

Wyndham Park Community Facilities

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1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek, approval for a grant of up to £400,000 towards the cost of providing community facilities for the new development at Wyndham Park, Yeovil.

2. Forward Plan

2.1 This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan/ with an anticipated Committee date of 6th November 2014.

3. Public Interest

3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a grant of £400,000 towards the cost of providing community facilities for the development at Wyndham Park. SSDC is working with the community, Parish Council, the Wyndham Park Partnership and other local partners to provide community facilities and in particular to secure a community hall on the estate. Unfortunately the deficit in the provision of community facilities in this area of the district has been greatly compounded by the development at Wyndham Park. The provision of a community hall has been identified as a top priority for the community during a number of consultation events and also supports SSDC's focus on Health and Communities.

3.2 The Lyde Road Key Site was allocated in the previous local plan. During the Local Plan Enquiry the Planning Inspector commented that the site had reasonable access to the town centre and that there was employment, education, retail and other facilities and services within reach by modes of transport other than the car. Consequently the allocation policy omitted the requirement for a doctors' surgery, community hall and shops etc.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That District Executive approve a grant of up to £400,000 towards the cost of providing community facilities for the development at Wyndham Park.

Subject to the following conditions:

- The grant will be held by SSDC until it is required in order to facilitate the provision of community facilities on Wyndham Park subject to a formal agreement and in accordance with SSDC's financial regulations.
- The grant will be made as a capital contribution towards the cost of the provision of community facilities at Wyndham park, on the understanding that Yeovil Without Parish Council take ownership of the hall on behalf of the community, if required, and

will be responsible for the management and maintenance of the facility once it is complete.

- Any land purchase would be subject to a District Valuer valuation together with clarity in terms of the likely planning issues relating to the selected site.
- The VAT implications of any future delivery model will be fully considered before implementation.
- That authority to agree the final conditions is delegated to the Leader, Portfolio holder and the Assistant Director – Communities.

5. Background

5.1 The Lyde Road Key Site was allocated in the previous local plan. During the Local Plan Enquiry the Planning Inspector commented that the site had reasonable access to the town centre and that there was employment, education, retail and other facilities and services within reach by modes of transport other than the car. Consequently the allocation policy omitted the requirement for a doctors' surgery, community hall and shops etc.

5.2 The development has since proceeded with minimal onsite community infrastructure; there are play areas and a MUGA, but no other facilities such as a pre-school facility or a community hall, both of which are much needed in the area. The existing deficit in the provision of community halls in this area of the town has now been compounded by the development at Wyndham Park (over 850 dwellings in total). This is now a major issue for residents and local stakeholders as the site is steadily built out.

5.3 There is an established Community Association on the estate and their top priority is to secure a community hall within their neighbourhood. Wider community consultation has further added weight to the pressing need for onsite provision.

5.4 The lack of community facilities on the site has also lead to the creation of the Wyndham Park Partnership. Members of this group include SSDC, the Parish Council, Church Leaders, Housing Associations, a representative from the Community Covenant, a representative from the developer and members of the community association. The terms of reference for the group are "A joint venture to deliver the necessary facilities that enable Wyndham Park to develop as a community, for the benefit of all its residents."

5.5 It is clear that there is strong support and evidenced need for the provision of facilities on this site. Community buildings play a crucial role in local communities as a focal point for community activity, local service point and a base for local groups. They help to build capacity within local communities, encouraging active citizenship and developing social cohesion. Community facilities help to make communities stronger and healthier.

5.6 It is recognised that for Wyndham Park to become a safe, cohesive and sustainable community in the long term, it is essential that as many of the social, (informal) educational, health and recreational needs of the community can be met from within the site itself.

5.7 Failure to provide the necessary facilities could lead to social isolation and migration away from the site in order to access community buildings. This will add unnecessarily to traffic movements in and out of the site, increase traffic congestion and pollution and create a 'community' that has little or no opportunity for residents to engage with one another.

6. Key objectives of the Grant

- To provide residents with a suitable and sustainable community facility in response to local consultation.
- To provide residents with a community owned (rather than SSDC owned) community facility.
- To reduce the overall deficit in community hall provision within Yeovil.

7. Anticipated Benefits

- 7.1 The provision of Community Facilities will benefit the residents of Wyndham Park by helping to tackle the health and social issues in one of the most deprived areas in the district. Wyndham Park has been build adjacent to Yeovil East which is the most deprived ward in South Somerset.
- 7.2 The project will help SSDC to achieve objectives detailed in the Sustainable Community Strategy, the strategy for Health and Wellbeing, the Corporate Plan and the LAA. It is also a key action within the Area South Development Plan for 2014/2015.
- 7.3 The project will benefit residents who are isolated (there is no bus service linking Wyndham Park to the town) and provide opportunities for residents to get together for parent and toddler groups, fitness classes (improving health), youth clubs and other important community activities.

