

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Director of Environment

TO: East Area Committee

28/11/2013

WARDS: Abbey, Coleridge, Petersfield, Romsey

**DEVOLVED DECISION-MAKING AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS:
SECOND ROUND PRIORITY-SETTING FOR EAST AREA**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This priority-setting report invites the Area Committee to identify its priorities for the second round of developer contributions devolved decision-making. These will be taken forward once the first round priorities have been completed. A reminder of the council's approach to devolved decision-making can be found in Section 3.
- 1.2 This report follows the discussion at the Area Committee meeting on 12 September 2013 when nine (effectively ten) local project options were short-listed, alongside the allocation of supplementary funding from developer contributions for improved seating and paving (with public art) at the Mill Road end of Cavendish Road.
- 1.3 The task now is to choose four of these short-listed options (see Table 2 on page 3) as the Area Committee's second round priorities. An assessment of each of the options can be found in Section 4.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

To identify four short-listed options that the Area Committee would wish to prioritise from devolved developer contributions funding in the second round, subject to project appraisal.

3. CONTEXT

- 3.1 The background to the Council's approach to developer contributions devolved decision-making was summarised in Appendix A of the report to the Area Committee on 12 September 2013. Further details can also be found on the Council's Developer Contributions web page (www.cambridge.gov.uk/s106). Particular emphasis has been given to make clear that projects can only be taken forward where:

- a. there is sufficient developer contributions funding already available in the relevant contribution type;
 - b. there is sufficient officer capacity to take forward the development, appraisal, procurement and delivery of projects; and
 - c. it is agreed as a priority by the Area Committee.
- 3.2 The two-stage devolved decision-making approach of short-listing and priority-setting applies to all four area committees and was mapped out in a report to the Environment Scrutiny Committee last June. The short-listing enables officers to focus in on a smaller number of proposals without distracting from the delivery of existing priority projects. It also helps to make sure that Members have sufficient information to make decisions about the use of significant amounts of devolved developer contributions.
- 3.3 Last September's East Area short-listing report highlighted that:
- a. each area committee has been asked to set as many second round priorities as it has wards and, if applicable, an additional grant-funded priority (to be delivered by a local community group) – this point is followed up in paragraphs 4.4 and 5.2;
 - b. officers would recommend that devolved project priorities draw on a range of different contribution types to help make sure that contributions with expiry date conditions can be used on time;
 - c. at the same time, area committees may wish to defer using up all the funding available in particular contribution types in order to leave some for future priority-setting rounds or allow more to accrue so that more larger projects can be undertaken in future.
- 3.4 The analysis of devolved developer contributions available to the East Area has been updated in Table 1 below. This takes account of allocations to the Mill Road/Cavendish Road project agreed in September 2013 and further developer contributions received and assigned to the Area fund by mid-November 2013.

Table 1: Devolved developer contributions available

Contribution type	£k	Contribution type	£k
Community facilities	£275k	Outdoor sport	£150k
Informal open space	£150k	Indoor sport	£75k
Play provision	£50k	Public art	£75k
<i>Rounded down to nearest £25k</i>		Public realm	£75k

3.5 Since the last analysis, produced in late August 2013, devolved funding available to East Area for community facilities and public art has increased (moving into the next £25k bracket). At the same time, the funding available for play provision for children & teenagers has not changed: this will impact on the Area Committee's priority-setting choices for play area improvements (see paragraph 4.5c).

4. CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SHORT-LISTED OPTIONS

4.1 This table shows the proposals short-listed in September 2013. At this stage, the proposals for a trim trail and play improvements at Howard Road/Dudley Road are presented separately.

