

## **ST MARK'S COMMUNITY HALL - UPDATE**

The Chairman has agreed to admit this item as urgent because the construction of the hall is nearing completion and there is a shortfall in funding.

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report advises Members of a shortfall that has recently been identified in funding for the hall and seeks views on a further contribution.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In 1993 an area of land off Doggetts Close, Rochford was sold to Springboard Housing Association. The sale included a covenant by Springboard to construct at its own expense a number of dwellings, and a community hall on a plot which was subject to a 99 year lease.
- 2.2 The Council subsequently sold its freehold interest in the community hall site to Rochford Parish Council. This was subject to the 99 year lease to Springboard and the covenant on the part of Springboard to construct a community hall on the site.
- 2.3 In 1998, after a period without any progress on the hall, the Council requested Springboard to consult with Rochford Parish Council and bring forward proposals for the building. Subsequently, a liaison group of District Councillors was nominated and have met regularly with the Parish Council and Springboard to develop detailed proposals.
- 2.4 Agreement was reached between the parties on the design of the building and Springboard invited tenders for the construction. Following receipt of tenders there were further detailed discussions between Springboard and the Parish Council, and at the liaison group, to agree the division of funding.
- 2.5 The Council was asked by the Parish Council to provide £60,000 from the approved capital programme provision towards the capital and revenue costs. This was considered at Member Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee on 16 January 2001 and subsequently approved at Full Council on 23 January (Minute 16(125)/01).

- 2.6 Springboard Housing Association's Investment Group had approved expenditure of £150,000 and Rochford Parish Council agreed to meet the cost of a number of elements of the specification, in order that the lowest tender could be accepted.

### **3 CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1 Construction of the hall is expected to be completed during November.
- 3.2 Springboard have advised the Parish Council that, for reasons that are unclear, the costs previously notified and agreed do not include scheme on-costs (for professional fees etc.), which amount to £18,783.60.
- 3.3 A meeting of the liaison group was held on 3 October 2001. The representatives from Rochford Parish Council have indicated they anticipate the Parish Council will provide £5000 towards the shortfall. Springboard undertook to reconsider their own development administration costs of just under £7000 and the District Council has been requested to consider whether it is prepared to offer any additional financial support towards the outstanding shortfall of approximately £5500

### **4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Provision was first made in the Capital Programme for this project in 2000/2001 in the sum of £70,000. This was reduced to £60,000 following the Parish's request for funding as described at paragraph 2.5 above.
- 4.2 At present the Capital Programme is overcommitted over the three year rolling timetable. If all schemes are implemented in accordance with approved budgets the Programme will go overdrawn in 2002/2003 by around £204,000.
- 4.3 Should Members be minded to approve further funding to this project the amount will need to be added to the overspend. The Capital Programme will need to be re-prioritised during the budget cycle for 2002/2003.

### **5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Rochford Parish Council is the Freehold Owner of the site of the community hall and has the benefit of the covenant for the hall's construction.

**6 ENVIRONMENTAL/CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Completion of the hall is included in the Rochford Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy (7.7(a)).

**7 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

Whether any additional funding will be provided to Rochford Parish Council for St Mark's Community Hall and if so, the revised figure.

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**Background Papers:**

None.

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