8. Options for provision

- 8.1 There is a huge range of variables which impact on the type and location of the community facilities that can be provided within this site. These are exceptional circumstances, but the allocation of this grant will greatly aid the negotiations that are currently taking place by providing some certainty regarding immediately available resources.
- 8.2 The build costs of the Community hall will require contributions from different sources including S106 contributions from existing and future developments in the area together with grants from other organisations, for example the Community Covenant. However, the biggest constraint on the project has been the lack of available land and this is the most important factor at this stage in the project and is likely to be where SSDC's capital contribution will be utilised.
- 8.3 An immediate opportunity has presented itself with the submission of a planning application for the Primrose Lane development for the land adjacent to Wyndham Park. This application includes space for a 7 class school. If approved this would lead to the provision of a 7 class school on Wyndham Park and a separate 7 class school on the adjacent Primrose Lane development. Clearly, significant savings would be made if a 14 class school could be provided to serve both developments and this is the preferred option of the Education Authority (SCC). However, bringing the two school sites together to provide a single larger school requires careful negotiations with SSDC, SCC and the respective developers. If these negotiations are successful it is envisaged that the single large school will be located on the Primrose Lane site to serve both developments. This would be phased to deliver a 7 class facility initially to open in September 2016. This could potentially release the existing, much smaller, school site

located within the Wyndham Park estate for the development of a Community Hall to serve both the Wyndham and Primrose Lane communities.

8.4 Alternatively, if agreement cannot be reached or the application for the Primrose Lane development is not successful, then the option of a dual use school on the Wyndham Park school site would become the most realistic way of achieving some community space for the residents in this area.

8.5 The reason for bringing forward this request for grant funding before the final mode of delivery for the Community facilities has been identified, is to enable negotiations to take place in confidence, knowing that the resources are available to fund the next stage of the process and to take advantage of any emerging opportunities.

8.6 The funding could be used in a number of ways for example:

- the purchase of additional land to enable plans for the larger school on the Primrose Lane site to proceed and thereby releasing the existing school site for community use
- the purchase of land to provide addition parking for a dual use 7 class room school on the Wyndham park site should this be required. In order to enable the creation of a dual use facility.

8.7 The allocation of this funding proves an excellent opportunity for SSDC to help meet the shortfall of community facilities in this area and also to facilitate the development of a much needed school serving the eastern side of Yeovil. In response to pressing need Somerset County Council plans to start construction of the new school in 2015 on which ever site is available at that time.

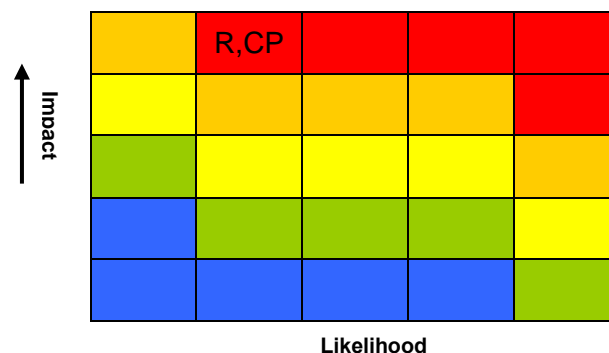
9. Financial Implications

9.1 The payment of up to £400,000 will be made as a grant from useable capital receipts. District Executive has delegated authority to approve the use of up to 5% of capital receipts in any one year (approx. £1.5million). Allocation of this funding does not exceed this limit.

9.2 As this is a grant payment, and no asset will be owned by SSDC, there will be no future revenue implications for SSDC.

9.3 Approval for the grant is needed at this stage rather than as part of a capital bid through the budget setting process in February 2014, so that the funding is available to support current negotiations and to enable the best use of the emerging opportunities for the community at Wyndham Park.

10. Risk Matrix



Key



Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

11. Council Plan Implications

Focus Four: Health and Communities

We will continue to provide country parks, the Octagon Theatre, support local play areas and community buildings.

We will continue to help communities to identify their own needs and priorities in order to take more control over shaping the places where they live and work. Our dedicated area teams and area committees ensure that we are well placed to work creatively with partners (at a parish, district or county level) to support practical ways for people to influence or take control of important local facilities and services.

12. Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

The community facilities are not provided on the site then this will lead to mass migration out of the key site in order to access community buildings and retail facilities. This of course will add unnecessarily to traffic movements in and out of the estate, increase traffic congestion and therefore increase pollution.

13. Equality and Diversity Implications

An accessible community building will be of positive benefit to all groups. Local community facilities can play a vital role in reducing health inequalities, social isolation and may contribute towards community cohesion.

14. Privacy Impact Assessment

N/A

15. Background Papers

N/A