Table 2: East Area short-list		Category	Ward
A.	Develop East Barnwell Community Centre: phase 1	Community facilities	Abbey
B.	Improve meeting space/access at St Thomas' Hall, Ancaster Way	Community facilities	Coleridge
C.	Extend Ross Street Community Centre	Community facilities	Romsey
D.	Open garden at St Martin's Church for community use	Informal OS	Coleridge
E.	Improve Coldhams Lane play facilities for older children/teenagers	Informal OS	Romsey
F1	Howard Road/Dudley Road: new trim trail or outdoor gym equipment	Informal OS/ Outdoor sport	Abbey
F2	Howard Road/Dudley Road: improve play area	Play provision /Informal OS	Abbey
G.	Improve Ditton Fields play area for toddlers/pre-schoolers	Play provision /Informal OS	Abbey
H.	[i] Improve Bath House play area & [ii] landscaping at the front	Play provision /Informal OS	Petersfield
I.	Create Romsey 'town square' by Mill Road Co-op/St Philip's Church	Public realm	Romsey

'Informal OS' stands for the informal open spaces contribution type.

Officers have considered whether a trim trail might also be proposed at Coldham's Lane play area, but have discounted this as there would not be sufficient space on the site.

4.2 To whittle the options down to four, the first step is to rule out those proposals which are ***not yet ready to be considered***.

a. There is still uncertainty over **Option A** in terms of:

- the level of funding for the East Barnwell Community Centre proposals from the county council and what this means for the proposed project specification and its viability; and
- whether/how much developer contributions from the Wing development (being negotiated by South Cambridgeshire District Council) might be secured for this community centre.

See Appendix A for more details about the county council's proposals. Until the situation becomes clearer, it would be premature for the Area Committee to prioritise Option A. That said, there are still likely to be a significant amounts of devolved community facilities contributions available following this second round, which would allow the Area Committee to consider the option afresh should these circumstances change.

b. St Martin's & St Thomas's churches (working together) have themselves ruled out **Options B** and **D**, for the time being at least.

- While there is agreement in principle to the concept of further development to St. Thomas's hall for increased community use, the church has highlighted a number of obstacles relating to: funding; car parking (if the current hall car park is used to increase building space); and the desire of St Martin's to complete work there prior to commencing work at St Thomas's.
- Whilst St Martin's is still exploring ways to increase community use of the church garden, this needs to be placed in the context of discussions with the neighbouring school (Coleridge Community College) about developing use of its sport hall (next to the church garden). Options are being considered for making the garden available for use by the school and by community groups using the sports hall and church community facilities.

c. Officers are still looking into the suggestion for improved landscaping in front of the Bath House (part [ii] of Option H) and whether this, in fact, relates to public realm or highways issues. Separately, members of the Cambridge Disability Panel have highlighted concerns about the pavement on Gwydir Street (as reported to the Environment Scrutiny Committee in October 2013) and officers have passed this on to County Council colleagues.

4.3 Table 3 (pages 5-6) considers the options for Ross Street community centre, play areas at Coldhams Lane, Howard Road/ Dudley Road, Ditton Fields & the Bath House and Romsey 'town square'.

Table 3: Summary of the East Area short-listed options

	WHAT THE PROJECT ENTAILS	BENEFITS / IMPACT	ISSUES TO CONSIDER
C.	Ross Street community centre: New foyer/toilets/kitchenette/cycle parking. Could cost £70k (or up to £150k with an additional side annexe). Subject to planning approval & possible funding agreement with county council, could be completed by end December '14.	Would help meet local demand for additional childcare provision and provide a larger/more flexible modern letting space, which would encourage more bookings, increase centre revenue & cost-effectiveness.	Would be delivered by council officers (not grant). Discussions on design options & likely costs are on-going with the council's architect & county council officers. We will need to report back to the committee once detailed options and costs are available.
E.	Improve Coldhams Lane play facilities for older children & teens: Officers suggest replacing the existing metal skateboard ramp with a more sophisticated and landscaped concrete min-skate park. Could cost £65k (informal open space contributions).	Would be popular with young people in East Area. In addition to Jesus Green, skate park improvements are being implemented at Nuns Way (North) & Cherry Hinton Rec (South). A concrete skate park would reduce noise for local residents.	If prioritised, there will need to be further local consultation. This could also seek local views about other possible project ideas at Coldhams Lane (eg, turning the mini-basketball court into a multi-use games area) for a future priority-setting round.
F.	Howard Road/Dudley Road play area	This equipment is free to use and in some instances replicates activities found in gyms & health suites. It promotes good health, increases mobility and physical activity.	Would need to consult on specific location. No planning permission would be required. The equipment selection & installation could be straightforward.
F1	Wooden trim trail and/or outdoor gym equipment (as at Ditton Fields and Nightingale Avenue). Could cost £30k (informal OS and/or outdoor sports).		
F2	Design/construct play area improvements for toddlers & children up to 6. Could cost £60k-£70k (play provision plus informal open space contributions for landscaping).		

