

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	YOUR FUND SURREY APPLICATION - THURSLEY ROAD RECREATION GROUND BOREHOLE IRRIGATION SYSTEM
Divisions Affected:	All / List divisions in Surrey impacted 1. Waverley Western Villages – David Harmer
Key Decision:	No Note: This record relates to a decision which impacts solely on one division as set out above.
Reason Key:	N/A
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet/ Committee decision Cabinet 21st July 2020 Min Ref: 112/20 COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND [Item 10] Link

Summary

This decision record sets out the key information for publication on the decision by the Executive Director for Customer and Communities to approve expenditure for a Your Fund Surrey project located in Elstead at Thursley Road Recreation Ground. The agreed recommendations are set out below on the face of this decision record. Details on the project are set out in the Decision Report as an annex to this record.

Decision made

Decision made:

It was AGREED that:

- To fund project CF161 for the full amount requested of £16,740. No contingency to be held by SCC (Surrey County Council) due to the simple one-off purchase of equipment.**
- Approve the following conditions before funding can be released:**
 - Evidence of updated insurance which covers the new assets after they have been installed**

Reasons for Decision:

These decisions are to enable expenditure from the Your Fund Surrey to be awarded to a project which have been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in Annex 1.

Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding, the project has been further considered by the Your Fund Advisory Panel.

Decision taken by:	Marie Snelling - Executive Director of Customer and Communities
Decision taken on:	27th May 2022

To be implemented on:	27th May 2022
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Alternative options considered

N/A

Summary of any financial implications

<p>This project that has been approved for funding and has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed in July 2020 the funding for these projects will be drawn from the £100m of capital funding allocated to Your Fund Surrey within the Capital Programme.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed in July 2020 to establish a core team to manage the delivery of the fund and risks associated with it, funded from the Corporate Feasibility budget.</p>

Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with Cllr Mark Nuti, Cabinet Member for Communities and following Your Fund Surrey Advisory panel review.
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Background Documents	Exempt:
Annex 1 – Your Fund Surrey Decision Report CF161 Thursley Road Recreation Ground Borehole Irrigation System	No

Your Fund Surrey - Delegated Officer Decision Report

DATE: 26th July 2022

SUBJECT: YOUR FUND SURREY APPLICATION – THURSLEY ROAD RECREATION GROUND

PROJECT NAME: RECREATION GROUND BOREHOLE IRRIGATION SYSTEM

CF REFERENCE: CF161

Purpose of the Report:

This decision record sets out the key information for publication on the decision by the Executive Director for Customer and Communities to approve expenditure for a Your Fund Surrey project located in Elstead at the Thursley Road Recreation Ground.

This is to enable expenditure from Your Fund Surrey to be awarded to projects which have been objectively scored and assessed to meet the criteria for Your Fund Surrey by Officers and further considered by the Your Fund Advisory Panel.

The vision of Your Fund Surrey (YFS) is to bring community-led and place-making projects to life, with a focus on wider community benefit that leaves a real legacy.

Recommendations:

Officer Recommendations in consultation with the Advisory Panel. It is recommended:

- 1. To fund project CF161 for the full amount requested of £16,740. No contingency to be held by SCC (Surrey County Council) due to the simple one-off purchase of equipment.**
- 2. Approve the following conditions before funding can be released:**
 - Evidence of updated insurance which covers the new assets after they have been installed**

Reason for Recommendations

1. This application has been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in the body of this report. Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding.

Executive Summary

2. This proposal is for the purchase and installation of an irrigation system to transport water from the existing borehole to strategic watering points across Thursley Road Recreation Ground.
3. Thursley Road Recreation Ground is located in Elstead, Waverley, (Annex 1) which is ranked 23464, Decile 7 on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (decile 1 being in the most deprived 10% nationally and decile 10 being in the least deprived 10% nationally). Elstead has a population of approximately 2,670. Thursley Road Recreation Ground is the home of the Elstead Cricket Club and has pitches for the local adult and junior football teams. It also has a Pavillion as well as children's play areas. Essentially, it is a central place in the community for residents to congregate, exercise, socialise and relax.

