

£1.4 million funding at stake for the Paddock Wood Community Centre - use it or lose it.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council strongly supports Paddock Wood Town Council's ambition to deliver a community centre for the town. I cannot think of a town of the size and status of Paddock Wood that does not have a community centre worthy of its name and it seems incongruous that many small villages have better facilities.

We have been working with the Town Council for a number of years to help them in their ambitions to deliver a community centre for the residents of Paddock Wood. Lots of work has been undertaken to find a suitable site and, despite suggestions to the contrary, no other suitable sites have been identified. The Borough Council has agreed to put £400,000 towards the scheme and has secured a further £1 million from developers who are building new homes in the town. It is only right that alongside the new homes we secure new facilities for residents.

Significant consultation has already taken place and the parish poll will cost local taxpayers more than £5,000 - money I would much rather see put into much-needed community facilities. We need to be clear that any decision not to proceed with the Memorial Field proposal would result in the loss of the £400,000 contribution from the Borough Council and in all likelihood see the million pounds being handed back to the developer. I urge local residents to support their local parish council and its proposal for a new community centre for the town

Cllr Lynne Weatherley, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Wellbeing