	WHAT THE PROJECT ENTAILS	BENEFITS / IMPACT	ISSUES TO CONSIDER
G.	<i>Ditton Fields play area:</i> Design & construct improvements for toddlers & children up to 6 years old. Likely cost: around £60k-£70k (play provision, supplemented by informal open space contributions for landscaping).	Improved local play provision for local children and their carers. Would complement the existing play equipment for older children and the recently installed outdoor gym equipment.	This play area has been prone to vandalism: robust ranges of play equipment would be needed. Planning permission may be necessary for the provision of extra play equipment in a small space.
H.	<i>Bath House play area:</i> Install three new pieces of play equipment; lower wall to improve visibility; renew/ refurbish railings; create raised beds and a 'green' wall (planting). Have taken account of comments from Lifecraft about not including in the project the yard adjacent to the Bath House (accessible only by Lifecraft). Likely costs: £30k (play provision) plus £25k informal open space.	Improved local play provision for local children and their carers. Would open up the space for a gardening activity with Lifecraft (a self-help, user-led organisation for adults who have experience of mental health difficulties in their lives). Would benefit Petersfield, which has relatively low open space provision. There has been extensive work in preparing a design, which has been shared with ward councillors.	The space for the play area at the Bath House is small. There are other play areas in the vicinity (eg, the one recently refurbished at Flower Street). If this proposal were prioritised, we would need to consider what measures could be incorporated into the project to enable this space to be enjoyed as a play area (concerns have been raised about drinkers congregating at other play areas along Mill Road).
I.	<i>Create Romsey 'town square':</i> Design proposals include improved paving, high quality seating, more efficient cycling stands, better use of space and better rooting conditions for trees. Likely costs: around £60k of public realm contributions.	The 'refresh' consultation last summer, reported to the Area Committee in September 2013 highlighted enthusiastic support for this project, which would remove existing paving of poor quality/in need of repair (including tripping hazards).	The Co-operative Group has been approached for financial support, but is unable to provide assurances of any financial contribution at this time. Planning consent may be needed.

- 4.4 A devolved decision-making principle being applied across all four area committees is that each area committee has been asked to set as many second round priorities as it has wards and, if applicable, an additional grant-funded priority to be delivered by a community group.
- a. Given that Options A and B are not yet ready for consideration and Option C would need to be delivered by the council, the key point for the East Area is that the possibility of an additional grant-funded option does not apply.
 - b. However, it is also important to remind the Area Committee that, the report to the Area Committee on 12/9/13 report took the view that the Area Committee's allocation of top-up developer contributions funding for the Mill Road/Cavendish Road public realm project (including public art) would not be counted as one of the Area Committee's second round priorities. This is because the public realm project is already featured on the East Area's Environmental Improvement Programme.

This means that the East Area Committee is being invited to set four local project priorities at this stage.

- 4.5 In deliberating which short-listed options to prioritise in the second round, the Area Committee is asked to consider the following issues.
- a. The short-listed options available would enable the Area Committee to draw on a good range of developer contribution types, including community facilities and public realm.
 - b. Prioritising the Ross Street community centre (Option C) could still leave the Area Committee with around £125k-£200k of community facilities contributions for use on other options.
 - c. The most difficult choice for the Area Committee could be which play are improvement (from Options F2, G and H) to take forward given that there is only enough funding in the 'play provision for children and teenagers' type for one of these.
 - d. That said, Option E (for a concrete mini-skate park at Coldham's Lane play area) and Option F2 (for a trim trail at Howard Road/Dudley Road play area) using informal open space contributions do provide greater scope for improvements than there otherwise might be.
 - e. Consistent with the agreed approach to devolved decision-making and practice applied by other area committees, if the East Area Committee decided to prioritise both Options F1 and F2 for Howard Road/Dudley Road, this would be counted as a single priority project (one of the four available to East Area).