4. There is a need for the community to have access to a well-maintained Recreation Ground. The Recreation Ground is predominantly turf on sand and without regular watering it loses grass. The surfaces become hard and abrasive which reduces the amount of activity that can take place over the summer months. The quality and cover of the grass surface is important to sports clubs, but also recreational activities carried out by the wider community. The borehole gives water that is needed to maintain the safety standards they want to deliver for the community and sports teams, but distribution without the irrigation system is laborious and very time consuming. Currently they manually move the sprinkler system between 16-24 times a day to cover the area.
5. The Elstead Recreation Trust, in partnership with the Parish Council, facilitate numerous social events that increase the use of the recreation ground. These include recent Jubilee celebrations, charity fairs and special events. A variety of inclusive sports activities already take place on the Recreation Ground such as the Ahmadiyya community cricket competition, girls to ladies' football and ladies' cricket. The new borehole irrigation system will provide increased opportunities for consistent use of the grounds for social and community activities.
6. The applicant has demonstrated strong support from the local community, who are keen to see their outdoor space be safeguarded for the future. The first part of the project, which has now been completed, was to create the borehole which was supported financially by the community. Contributions were received from the Elstead Football and Cricket Clubs, local sponsorship and public donations.
7. The application for this project is being lodged on behalf of Elstead Parish Council, which is the co-ordinating body for the implementation of the project, the owner of the Recreation Ground on which the project is located and the body responsible for paying the contractor installing the irrigation system. The project is being implemented in partnership with the Elstead Recreational Trust, a registered charity which leases and manages the Elstead Pavilion located on the site adjacent to the borehole and irrigation project.
8. Planning Permission was not required for the borehole and an abstraction licence is only required if extracting more than 20m³ water per day. Equally, Environment Agency consent is only required if it is planned to extract more than the 20m³ of water per day permitted under the Environment Agency's general licence provisions. Thursley Road recreation ground will be restricted to using no more than 20m³ per day and it will only be used when the soil is dry. It is anticipated that this will be a maximum of 50 days per year, approximately 2000m³ of water per year. The rate of flow is approximately 50-60l/min, approximately 3-4m³ per hour. The amount of water used will be monitored to ensure compliance with The Environment Agency guidelines and any future restrictions on water usage.

Details

Description of project benefits

9. The new irrigation system will enhance the safety of all children and adults playing their chosen sports. It will also provide a consistent, attractive lush grass area for the younger children and playschool which is part of the pavilion facility.
10. Without a borehole irrigation system, the likelihood is that the current intensive use of the ground, coupled with climate change, would cause a degradation of the playing surface to the extent that sporting activities would need to be curtailed in order to preserve grass cover, leading to reduced involvement in sport in the village.
11. Officers consider the project contributes towards the following areas of the SCC priorities 2021-2026:

Children and young people feel safe and confident

- Ensuring the grounds and play areas are maintained and safe

Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives

- It provides a community area for people to pursue healthy, active and fulfilling lives. The effective and efficient distribution of borehole water across the area increases playability and safety

Communities are welcoming and supportive

- They are an inclusive community and encourage use of the Recreation Ground by all

Empowering communities

- Provision of a local community space for residents to feel proud of

Enabling a greener future

- Reducing vehicle movements by providing improved local facilities within walking distance of schools and the community
- The borehole is a sustainable, eco-friendly solution to maintaining a green space for recreation

Tackling health inequality

- Increased opportunity for people to meet outside and encourages active lifestyles

Project Timeframes

12. The project timeframes are approximately 1 week.

Management of the project

13. The Recreation Ground is well maintained with works carried out on a regular basis under the supervision of the Parish Council and the Elstead Recreational Trust.
14. The irrigation system installation will be managed primarily by the contractor who has 40 years' experience in such work. It will be overseen by the Borehole Sub Committee and Elstead Recreational Trust who will manage day to day operations by the contractor. Financial control will be the responsibility of the Parish Council.
15. The maintenance of the borehole and irrigation system will be the responsibility of the Elstead Recreational Trust. The annual costs for Gold Maintenance by the contractor will be £595. Elstead Recreational Trust will recover these costs from the cricket and football clubs, all of which are members of the Trust. They already pay charges for the use of the pavilion, which are assessed annually on the basis of the costs of managing the building and the relative usage of each user group.
16. The costs of managing the building and the playing surfaces will be reduced as a result of no longer needing to use mains water to irrigate the cricket square and the amenity area adjacent to the pavilion. It is estimated that this saving will be approximately £300-400 per year. Both Clubs have agreed to share equally any increased costs because both will benefit substantially from the improvements in the playing surfaces.

