

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Education, Culture & Leisure Cabinet Member and Advisors
2.	Date:	12th April 2005
3.	Title:	Space for Sport & Arts in Primary Schools Community Access Fund
4.	Programme Area:	Education, Culture & Leisure

- 5. Summary:** During the development of the £2.6m Space for Sport & Arts programme, it became clear that the funding bodies required community access to new facilities in deprivation communities to be affordable. On that basis, members agreed in 2001 to create a Community Access Fund which would enable the LEA to provide a subsidy for local people to access the new facilities. The programme has now reached the end of its first full year (2004-05), and the Community Access Fund has worked well by targeting a substantial number of low income participants in sport or arts groups.

In order to ensure proper budgetary control and to establish a baseline for comparative levels of take-up at the five different schools in the programme, requests for subsidy have in this first year been approved on a one-by-one basis at LEA level. In the light of this first year's experience and take-up, a different process is proposed for 2005-06 which will streamline procedures and make better use of the funding available.

6. Recommendations:

That Members approve a streamlined process for approving claims to the Community Access Fund which provides a better level of financial control over the funding; and that part of the total fund is used proactively to add value to the forthcoming Community Coaching Initiative.

7. **Proposals and Details:** In the financial year 2005-06, £18,200 is available to help support community use at the five schools in the programme (Rawmarsh Rosehill J, Ferham Primary, St Ann's J & I, High Greave J, and Thurcroft J). It is proposed that an allowance of £1,800 per school at Rosehill, High Greave and St Ann's is made (this figure reflects take up during 2004-05, takes account of inflation, and allows a reasonable level of growth). At Ferham £1,800 would be allocated to Building Learning Communities (the not-for-profit company which handles community access to the PFI schools) for use within an agreed framework to benefit Ferham residents. At Thurcroft £1,000 each would be allocated to each of the three stakeholder organisations (the school itself, the community library and the Schools Music Service) to support community access to facilities. Each school or stakeholder would approve eligible applications from local groups for financial support during the course of the financial year up to its budgetary ceiling, and legitimate claims would be reimbursed directly into school budgets at the end of the financial year on submission by the school of appropriate documentation. This process would ensure that budgetary responsibility remained with the body authorising the financial support, and that an audit trail existed to ensure that the funding was being used for the purpose for which it was intended.

It is proposed that the £8,000 balance of funding is used as match funding to support the successful application to DCMS/Sport England for a Community Coaching programme which was approved by Sport England just before Easter. This three-year initiative will focus on a community-based sports coaching scheme with a particular brief in disabilities and mentoring. Some of the venues needed for this programme will be supplied through the Space for Sport & Arts programme: many of the beneficiaries will inevitably be local residents, and so the original purpose of the Community Access Fund will continue to be met.

8. **Finance:** All costs will be met within existing revenue budgets.
9. **Risks and Uncertainties:** None.
10. **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:** The proposal meets the corporate priorities of Rotherham Alive, Rotherham Learning and Rotherham Safe. It also helps address the Culture & Leisure Service Plan priority of contributing to safer, stronger neighbourhoods through the active engagement of priority communities in cultural activity.
11. **Background Papers and Consultation:** Minute No 3 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Education, Culture & Leisure Services dated 9 October 2001: establishment of a Community Access Fund

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