

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> February, 2013</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Grant Budget Savings, 2013/14</b>
4.	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### 5. Summary

This report seeks approval to remove two grant budgets (Third Party Funding Grant and Space for Sports & Arts Fund) in order to make savings needed to help meet budget savings targets for 2013/14.

### 6. Recommendations

6.1 That Cabinet Member approves the removal of the Third Party Funding Grant and the Space for Sports & Arts Fund

## **7. Proposals and Details**

2013/14 budget savings proposals for EDS include the removal of two grant budgets (Third Party Funding Grant and Space for Sports & Arts Fund). This is necessary to achieve a budget saving target of £30,000.

### Third Party Funding Grant

The annual budget for the Third Party Funding Grant is set at £16,646. The grant is administered by Leisure and Community Services on behalf of the Council and is used to facilitate the release of funding for environmental projects through the Landfill Community Fund. This is made available from a number of environmental bodies (Biffaward, WREN, Veolia etc.). The service works in partnership with local Friends groups, TARAs, BTCV and Groundwork in order to maximise the benefit to Rotherham from these sources. The availability of this budget has been beneficial in releasing grant funding to local communities in Rotherham (approximately £155,000 in 2011/12) and the general trend in uptake does appear to be increasing.

### Recent Performance

Because of the carry forward of previous year's under-spend, recent budgets have been significantly under-spent and the forecast outturn position for this year suggests another significant under-spend. This is in part because while funds were allocated against defined projects, these projects have not always been successful. The funding applications for this year have totalled approximately £210,000, but only £62,000 has been granted by the funding bodies. The outturn figure would have been significantly different if these applications had succeeded.

One particular project (the Rotherham Rivers project) will be put at risk if the budget is withdrawn. This is part of the Living Don programme (underway since 2009) and identified by the Yorkshire & Humber Biodiversity Forum and the South Yorkshire Biodiversity Forum as a Priority Landscape-Scale Project Area. The programme aims to bring about the pro-active management of the upper part of the River Don catchment in South Yorkshire. To date there has been limited focus on the main River Don corridor in Rotherham and the River Rother, which is a key tributary. The Rotherham Rivers project has been designed to address this gap. An invitation has been received from WREN to apply to their Biodiversity Action Fund (funding up to £250k) and the application for completion is underway. A third party funding a contribution of 11% (£20,000 to £25,000) is required and RMBC is an eligible funder. The proposed removal of the Third Party Funding Grant will mean that a contribution cannot be made and unless an alternative funding source can be identified the project will not go ahead.

### Space for Sports & Arts (SSA)

The budget for the Space for Sports & Arts Fund is £15,000. This fund was set up on the completion of the SSA programme (an external funding stream used to build spaces in Primary Schools for school and community use). The purpose of the fund was to subsidise community access in order to support and develop use outside of school hours.

## Recent Performance

In 2010-11 the SSA budget was used only partially to subsidise community use of the three SSA facilities at Rawmarsh, St Ann's and Ferham schools (£750-£800 per facility), with the remainder being used for community sports coaching. There has been no adverse reaction to this change. In 2011-12 the entire SSA budget was used to support community sports coaching. In 2012-13 the SSA budget ceased to be used in this way as a separate 'Special Projects' budget was used instead. Consequently, the SSA budget has remained largely unspent on out of school hours access in the current financial year.

## **8. Finance**

The projected savings from the above proposal will be £30,000 in the next financial year. This will contribute to overall savings that need to be made by the Council in the light of reduced funding from central government.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Loss of the Third Party Funding budget will mean that community led projects including those on Council land, may not go ahead where TPF is required before a grant offer is made.

Possible loss of the Rotherham Rivers project as identified above.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Minor. The Council will reduce its budget in line with government targets.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Reports to Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning and Culture, 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012, An End of Year Report on achievements of the Third Party Funding budget.

Officers in Financial Services have seen the report and had the opportunity to comment.

**Contact Name:** *Steve Hallsworth – Leisure & Community Services Manager, Extension 22483, e-mail [steve.hallsworth@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:steve.hallsworth@rotherham.gov.uk)*