Project Lifespan

17. The irrigation system will have a lifespan of up to 20 years. The annual maintenance procedures Elstead Recreational Trust will undertake has the potential to extend the lifespan beyond this.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

18. YFS funding is requested for purchase and installation of the irrigation system. The project has applied for £16,740 which equates to 97% of the overall project costs.

19. Table 1 - Financial Summary details the £540 of other funding which has been secured against the total project cost of **£17,280**.
20. Table 2 - Project Cost Breakdown and Grant Utilisation, YFS funding is to be attributed across all capital elements of the project. The maintenance cost is not eligible for YFS and evidence has been provided which shows that the Trust have the finances to pay the annual maintenance. The applicant has secured quotes that support their costing, and will ultimately be funded based on evidenced, actual spend, up to the amount awarded.

Table 1. Financial summary

Amount applied for:	£16,740
Total project cost:	£17,280
Percentage of cost against total:	97%
Have other funding sources been secured?	Yes
Other funding:	£540 - Elstead Recreational Trust
Volunteer contributions	Yes
Is there a commercial element to the project?	No
Amount suggested for funding:	£16,740

Table 2. Project Cost breakdown and Grant Utilisation:

Activity	Total Cost (including VAT)	YFS Contribution
Irrigation System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain King Self Travelling sprinkler Sled base (for the cricket square) of plated tubular steel • 50 metre length of hose • Large Hose Reels, All Fittings and Connectors 	£16,740	£16,740
1 year gold maintenance	£540	£0
Total	£17,280	£16,740

Assessment of the application against the criteria for the fund:

21. This application for funding has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process for the fund, which are publicly available on the County Council website
22. The application has been subject to a standard process involving assessment and scoring by YFS Officers. The application has been assessed and scored independently by two Officers whose scores are then moderated. A summary of the Assessment Report comments against the funds five published scoring criteria are set out in Annex 2
23. Due to the small value of this bid, low number of supplementary questions from Officers and a high scoring first round, a second round of scoring was not required.

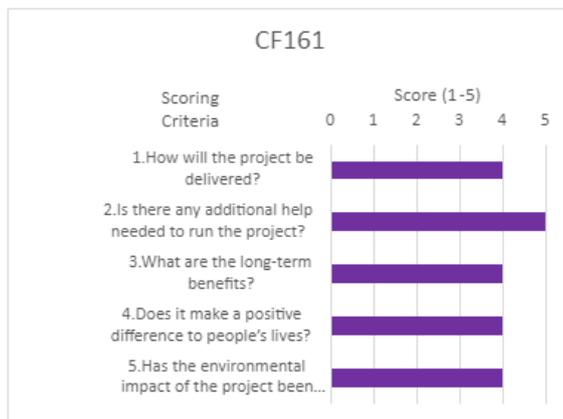
Expert Hub Review

24. Finance – This funding builds on the organisation’s initial investment into a borehole. It has community support, demonstrates wider community use and is in line with SCC’s Greener Futures strategic objective. The project is relatively low risk and all financial queries have been resolved.

Score Breakdown

25. The application scored a total of 418 out of 500 when scored by Officers broken down as follows:

Figure 1. Assessment score breakdown



Advisory Panel Comments

26. The Advisory Panel functions in an advisory capacity and its role is intended to assist formal decision-making processes which sit outside the Panel. The role of the YFS Advisory Panel is to review shortlisted applications following the assessment and scoring of bids by Officers, and to advise and inform the final officer recommendations to the appropriate decision-maker on the proposed funding awards to be made.

27. The Advisory Panel was conducted via email and positive responses were received from four of the nine Members on the panel. Responses were not received by four panel Members. The quorum may not be fewer than three of the eight standing elected members of the YFS Advisory Panel. Queries were raised by one Member about permits, permissions and licenses. YFS Officers explored this further with the applicant and satisfactory responses were provided and have been included in paragraph 8 of this Decision Report.

28. One member does not support SCC funding water abstraction for recreational purposes and had a number of queries regarding the environmental impacts of the borehole and whether the applicant had explored alternatives. YFS Officers explored this further with the applicant and responses were provided

- **Member question** - What volume of water will typically be used each year and what affect will this have on the water table or watercourses of the surrounding area? What is the potential impact on local ecosystems which will be altered by water extraction?

