



To: Community Services Scrutiny Committee  
Report by: Head of Community Development  
Relevant scrutiny committee: 30.6.11 Community Services Scrutiny Committee  
Wards affected: Abbey, Coleridge, Petersfield, Romsey

## Community Facilities in East Area Key Decision

### 1. Executive summary

- 1.1 A new approach to allocating funding to enhance the provision of local community facilities was considered by East Area Committee in August 2010 and has been operating consensually between ward councillors and the Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health since this time.
- 1.2 This report asks the Community Services Scrutiny Committee to support this approach by waiving its right to pre-scrutinise decisions about the allocation of funding from developer contributions for enhancing local community facilities within East Area.

### 2. Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended:

- 2.1 To agree to waive its pre-scrutiny function for making decisions (including project appraisals, where required) about funding improvements to 'off-site' community facilities in the East Area that are funded from developer contributions.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Following discussions between the previous Head of Community Development, the Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health and the Chair and Spokes of East Area Committee, a report was presented to East Area Committee on 19 August 2010.

- 3.2 The purpose of the report was to enable members of the Area Committee to consider options for funding improvements to community facilities in the east of the city. Also, to recommend to the Executive Councillor for Community Development, Health and Community Safety a preferred approach to the scrutiny of potential projects and to the allocation of the funds from planning obligations on developers, also known as Section (s)106 contributions.
- 3.3 The policy of allocating developer contributions for the provision and improvement of community facilities has been in place for several years. The allocation of off-site contributions, by area, provides a response to the challenge of providing and enhancing facilities as close as possible to the location of the development. It also speeds up the decision making process and enhances the Council's approach to the localism agenda, enabling local residents to shape provision in their neighbourhood.
- 3.4 Off-site contributions are rarely large enough (individually or collectively) to fund new facilities. Consequently, investing in existing facilities or working in partnership with independent providers to create or enhance facilities has invariably proved to be the most effective strategy. Several partners have also used the availability of Council funding to attract other external funding.
- 3.5 The East Area report can be seen on the Council's website at this link: <http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/democracy/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=276&T=10> (see item 7)
- 3.6 Whilst ward members and the Executive Councillor agreed to the process whereby the area committee considered and recommended the allocation of funds to the Executive Councillor, this needs to be supported by Community Services Scrutiny Committee by means of waiving its right to pre-scrutinise decisions about the funding of local community facilities through developer contributions.

#### **4. Implications :-**

##### **(a) Financial**

Generally, investment in improvements to community facilities will be in the form of capital grants to the owners and managers of the facilities. They will be required to enter into a legal agreement with the Council to secure the grant. The agreements will set out the conditions with which the grant recipients will need to comply, including, in most

cases, a claw-back clause if for any reason the project is not delivered and/or the money is not used for the purposes for which it was given.

Most s106 agreements are time limited and contributions will be paid back to the developer if not spent within the agreed timescale. Two contributions for community facilities in the East Area will need to be repaid by 2013, if not used.

**(b) Staffing**

None

**(c) Equal Opportunities**

Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their projects will promote equality of opportunity and community cohesion

**(d) Environmental**

Environmental performance criteria are included in the assessment of projects.

**5. Background papers**

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Report to East Area Committee on 19 August 2010

**7. Inspection of papers**

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

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