

| Report of | Meeting | Date |
|---|---------|-----------------------------|
| Director of Property and Planning (Introduced by Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)) | Council | Wednesday, 27 March 2024 |

Parks and Open Spaces Capital Programme

| | |
|---|---|
| Is this report confidential? | No |
| Is this decision key? | Not applicable |
| Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000 | Significant impact on 2 or more council wards |

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is seeking approval for the following schemes as part of developing a future Parks and Open Spaces Capital Programme for the next three years, and:
 - a. The report requests a number of budgets to be set up for particular projects to be funded by section106 funding and existing Council Capital programme budgets.
 - b. The report is asking for the limited reallocation of certain budgets between different projects.
 - c. The report includes two schemes which will be funded as part of the UKSPF (Shared Prosperity Fund) program. The UKSPF programme was agreed at full Council in June last year.

Recommendations to Council

2. That Council agree to take forward the list of projects identified in the table below in paragraph 18.
3. That Council approves the setting up budgets for projects as identified in the table below in section 18. These budgets will be funded through a combination of Section 106 monies, existing capital programme budgets and some one-off UKSPF grant funding linked to Economic Development as shown in the table below.
4. That Council approve the re-allocation of budgets as identified in the table in paragraph 18.

Reasons for recommendations

5. A council decision is required to approve and set up budgets and agree to a re-allocation of budgets in excess of £100k. This report is asking Council for approval to set up a number of budgets for individual parks and open spaces projects for the next three years. A Council decision is also required to approve the reallocation of budgets

within the capital budgets in order to fund the budgets required for the parks and open spaces projects.

Other options considered and rejected.

6. The option of not bringing forward this programme of parks and open spaces projects could have been chosen. However, this would mean that some S106 funding could be lost and the one-off UKSPF grant funding available would not be used, missing out on the opportunity to improve the borough's greenspaces.

Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

| | |
|--|---|
| An exemplary council | Thriving communities |
| A fair local economy that works for everyone | Good homes, green spaces, healthy places |

Background to the report

8. During spring 2019 an extensive consultation was undertaken on the future of green spaces in South Ribble focusing on some key areas including Bent Lane which has now become Strawberry Valley Park. The consultation was hugely successful with over 500 responses and residents engaging in a Planning For Real exercise in helping to plan future projects which have come to fruition in recent years.
9. The results of the consultation carried out in 2019 were fed into the new Corporate Strategy which emerged later in the year. The Corporate Strategy highlighted the importance of parks and open spaces in helping to deliver key aspirations set out in the Strategy including:
 - a. Improving health and wellbeing of our residents
 - b. Delivering against our aspiration of achieving a Council Net Zero position by 2030
 - c. Reducing air pollution across the Borough focusing on urban hot spots of pollution
 - d. Protecting and improving biodiversity across Borough.
 - e. Delivering new and improved open spaces and children's play facilities in the Borough focusing on an extensive Play Area Refurbishment Programme
 - f. Developing a 'green links' network of pedestrian, cycle and bridle ways supporting informal outdoor leisure activities and active travel across the Borough
10. In June 2019, alongside the emergence of the new Corporate Strategy, Cabinet approved a set of projects to be delivered over the next 4 years to be delivered from 2020/21 through to 2023/24. Many of the projects have been completed across the borough including:
 - a. A number of play areas that have been refurbished or renewed.
 - b. The development of the Leyland Loop which has involved the creation of a number of pedestrians, cycle and bridleways in and around Leyland.
 - c. Improvements to a number of parks across the Borough including significant work on Worden, Withy Grove, Farington, Hurst Grange and Strawberry Valley Parks.
 - d. Delivery of the Coach House Lottery Project in Hurst Grange Park

- e. Development of a number of urban flower meadows across the Borough to support pollinating insects.
 - f. Delivery of a new park now called 'Strawberry Valley Park' previously known as Bent Lane Recreation Ground.
 - g. Improvements to the Central Parks area of the Borough working in partnership with the Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council, and the Woodland Trust.
11. This financial year 2023/24 represents the fourth year in the 4-year plan of projects which are either delivered or planned to be delivered later in this financial year.
 12. This report is about developing a new Parks and Open Spaces Capital Programme looking forward to the next 3 financial years (2024/25 -2026/27).

The Proposals

13. The proposals below bring forward a set of parks and open spaces capital projects for the next 3 years which promotes the aspirations highlighted in the Council's revised Corporate Strategy.
14. The table below in paragraph 18 sets out the approvals required from Council in the following areas:
 - a. The creation of individual budgets for named parks and open spaces projects allocated to given financial years,
 - b. The re-allocation of money across projects within the Capital Programme
 - c. The allocation of s106 monies to individual projects as directed by the s106 agreements in place.
 - d. The allocation of some one-off UKSPF funding to specific parks and open spaces projects that will deliver against the required grant outcomes. The main UKSPF programme was agreed by Council on 19th July 2023.
15. As an explanation of the table in paragraph 18 below, the following information provides a short narrative for each project identified and how it will be funded.
 - a. Margaret Road play area in Middleforth is already a named project in the capital programme with a budget of £100,000 allocated. The proposal is that £110,000 is vired from the budget of £310,000 earmarked for a Penwortham to Howick green link for 2024/2025 to give this project a total budget of £210,000. This scheme and the following points b and c were previously earmarked to be funded via CIL but following the City Deal update to Council in November it is now proposed that this be switched to funded by borrowing.
 - b. Penwortham Loop is a planned 10km pedestrian and cycle green link around Penwortham promoted by the local Community Hub and local Members. The proposal is that a budget of £100,000 is set up for the Penwortham Loop project. Funding for this project will come from a virement of £100,000 from the budget of £310,000 earmarked for a Penwortham to Howick link. The budget will be profiled over 2024/25 and 2025/26.
 - c. Penwortham To Howick Green Link Scheme – Following the above virements totalling £210,000 from this scheme, there will be budget of £100,000 remaining to carry out the path upgrade works on SRBC land (80% of the original scheme).
 - d. It is requested that a new budget of £50,000 is set up for the drainage of a football pitch in New Longton in 2025/2026 using s106 funding earmarked for sports pitch

improvements in the New Longton area. A further EMD will be required to award the contract for the work to be completed.