Applicant response - *Thursley Road recreation ground will be restricted to using no more than 20 cubic metres per day and it will only be used when the soil is dry. It is anticipated that this will probably be a max of 50 days in a normal year, so perhaps 2000 cubic metres per year. It is heavily dependent on the weather. A hydrogeological survey was commissioned prior to launching the borehole project. The survey says that the large aquifer under the rec ground at 50m can provide 'moderate to large abstraction with relatively small drops in water levels.'* The recreation ground's extraction levels are v modest, and far from large or moderate.

- **Member question** - I understand a licence is required from the Environment Agency for their management of water resources. The water will be required in hot dry conditions, to preserve the grass – but this is precisely the conditions when the Environment Agency would impose

restrictions on water abstraction, so our funding could produce a white elephant. Has the Environment Agency been approached for their view?

Applicant response - *There is no requirement for EA permission and no current restrictions on water uptake from boreholes within the general licence provisions. Boreholes help to reduce the demands on mains water in drought periods, so are generally encouraged.*

- **Member question** - Has the alternative been investigated: collecting rainwater from the roof of the pavilion in large tanks above ground – water can then be pumped through the hose and sprinklers rather than being pumped up from the bore hole.

Applicant response - *Rainwater collection would not be a practicable alternative. Unless you have a huge reservoir, you are not going to be able to store enough water to see you through the dry periods - in the recreation ground's case they'd need a storage capacity in the current hot weather of 1000 - 2000 cu m. A 16 cubic metres tank with pump costs £10,000, so they'd need 60 of these, total cost £600,000.*

YFS Officers contacted Greener Futures who confirmed that 20 cubic metres a day should not have a substantive impact on the ground water levels.

Consultation

Summary of Support

29. Have your say, which has had the Thursley Road Recreation Ground Borehole Irrigation System featured on the Commonplace website, received 106 comments. There were no negative comments received.

30. Other examples of support include:

- A leaflet drop to 1100 dwellings in the local community and as a result raised over £4,000 funding towards the installation of the borehole.
- Grant received from the Football Foundation (Thursley Road Recreation Ground and Burford Lodge Recreation Ground) for the annual improvement and maintenance of the football pitches. The grant is split between the two recs and is £7,500 per annum over six years.

31. The Divisional Councillor David Harmer has commented as follows:

'Thursley Road Rec is the Elstead village cricket ground, as well as providing a children's recreation area, football pitches and a substantial green area for that half of the village which is close or adjacent to Thursley Road. In recent years there has been a noticeable need for watering the grass, and advice was provided that a borehole would be advisable. They realised that the number of different activities on the Rec would mean that they would have to move the water output around extensively to cover the whole area, hence the irrigation proposal. In practice that has proved to be a seriously arduous exercise, requiring careful management. That constitutes the need.

So who will benefit? In the cricket season there are three adult teams, two playing at home alternate Saturdays and one Sundays. In the football season there are about a dozen teams, mostly children's of various ages. All of these will benefit both by not having to move the pipework around (and managing the positioning and movements to optimise the effects), and by the quality of the playing surface. Additionally, the whole operation will be underground and automated to provide consistent coverage.'

Risk Management and Implications:

32. As part of the application process the applicant has provided an overview of project risks. This is summarised in Table 3 below. Officers consider there to be adequate control measures in place.

Table 3. Summary Table of Risks and Key Mitigations

Risk description	RAG	Mitigation action/strategy
Flow and pressure of existing borehole		Test borehole for pressure, no risks anticipated
Encountering an underground pipe when		Aware of position and direction of underground pipes so consider this risk to be very low

using the mole machine to drill pathways		
Weather and installation of irrigation system		Severe weather may cause a delay to the installation, but these risks are low considering it should only take 1 week to install
Cost increases		Updated quote received. One off purchase
Damage to assets		Regular inspections and annual gold maintenance will be in place

Equalities and Diversity:

33. Your Fund is designed to provide investment in schemes that encourage community participation, reduce isolation, and develop the potential for social wellbeing and economic prosperity. As such it is anticipated that this project will have a positive impact on a number of those who may rely on or gain support from within the local community and those within protected characteristics that may be more likely to experience social and economic exclusion.
34. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been produced for YFS and was circulated as an Annex to the YFS Cabinet Report 26th January 2021.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer:

35. The report sets out the information and steps for the consideration of the application further to the Council’s governance arrangements for Your Fund Surrey.
36. Further to those arrangements, if approved, the Council and the organisation will enter into a comprehensive funding agreement which will include the performance measures that will be put in place to ensure the funding is used as intended as well as clearly describing any support or additional conditions agreed as part of the funding award.

