

**Teignbridge District Council
Executive Committee
10 July 2023
Part i**

**Developer contributions funding for improvements to Highweek
Scout hut for wider community use**

Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the expenditure of up to £175,000 grant from developer contributions to fund improvements to the existing Highweek Scout Hut facility, creating an improved community building for public hire.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee RESOLVES to:

- (1) Agree approval of up to £175,000 grant funding to be paid to Highweek Scouts for improvements to the Scout Hut; and
- (2) Grant delegated authority to the Head of Place and Commercial services to enter into necessary legal agreements associated with funding the project and securing ongoing community access.
- (3) Note that the funding agreement will be contingent on the building being available for wider community hire as set out in Appendix A.

Financial Implications

The financial implications are detailed in 3.1 below.

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Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report. However, the commentary at paragraph 3.2.1 should be considered.

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Risk Assessment

The risks may include, but are not limited to, delays in securing planning permission; challenges securing builders and contractors; builders or contractors not completing work or doing so to an insufficient standard; increased build costs and project over spend.

Teignbridge is not responsible for the construction, however the Heads of Terms are clear that grant payments will only be made upon completion of works, which helps mitigate some of these risks to the Council.

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Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

The climate change implications are set out in 3.4.1 below.

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Executive Member

Cllr Gary Taylor: Planning

Cllr Lin Goodman-Bradbury: Homes and Communities

Appendices/Background Papers

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1. Developer contributions (via a Unilateral Undertaking) was secured from the 'NA2 Whitehill' development to support improvements to community facilities in the Highweek area, totalling £203,000.
- 1.2. The local ward member, Highweek Scouts and Newton Abbot Community Interest Company (CIC) officers are supportive of deploying the funding for improved community facilities, in the form of improvements to the Highweek Scout Hut.
- 1.3. Feedback from the CIC's residents survey 2023 from the Hele Park / Houghton Barton area (which received 200 responses) suggests a high level of community support for a community centre in the area (93% support). Resident suggestions included Café (62), Toddler Group (49), Youth Club (48), hall (35), Social Groups (25), Gym (22), Pub (20), Library (19), GP (17), Post Office (14), Football (10), Dentist (10), Church (7), Swimming Pool (5), Garden (5). Improvements to the Highweek Scout hut can help to meet a number of these aims.
- 1.4. Provision of improved community facilities forms part of the Local Plan 2013-2033 and Whitehill Development Framework Plan (2016) objectives, which have been secured through the developer contributions from the Whitehill development. The SPD specifies that *'Where on-site provision is not feasible then proposals for new or improved existing off-site community facilities (including at Highweek village) will be considered where this will provide an accessible alternative that can meet the needs of newly arising residents at the NA2 Whitehill development and where it can support the viability and retention of existing facilities'*.

1.5. The project is considered to be the best existing option for delivering improved community facilities within the Highweek area. A location map of Highweek Scout hut is at Appendix B.

2. Objectives

2.1. Provide a multi-purpose and flexible community building;

2.1.1. The project will improve local community access to a newly refurbished community building with modern facilities and meeting places within Highweek;

2.1.2. The main project works include extension of the building footprint, installation of a new larger kitchen, new accessible toilets and showers, a separate meeting room, insulation and energy efficiency improvements and car park resurfacing.

2.1.3. The building will be used by the Scouts and available to other groups.

2.2. Affordable space for hire;

2.2.1. The funding agreement will set out an approach to procurement and project monitoring, as outlined in the agreed Heads of Terms (appendix A).

2.2.2. The Scout group will be required to ensure convenient and affordable hall hire and ensure a convenient public booking system is in place.

2.3. Project management and completion;

2.3.1. The Scouts will be procuring and managing the project. The applicant has provided initial quotes of £150,000 - £178,000.

3. Implications, Risk Management and Climate Change Impact

3.1. Financial

3.1.1. The funding for the Teignbridge contribution towards this project will be £175,000 from the “community facilities” developer contribution from planning application (16/01968/MAJ) at Whitehill, Newton Abbot. The Highweek Scouts will fund the first £15,000 of the project.

3.2. Legal

3.2.1. Given the prevailing circumstances and the status of those to benefit from the funding, it would be most appropriate to agree the terms of a funding agreement so as to ensure the continued and future community benefit provision.

3.3. Risks

3.3.1. Delivery of building works requires the Highweek Scout Group to seek and secure necessary permissions (e.g., Planning) and secure competent builders / trades persons to ensure successful completion. Teignbridge officers will not be involved in this process.

3.3.2. There are financial risks related to building works and managing budgets that lie with the Scouts. Teignbridge will therefore only pay out the grant following invoices for completed construction works. To safeguard Teignbridge Council’s interest, a funding agreement will be put

in place with the 1st Highweek Village Scout Group (registered charity number 301079).

- 3.3.3. The Scout hall property was secured in trust for use by the Highweek Scouts. Should the Highweek Scouts cease to exist, the building would revert to the ownership of the Teignbridge District Scouts. This Group is a member of and governed by the Scout Association. The 2022 Accounts for the Highweek Scout Group and contact details for the group's Executive Committee Trustees have been made available.

3.4. Environmental/Climate Change Impact

- 3.4.1. The project will need to adhere to relevant Local Plan policies, and steps will need to be taken to reduce operational and embodied carbon to mitigate the project's environmental impacts. Where possible and relevant, the proposals should seek to follow the principles of the Authority's Part 1 Carbon Action Plan, Policy 3: Low Carbon Buildings, and Policy 4: Embodied Carbon.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1.1. Highweek village hall has confirmed that it does not have use for the funding given the limitations of the building. However, the nearby Scout facilities (400m west of the village hall) do require improvements and can be made into a more suitable multi-use community building.
- 4.1.2. The alternative use for this funding is a contribution to the larger 'NA1 Houghton Barton' community building. However, this building is part of the larger NA1 development, and it may be some years before it commences. The building is also likely to be further away, approximately 1.9km to the west of the village hall.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1.1. It is recommended that the Executive Committee agrees to providing grant funding to the Scouts for the sum of up to £175,000 subject to a funding agreement that reflects the points set out in the Heads of Terms (Appendix 1) and any other requirements as determined by TDC Legal.