accordance with the remit.

1 Programme Remit

To provide funding and grant aid for capital projects that will improve community provision, services and development for residents living in the New Town area of the city.

2 Review of Achievement of Project Objectives

The Programme is designed to enable residents who live in the New Town area of the city and in particular the Accordia development to develop proposals and make bids for resources to fund improvements to community life and through their involvement generate a strong sense of community identity and pride. This involves community consultation and appraisal of potential projects by a Forum of Councillors, agencies, voluntary organisations and residents.

Ideas have been identified over the past 18 months and are now mostly at the feasibility stage. The Forum will prioritise the bids in consultation with officers. One project, not requiring a detailed feasibility study, has been funded.

The programme timetable has been affected by the need to ensure that new residents on the Accordia development have been consulted as they move in.

3 Assessment of project costs and resources

Period	2008/09 to 2010/11
Programme Budget	£130,000
Actual Expenditure to 2009/10	£5,000
Expenditure Planned for 2010/11	£125,000
Over/Under spend at 2009/10	£125,000

Programme funded by:	
General Reserves	
Repair & Renewal Funds	
S106	£130,000
Other	
Total	£130,000

Project	Budgeted costs £000	Actual cost £000	Over / under spend £000
Individual projects within the programme:			
Equipment Centre at St Paul's		£5,000	
Insert rows as required			
Total actual cost to 2009/10		£5,000	
Individual projects to be assessed:			
Community Notice Boards	£4,500		
Seating/benches	£5,500		

Project	Budgeted costs £000	Actual cost £000	Over / under spend £000
Outdoor play and exercise equipment	£84,500		
Community room	£30,000		
Equipment Bowls club	£500		
Total cost of planned projects to 2010/12	£125,000		
Total Programme	£130,000		

4 Revenue Costs of the Programme

One of the criteria of the Programme is that there should be no additional revenue costs to the Council. This element has been built into the feasibility test for each project.

4 Value for Money

The programme will achieve value for money by:

- Volunteers rather than officers are carrying out most of the tasks associated with the management of the programme – from identifying need, developing solutions and testing the feasibility of ideas.
- As these projects are being generated by the community it can be expected that there will be strong sense of ownership of the assets generated reducing the incidence and costs arising from vandalism etc.
- There should be high levels of satisfaction with the end products reducing the potential for dissatisfaction and complaints to which officers would be required to respond.

- Some of the ideas require community investment through in kind contributions and/or additional external investment – adding value to the resources available from the Council.

5 Review of lessons learnt

Lessons Learnt

- Capital projects involving community participation and outcomes related to wider community benefits that affect the way people relate to their neighbourhoods, take time. This makes timetabling development and the programme difficult.
- By being involved in projects like this individuals and community groups gain new skills and confidence that stay with them and can contribute to future initiatives.
- Trying to provide additional facilities, post development, can be difficult especially in areas with high-density housing and high land values.
- Even apparently straightforward tasks such as locating a community notice board can be complex and time consuming.
- Ideally new developments should have areas where residents can develop the assets that reflect the needs of the community as it grows and matures. However it is difficult to see how this might be possible in an area where land values are high.

6 Conclusion

There is significant value, as described in sections 4 and 5, in involving residents in identifying, planning and implementing programmes that make improvements to the quality of community life and neighbourhoods. However, flexibility is needed in delivering the programme to ensure that the physical, environmental and social benefits are maximised and to ensure that resources are managed effectively.