- f. Officers are mindful that the fact that Options B and D have been ruled out of consideration in this priority-setting round means that there are no short-listed options from Coleridge ward to consider. To put this in context, however, Appendix B lists recent/on-going S106 projects in the East Area: of these 17, eight are in Abbey ward, six in Coleridge ward, two in Petersfield ward and one in Romsey ward.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Following the setting of the Area Committee's second round priorities, and as first round priority projects are completed, council officers will take forward local consultations on the new priority projects, as appropriate, and develop project appraisals.
- 5.2 These appraisals will provide more details about the project proposals and will highlight any particular implications (including any revenue implications). Depending on the size of the projects, the appraisals will either be reported to the Area Committee for approval (if above £75k) or for sign-off by the Area Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokes (if below £75k).
- 5.3 As a consistent message to all area committees, if it becomes clear by next Spring that some projects within an area committee's second round priorities are straightforward to deliver and there may be scope for more second round priorities to be taken forward within available resources and staffing capacity, there may be an opportunity for a follow-up priority-setting report to that area committee next spring or summer.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 **Financial implications:** The importance of ensuring that local priorities are affordable within the devolved contributions available has already been stated in paragraph 3.1. This has been reinforced by the update on the availability of devolved funding in Table 1 and the commentary in paragraph 3.5. The role of the project appraisal process in identifying any revenue implications for the council arising from running and maintenance costs of prioritised projects has been mentioned in paragraph 5.2.
- 6.2 **Staffing implications:** The number of local priorities which each area committee is invited to identify principally reflects the need to make sure that the overall programme of local and strategic priorities across the council is manageable and achievable within the staffing capacity available. This has been addressed in paragraphs 3.1 & 4.4.

A delicate balance has to be maintained across all area committees to safeguard this fundamental principle which is crucial to delivering local and strategic S106-funded projects across Cambridge. At the same time, paragraph 5.3 reflects officers' commitment to enable area committees to take forward as many priority projects as possible.

- 6.3 Equality and environmental impact assessments and community safety implications will be addressed for prioritised projects as part of the project appraisal process.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Whilst this report is focussed on the second round of priority-setting (and the process that this involves), the reason why we are doing this is to help take forward and deliver S106 -funded projects that help to address the impact of development in Cambridge and make a difference to local communities. Please see the Developer Contributions web page (www.cambridge.gov.uk/s106), which provides an overview of the Council's overall approach. This features an up-to-date list of projects that have been and are being delivered as well as photos of some recently completed projects that have been funded by developer contributions.

8. APPENDIX

- A. Project proposals profile for East Barnwell Community Centre prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council
B. Recent S106 projects in East Area.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following papers on devolved decision-making and developer contributions were used in the preparation of this report.

- Report to East Area Committee – 12/9/13
- Report to Environment Scrutiny Committee, 11/6/13
- Report to Environment Scrutiny Committee, 8/10/13
- Report to Community Services Scrutiny Committee, 10/10/13

This and other background information can be found on the Council's Developer Contributions web page (www.cambridge.gov.uk/S106).

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report, please contact:

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Project proposals profile for East Barnwell Community Centre prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council

