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## **BROOK ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks Members endorsement for the Economic Development Officer to work with the Rayleigh Chamber of Trade in Brook Road Industrial Estate to identify projects that would receive funding through the above scheme and would lead to an enhancement of the estate.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Essex County Council, Essex Economic Partnership and East of England Development Agency have developed a scheme to enable businesses to work together to enhance their business environment in industrial estates, known as the Industrial Estate Improvement Scheme.

### **3 INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

- 3.1 Eligible projects include those which involve two or more businesses in investment to improve the experience of a visitor to the estate and raise the profile of the business, that make the environment more comfortable and make recruitment and retention of staff easier.
- 3.2 The schemes must be supported by the local Economic Development Officer, although this need not be in monetary terms.
- 3.3 The businesses should also provide a matched contribution, again which need not be monetary, but could be based on the amount of time, labour or supplies provided.
- 3.4 Essex County Council would then assess the schemes contractors and schedule of works and help manage the project.
- 3.5 The local District Council would have to provide background information as to why they are supporting the scheme such as reducing vandalism or improving the image of the estate.
- 3.6 Bids must be submitted by December 2002, and completed by March 2003.
- 3.7 Full details of the criteria are at appendix 1. A copy of the draft content of the promotional leaflet is at appendix 2.

**4 BROOK ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**

- 4.1 For a number of years the Brook Road Industrial Estate has experienced problems associated with its poor appearance, image and location, these have included vandalism and burglary. The Rayleigh Chamber of Trade has a number of members on the Estate who are keen to improve the area and have already submitted proposals to research the potential for development of the site. The Council has funded this project with £3,410 from the Chambers of Trade Initiatives budget 2002/03.
- 4.2 At the Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October Rayleigh Chamber of Trade made a request to the Council to consider reserving funds in 2003/04 to implement the recommendations from their research for the future development of the estate.
- 4.3 This Industrial Estate Improvement Scheme provides an opportunity for the Members of the Chamber of Trade in the estate, with the support of Rochford District Council to complete small scale improvements by March 2003.
- 4.4 The conditions of the project include a requirement that the funding awarded must be match funded, so that an equivalent contribution be submitted by businesses on the industrial estate. This could be 'in kind' i.e. based on their contribution in terms of supply of labour and /or materials. Discussions with Essex County Council suggest that the funding provided by Rochford District Council for the initial research could contribute to the match funding required in the scheme although some contribution by the businesses would be desirable as well.
- 4.5 Should the scheme continue in 2003/04 other industrial estates in the area may be in a position to benefit from the scheme.

**5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Crime and disorder projects could be considered as part of this scheme.

**6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Environmental projects could be considered as part of this initiative.

**7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Rochford District Council has committed £3,410 to the initial research being undertaken by the Rayleigh Chamber of Trade into the future development of the estate.
- 7.2 Any project submitted by the estate should be supported by the District Council if it is to receive funding. Time resource from Economic Development Officer will be required to make this supporting submission on behalf of the estate. This is likely to total no more than three working days.

**8 RECOMMENDATION**

It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS** to Council

- (1) That the time contribution of the Economic Development Officer to support a bid by Brook Road Industrial Estate to the Industrial Estate Improvement Scheme be agreed.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to agree a supporting submission on behalf of the Council, subject to it being within agreed budgetary parameters.

Paul Warren

Chief Executive

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**Background Papers:** None

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**Appendix 1**

**Criteria List for Industrial Estate Improvements Scheme**

1. There must be a minimum of two businesses working in partnership with the economic development office to submit a proposal to the Essex Investment Office.
2. The match contribution, financial and/or other guaranteed.
3. Provide a proposal of works to be completed.
4. District to supply background information as to why they are supporting the site chosen. For example, if applying to reduce vandalism on a particular site, then contextual information on number of vandalism complaints made by businesses to the council should be made available or any other report in the council domain to support that the request is needy.
5. Notification of any relevant permissions required by the local authority have been obtained.
6. Specify whether there is a wider scheme of improvements entailed and whether you would require money during the next financial year to build on this initial project. This will help the Essex Investment Office to submit a bigger bid to the Essex Economic Partnership next year should this years scheme prove to be successful.

**General Note**

The total budget for the whole scheme this year is £80K. This will be split between the number of qualifying bids.

**Appendix 2**

**Draft leaflet to businesses**

**Lets share the cost of a makeover**

Small businesses are vital to the Essex economy by making a significant contribution to the economic output and employment opportunities. In recognition of this valuable contribution, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), the Essex Economic Partnership (EEP) and the Essex Investment Office (EIO) have developed a scheme to help you enhance your business environment.

To create and sustain vibrant industrial estates requires investment and we want to help you feel proud of operating your business from Essex. Small enhancements to estates could make a considerable difference to visitor's experience and assist you to raise the profile of your business. Supplying a comfortable environment in which to work also makes recruitment and retention of staff easier.

Essex has recognised that through agencies like EEDA, EEP and EIO, it is possible to support owners and businesses on industrial estates; therefore we are undertaking to make available funds in support of moderate environmental improvements. This could involve anything from enhancing the entrance with new signage and plantings, to upgrading the lighting.

If we agree that your industrial estate is among those in the county which would benefit most from our financial support we will work through your local Economic Development Office (usually based at the offices of your local authority). This financial support will be provided subject to a match contribution from yourselves. It need not be monetary, it could be the supply of labour and/or supplies.

Then, we will agree on the contractors and works schedule, helping to manage the project. When the site has been improved, we will help to generate publicity on the success story. Your industrial estate will then be firmly back on the business community map!

Our partnership proposal makes sound business sense, but funds are limited and there is a deadline for works to be completed by 31 March 2003.