

A Developing Communities Fund (DCF)

1. The DCF would be available to all Parishes and Communities.
2. For any such scheme to be effective, it should;
 - be based on the PCIF principles
 - be affordable (see 5 below)
 - require a financial contribution from the Parish Council/community group of a minimum of 25% of the total cost of the project; the actual level being calculated by reference to the formula in 3 (below). The contribution can be found from all available/legitimate funding sources.
 - be subject to a set of criteria which cover value for money and 'meeting strategic local need'
 - use a sound information/evidence base for the latter criteria, such as could be provided by Neighbourhood Development Plans.
3. The formula for determining the Parish/Community contribution will be based on an 'average' level of 35%, but be varied according the level of actual annual precept, as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Funding percentage required (\%)} \times \text{Average Band D Precept}^*}{\text{Actual Band D Precept}^*}$$

* These figures are subject to change each year.

There will be a minimum contribution from the Parish Council/Community of 25% of the total project cost, irrespective of the Precept levels.

4. The preparation and use of Neighbourhood Development Plans should be strongly encouraged on all the Parishes, as it will not only provide a sound evidence base for bids to the SRSF, but also a robust evidence base to respond to speculative development applications in the future. The Council could provide support via the establishment of a Parish Plans Support Officer, whose role could cover 'signposting', general advice and project guidance/consultancy support.
5. It is recommended that before any action is taken to create a fund, the 'larger' Parishes and their communities be asked the following:
 - In order to support increased development in your area (planned, in progress or anticipated), what facility/facilities would be required to provide necessary infrastructure beyond that available under Section 106 arrangements?
 - What capital funding would the Parish/Community be able to contribute on a minimum 25% basis with the Borough Council, as determined by the agreed Funding formula?

- Over what period would you envisage this funding being necessary? (The expectation would be that any funding provided would be expended within three years).
6. In addition it should be made clear to the relevant Parishes/Communities that joint bids would be considered, if it could be shown that they had broad support and applicability, it could be shown that they had broad support and applicability beyond a single area and have a clear link to any Parish Plans. It should be made clear also that feasibility studies would be considered for funding.
 7. Should there be a 'flow' problem, with a number of projects queued for funding and delivery in a short timescale, this could be addressed by borrowing (which could be against other capital reserves, not necessarily from external sources) at 1:1 against future anticipated surpluses being utilised.