Background

- A1. East Barnwell Community Centre (EBCC), also incorporating SeeSaw preschool, is a charitable trust run by East Barnwell Community Association (EBCA). With the building's lease expired, an ideal opportunity has arisen to transform East Barnwell Community Centre into a thriving community hub.
- A2. A community hub in East Barnwell presents significant benefit, providing the opportunity for co-location of public services in an area of deprivation and need, whilst also rationalising space and generating cost savings. For example, by incorporating Barnwell Road library provision and relocating the South City locality team (Children and young people's services) from Malta Road, CCC could increase accessibility to key public services where they are most needed in this area of Cambridge.
- A3. This project provides the opportunity to address Cambridgeshire's early years' provision and its insufficiency in this particular locality, through the expansion and improvement of SeeSaw preschool's facilities within the community hub.
- A4. This project would also allow the dilapidating community centre buildings to be upgraded to provide more fit-for-purpose community space, to have greater appeal to the wider community.
- A5. The Abbey ward has been identified as a key area of deprivation in need of a community hub, with a high percentage of residents on long-term benefits, inter-generational unemployment and a low percentage of those in higher education. It is hoped that a new community hub would provide a base for many facilities and services that will hopefully catalyse regeneration of the immediate area, improve community cohesion, build capacity and enable local services to respond more effectively to local needs. The neighbouring area is subject to significant enhancement through Marshall's WING development which is expected to include up to 1300 new homes. An increase in demand for community resources is anticipated, which is a further driver for an enhanced community hub in Abbey.

- A10. Additional S106 funding would allow a larger footprint of new build to be provided, with increased community space to provide additional benefit and 'enhanced', upgraded facilities.
- A11. Dependent on the amount of Section 106 funds allocated to East Barnwell, the following enhancements could be achieved (subject to further community consultation about what is required from East Barnwell's community hub):
- a. Dedicated youth space - £250,000 would allow up to 100 square metre of additional community space to be built (based on Faithful & Gould estimate of total project cost of up to £2500 per square metre). This would allow East Barnwell Community Centre to meet the needs of a wider community including business users, plus meet anticipated increased demand as a result of planned residential development in the locality
 - b. Additional flexible community space – as above (potential for seminar / meeting rooms, larger community hall space etc)
 - c. A community café, incorporating professional catering facilities, to provide a much sought after central meeting point that Abbey currently lacks
 - d. Community garden
 - e. Enhanced fixtures and fittings, such as 'London Walls' to create truly flexible space, sprung floors, retractable seating, café area etc.

Conclusion

- A12. A significant contribution via Section 106 funding would facilitate an enhanced community hub to be delivered within East Barnwell. Initial consultation with the local community suggests that East Barnwell Community Centre is unable to meet the current demand for community space in the area. £250,000 of S106 funding would enable the provision of an extra room for community use, to meet the needs of a wider community. This additional space or facility upgrades would not otherwise be provided within the basic hub scheme.

Recent S106 projects in East Area

SECOND ROUND LOCAL PRIORITY		Ward	
Mill Road/Cavendish Road improvements	£38k	Romsey	
FIRST ROUND STRATEGIC PRIORITY			
Cherry Trees Centre (plus funding from East Area Grants Prog)	£44k £36k	Petersfield	✓
FIRST ROUND LOCAL PRIORITIES			
Stourbridge Common: increase biodiversity	£15k	Abbey	
Improve access to Abbey paddling pools from Coldham's Common	£10k	Abbey	
Install adult gym equipment next to Ditton Fields play area	£30k	Abbey	✓
St Thomas' Square play area improvement (for delivery in late 2014)	£50k	Coleridge	
EAST AREA GRANTS PROGRAMME (PR026)			
Stanesfield Road scout hut	£100k	Abbey	
Flamsteed Road scout hut	£100k-£125k	Coleridge	
St Martin's Church centre: phase 1	£100k-£125k	Coleridge	✓
St Martin's Church centre: phase 1b	£100k-£125k	Coleridge	
King's Church community centre	£100k	Petersfield	✓
PRE-DEVOLVED DECISION-MAKING			
Peverel Road play area (SC497)	£75k-£100k	Abbey	✓
Abbey Pool play area facilities (SC479)	£75k-£100k	Abbey	
Abbey paddling pool water play (SC476)	£175k-£200k	Abbey	
Coldham's Common LNR Extension (SC456)	£25k-£50k	Abbey	
Coleridge Recreation Ground (SC544)	£275k-£300k	Coleridge	
Coleridge paddling pool – water play project (SC477)	£125k-£150k	Coleridge	

✓ denotes projects already completed; others are on the way to completion