Other Implications:

37. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Potential implications for council priorities and policy areas

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No direct implications
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children & adults	No direct implications
Environmental sustainability	The provision of the borehole will reduce carbon emissions whilst greatly improving the quality and quantity of the grass coverage across the Rec. Restrictions during droughts can be avoided and money saved on water bills which can be used for improvements elsewhere.

Public Health	The project has a positive impact on wider health determinants with specific reference to users being encouraged to be outdoors and use the facility to decrease social isolation and increase community cohesion.
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What Happens Next:

- Following the advisory panel conducted via email, a dedicated Officer decision report will be produced for consideration by the Executive Director for Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities incorporating the comments of the Advisory Panel.
- Following Delegated Executive Director approval of the funding a notice of the records of decisions taken under delegated powers, will be published within 3 days of the decision being made. A note of this decision will be included in the next Cabinet report update of Your Fund Surrey.
- Officers will prepare the relevant schedules and funding agreements to enable payment of funds and monitoring and evaluation of the project against its outcomes.
- The YFS Team officers will then issue a provisional offer of funding to the applicant, including a copy of the draft Funding Agreement incorporating any additional conditions.

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Consulted:

Division County Councillor

Corporate Finance – Surrey County Council

Annexes:

Annex 1: Project Location & Images

Annex 2: Summary Scoring Comments

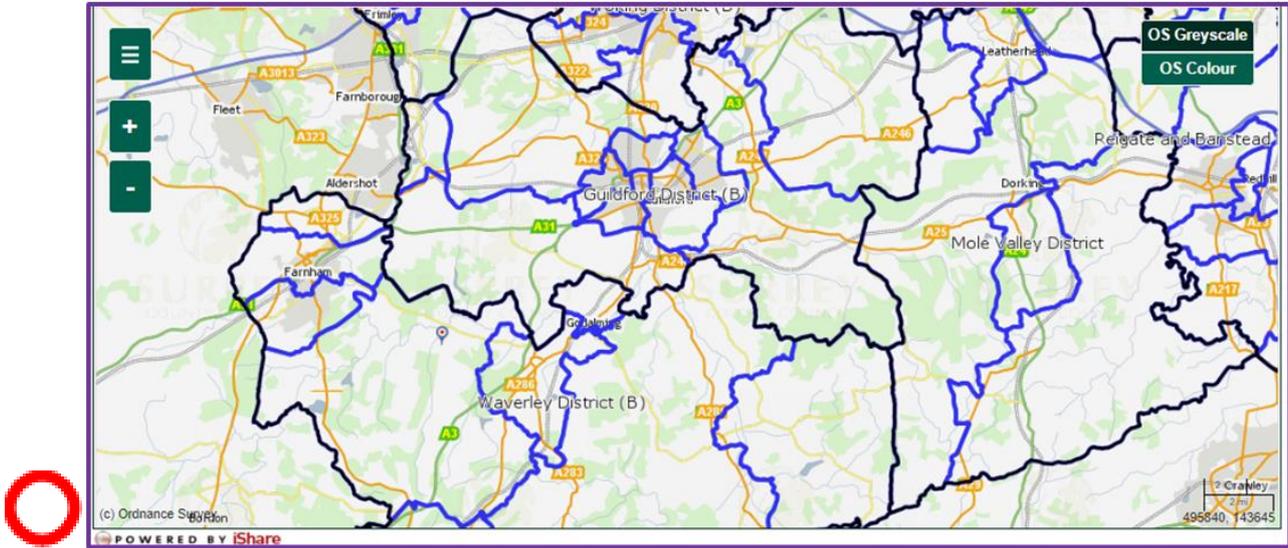
Sources/background papers:

