

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEDWAY VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

30 June 2008

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non Key Decision

1 2008/09 PROPOSED PROJECT WORK

Summary

This report brings forward proposals for the allocation of approved revenue funding for the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership in 2008/09.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Members will be aware that this Council has previously committed an annual contribution of £6,000 towards the core funding of the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership. This is supported by other partners including Maidstone Borough Council (£6,000), the Environment Agency (£21,000) and Kent County Council (£8,950).

1.1.2 For 2008/09 this Council allocated £10,600 within existing revenue budgets to support the Partnership. This includes the allocation of £6,000 for core funding and £4,600 for other project work.

1.2 Proposed Project Work

1.2.1 Events Programme – Following a successful and well attended programme of public events held at the Borough Council's two country parks in 2007/08, the following events are proposed for the current financial year:

- Two Bat Walks at each country park
- One Bird Walk at Haysden Country Park
- One Wildlife Activity Day at both country parks

1.2.2 Giant Hogweed Control Programme – The programme, now in its 7th year, is managed by the Partnership and offers a coordinated approach to the control of this invasive weed species. The Council has previously provided a contribution of £625 to support this programme and it is proposed that the same level of financial support be provided in 2008/09. Total project funding is just under £14,000, with

additional support from the Environment Agency, Maidstone Borough Council, Wealden District Council and Tandridge District Council.

1.2.3 Free Tree Scheme 2008 – Working in seven councils the scheme provides an opportunity for members of the public to enhance their local environment, landscape and biodiversity by planting appropriate native tree species. Funded by the Kent Downs AONB Unit, Network Rail, Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council the scheme offers up to 25 free trees to individuals and groups. This Council has previously contributed £500 towards the project and it is proposed that the same level of financial support be provided in 2008/09.

1.2.4 A summary of the above projects is provided below:

Project	Cost (£)
Events Programme	2,275
Giant Hogweed Control Programme	625
Free Tree Scheme	500
TOTAL	3,400

1.2.5 Members will note £1,200 of unallocated revenue funding, and it is proposed that this be reserved to engage the Partnership in additional small projects throughout the year as and when identified.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The Council has an approved Memorandum of Agreement with the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 Proposed projects will be fully funded through existing revenue budgets.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 All activities carried out above will be subject to the provision of appropriate individual risk assessment.

1.6 Recommendations

1.6.1 It is therefore **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the proposed 2008/09 project work for the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership as outlined in the report be agreed, funded by existing revenue budgets.

Background papers:

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Nil

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Chief Leisure Officer