
GREAT WAKERING YOUTH PROVISION UPDATE

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progress of the project to provide additional facilities/services for the young people of Great Wakering.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Both the District Council and Great Wakering Parish Council have allocated funds within their current budget specifically towards the increased facility provision for young people in the Great Wakering of the District. As a result of these allocations, representatives of the two councils have held a number of meetings over the past few months to discuss the possibilities and the best ways of utilising these resources in a way that maximises the benefit to the young people.
- 2.2 These discussions have centred mainly around the potential of a “new building” adjacent to the Great Wakering Sports Centre that would provide a location specifically for the young people to meet, providing shelter and thus enabling all year round usage.
- 2.3 A meeting was held on 18 July at the Parish Council offices where discussions took place around a broad range of options. It was attended by a number of potential stakeholders, including the District Council, Parish Council, Community Association, Youth Service, Police and the Star Partnership, which has now effectively formed a working group for this particular project.

3 PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.1 As a result of some of the initial discussions held between the District and Parish Council, rough costings were obtained for the construction of a new “youth club” type building adjacent to the sports centre, in addition to the funding and management options of such a building. Whilst obviously having to cover the initial build cost, it would be necessary in advance of such a project to identify how the building is going to be operated, and by whom, and who will incur the running costs from year to year.
- 3.2 Another outcome of these discussions was that a number of other potential “partners” were identified that are either already involved, or could be in the future, with provision of facilities for young people such as the Youth Service, Community Association, Star Partnership etc.
- 3.3 At the 18 July meeting a number of potential options for additional youth provision were identified on which further research / costings would be carried out. These options were as follows:-

- Metal containers converted into young peoples “meeting area”.
- Teen shelters.
- New “permanent” building constructed adjacent to the sports centre, again for use as a meeting place.

This information was to be brought back to the next meeting on 29 August 2007, when decisions would be taken on which options would be included in a programme of consultation with the local young people around what facilities they would like to see in the area.

- 3.4 At the meeting of 29 August 2007 the options detailed above were discussed again in further detail as to their suitability and practicality. With regard to the converted containers, information had been gathered from a number of companies providing such facilities, and examples and associated costings were tabled at the meeting that demonstrated what could potentially be achieved. One specific example was where two forty foot containers were linked together and redesigned and fitted with toilets, showers, changing rooms and a small kitchen area for use as football changing rooms. This was at a total cost of £14,700.
- 3.5 Similar information was provided for the permanent new building option, which for a building of about 8 metres square, the cost would be in the region of £90,000. It was pointed out that, for both these options, an element of “management / supervision” would be required and on this subject there was a willingness from the “working group” to further develop the community involvement in which various parties have already expressed an interest. When comparing the estimated costs of both these options (for what would broadly be a similar type of facility) the converted containers are significantly cheaper and it was felt that they would provide much greater flexibility of use.
- 3.6 With regard to teen shelters, there are a wide range of products on the market incorporating different materials, size and shape, with costs ranging from approximately £6,000 - £18,000.
- 3.7 In addition to the three options detailed in 3.3 of this report, the option of a skateboard park was also discussed, particularly as there had been considerable interest received from the young people in this particular type of facility. The cost of such a facility will change significantly dependent on the size of the facility and range of ramps etc., although if of a similar size to other skate parks built in the District the cost would be in the region of £40,000.
- 3.8 With regard to location of these potential facilities, the most logical sites seem to be on or around the recreation ground, although with regard to the teen shelters it was suggested that consideration could be given to having a second shelter located at the opposite of the end of the village.
- 3.9 The conclusion from this meeting was that the converted containers, teen shelters and skateboard park would be included in the consultation process.

Officers from the District Council and the Youth Service would liaise in order to put together proposals for the consultation programme, including the detailed information, wording of the questions and who/how/when, would be consulted. A draft programme will be brought back to the next meeting of the “working group” which is set for Thursday, 27 September.

- 3.10 Once the consultation process has been carried out and preferences and conclusions have been drawn through the working group, these will form the proposal that will be put to the District Council’s Executive Board at the end of November.

4 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Increasing the provision of facilities for young people in Great Waking could contribute to a positive impact on the level of crime and anti social behaviour in the area.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of providing any additional facilities for the young people of Great Waking, would be met from monies allocated in both the District Council’s and Parish Council’s budgets, in addition to exploring the potential of obtaining external grant funding, where appropriate. The District Council currently has £52,500 allocated for additional youth provision in Great Waking and a further £65,000 allocated in 2008/9 budget. The Parish Council has a sum of £10,000 allocated for the same purpose.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to note the content of this report and give views on the options being included in the consultation programme.

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Background Papers:-

None

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