Your Fund Surrey Criteria

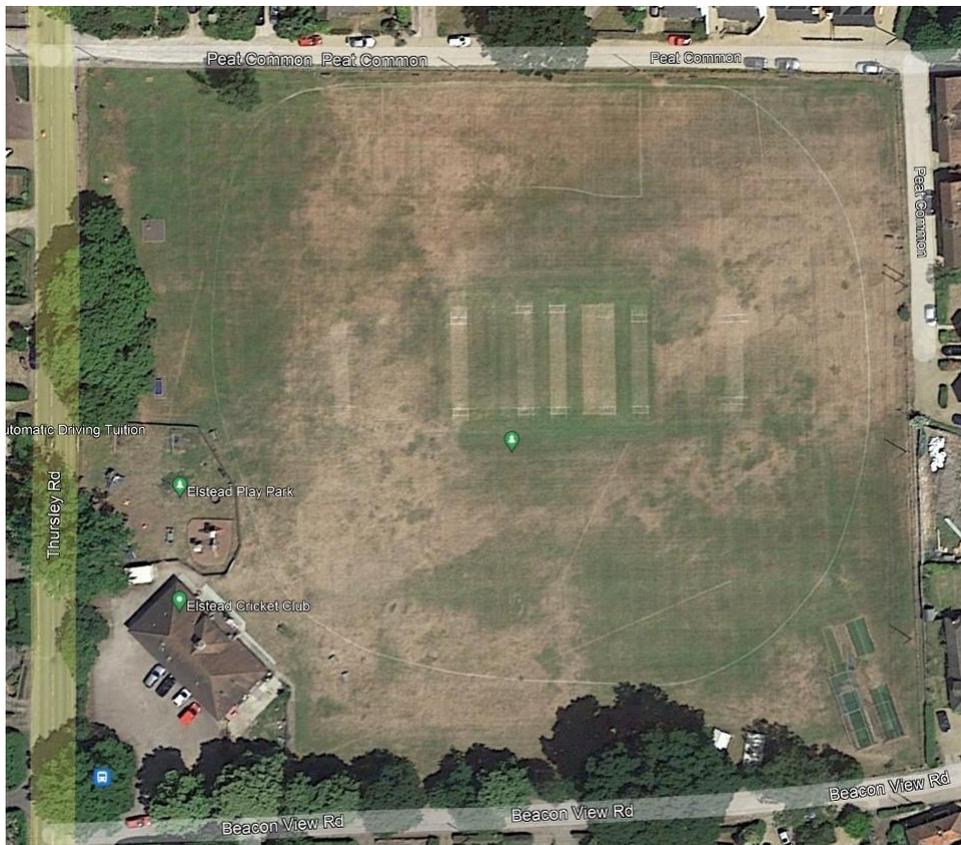
Your Fund Surrey Governance Document

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Annex 1



Arial Photograph of the Rec in the summer months



Thursley Recreation Ground – playground and communal areas



A photograph of the teams in the final of the Ahmadiyya Cricket Cup on Thursley Road Recreation Ground. The Rec is green in this picture because of constant daily watering if they have no rain.



Annex 2: Summary Scoring Comments

Criteria 1 - How will the project be delivered?

- This is an easy project to deliver. There is a clear project and maintenance plan. It will be completed within a short timescale and so the risks of failure are minimal.
- Clear constitution, established Trust and PC (Parish Council)

Criteria 2 - Is there any additional help needed to run, the project?

- There is a suitable organisation structure in place to deliver, manage and maintain the project. Clubs that use the pavilion are required to provide 1 member to the Trust Committee, this satisfies me that the Trust can reclaim the maintenance costs from the user clubs.
- Clear structure in place and relationship with Parish Council outlined.

Criteria 3 - What are the long-term benefits?

- Evaluation could be better developed but ok for this level of funding
- Adequate engagement undertaken and fundraising evidenced
- This will have a lasting benefit to the community as the sports field will become more usable, especially in the summer months.

Criteria 4 - Does it make a positive difference to people's lives?

- Organisational and community support is good for this value
- It will benefit those already using the ground and may encourage more others to partake in sport at the ground. Good feedback to the project from the earlier consultation / leaflet drop.

Criteria 5 - Has the environmental impact of the project been considered?

- Borehole is more sustainable than mains water and less carbon impact, meaning more funds to be re-invested into community
- The project is about enhancement and supported by grant for pitch improvement from Football Foundation