

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	4 th February 2025
Report Title	Community Choices 2025
Agenda Reference	9A
Author	Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk & Services Manager

Officer's Recommendations:

1. To note the background information of the Community Choices initiative and agree with the proposed theme of 'Celebrating Community'.
2. To agree with the proposed themes below to go out for consultation throughout the month of February 2025.

Background

The Community Choices initiative is a participatory budget scheme whereby the community can choose where local money is spent.

For the last four years the community has picked the theme 'Reducing Loneliness & Isolation' which enabled us to create a programme of events which is still relevant today (see Agenda 9B). This was incredibly popular in re-establishing the wants of the community, being friendly neighbours and has allowed the Council to communicate with the needs of the residents. During this time the Council has been able to see what has been well attended and what could be tweaked to encourage more involvement. Throughout those four years there have been several public consultations via online surveys, feedback forms and social media, feedback from events and via the Haydon Wick "Living" Magazine.

The events have been marketed well and there have been 'meet & greet sessions' at the Orbital and larger scale events to promote this further in person. A rapport has been built up with the regular event attendees as well who are becoming interested in more tailored Council activities.

Consultation 2025

It is suggested that the consultation for 2025 runs from Saturday 8th February – Saturday 15th March, reviewing the analysis after that and reporting the final projects to Full Council.

Proposed Theme

The Officers would like to propose the theme 'Celebrating Community' and would like to go out to public consultation with these suggested ideas. These themes will be to utilise the budget of £5,000 for general community and £2,5000 for youth allocation.

1. Various Community Art Projects (e.g. a street art mural and a commemorative wood carving sculpture)
2. Budget to boost the existing Community Events (e.g. VE Day Event 80, Summer and Christmas)
3. Wild Wick Community Garden Development/ Enhancing Community Open Spaces
4. Performing Arts/Community Theatre Performances
5. Thyme Close Play Area Repainting
6. Dog Play Area



Budget

The budget is £7,500.00 for 2025/2026 and has been split into the following categories:

- £5,000.00 General community projects
- £2,500.00 Youth projects (delivered either in-house and/or outsourced)

Previously the Council has vired some of this money to support the Council's Community Grants scheme or to enhance the Christmas Parcel scheme to a wider audience, if there is the demand and or if the budget allows.