- e. It is requested that a new capital budget is set up for improvements to Paradise Park in the Leyland area using section 106 funding associated with the Test Track development and directly available for improvements to Paradise Park. The budget available is £226,000 over two years in 2024/2025 and 2025/2026. A further Cabinet report will be required to award the contract to complete the work.
 - f. A new budget is requested for a project at Worden Park to include the improvement of the Shaw Brook Valley and the delivery of the extension on the western side of the park following the transfer of land to the council as part of the Altcar Lane development. It is proposed that the project will be programmed over two years in 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 and be funded from the existing capital budget for the Shaw Brook Valley, s106 funds from Buckshaw Village for public open space improvements and s106 funds allocated for the delivery of the park extension giving a combined project budget of £233,000.
 - g. It is requested that a new capital budget of £39,000 is set up over two years in 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 for projects in the central parks area of the Borough. The budget will be funded by section 106 funding which is earmarked for the central parks.
 - h. It is requested that a new capital budget is set up for Longton Playing Fields in 2024/2025 of £99,000 for the drainage of the sports pitch, the creation of a new footpath, and the relocation of a sports pavilion onto the site. The project will be funded by a direct s106 budget earmarked for Longton and a further s106 budget earmarked for playing pitch improvements in the Borough.
 - i. A new budget is requested to be set up for the replacing of play area equipment on Withy Grove Park in 2025/26. This project will be funded by the allocation of a s106 receipt to the existing capital programme releasing the relevant funds to the value of £150,000.
 - j. It is requested that a new budget of £200,000 is set up for the refurbishment and renewal of Holland House Play Area in 2026/27. The project will be funded from specific s106 monies applicable to the Holland House area. A further Cabinet report will be brought forward to award the contract to complete the work.
16. In addition to the above, UKSPF grant funding was approved by Council in July 2023 and some has been made available for capital works. Two capital budgets will form part of the Play and Open Spaces Programme as detailed below.
17. The proposed schemes that meet the criteria of the UKSPF funding highlighted above include:
- a. Improvements to a piece of land given to SRBC off Croston Road adjacent to a number of new Housing Estates.
 - b. Improvement to Bannister Brook and connecting the area to the Town Deal project providing a green lung in the heart of Leyland.
 - c. A further report will be brought to Cabinet to award the contracts to complete the projects.

18. The table showing the details of what money is been vired and where the section 106 funding is coming from in the table below.

| | Scheme | Virement From | Virement To | Increase/ New Budget 2024/25 | Increase/ New Budget 2025/26 & future years | New/Increased Budget funded by: |
|----|--|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| | | £'000s | £'000s | £'000s | £'000s | |
| 1 | Margaret Road Play Area | | 110 | | | Virement from Penwortham to Howick Green Link budget |
| 2 | Penwortham Loop Green Links | | 100 | | | Virement from Penwortham to Howick Green Link budget |
| 3 | Penwortham to Howick Green Link – re-allocate money to Penwortham Loop and Margaret Road play area | 210 | | | | |
| 4 | Paradise Park Improvements | | | 113 | 113 | s106 Contribution |
| 5 | Worden Park - Shaw Brook Valley Improvements & Park Extension Delivery | | 120 | 113 | | s106 Contributions |
| 6 | Worden Park - Shaw Brook Valley Improvements - Vire existing capital budget into wider project identified above in 7 | 120 | | | | |
| 7 | Central Park Projects | | | 15 | 24 | s106 Contribution |
| 8 | Longton Playing Fields | | | 99 | | s106 Contribution |
| 9 | New Longton Playing Pitches drainage | | | | 50 | s106 Contribution |
| 10 | Withy Grove Play Area Refurbishment | | | 150 | | s106 Contribution & s106 utilised elsewhere to allow reallocation of existing financing |
| 11 | Holland House Road Play Area | | | | 200 | Future s106 Contributions |
| | TOTAL | 330 | 330 | 490 | 387 | |

19. Each project identified above will require further reports in the shape of Cabinet reports or Executive Member Decisions depending on the individual values of the projects in order that contracts for work can be formally awarded.

Climate change and air quality

20. The programme of improvements works proposed in this report impacts on the following areas of climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda:
- reducing waste production
 - working with sustainable and green accredited companies,

- c. limiting or improving air quality

Equality and diversity

- 21. As part of pulling together the future Capital Programme for Parks and Open Spaces over the next three financial years, a full Equality Impact Assessment will be done on the impacts of the schemes across the Borough.

Risk

- 22. A risk register is in place to cover the procurement, contract management and delivery of parks and open spaces capital schemes with additional steps put in place to mitigate risks specific to individual projects. Contractors are also required to submit their risk assessments and proposed mitigation as part of the tender return information.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

- 23. The schemes in this report were all funded by external resources until the update on City Deal to Council in November confirmed there is currently no CIL available for allocation. As a result, points 1-3 in the table will be impacted upon totalling £210k and overall, in the capital programme £310k (the other £100k not forming part of this report). The increase in borrowing costs of approximately £30k has been factored into budget setting for 24/25 and beyond. All remaining schemes in this report are utilising other funding sources.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

- 24. Essentially the report seeks in principle approval to a number of projects together with the approval of the necessary budgets. Once detailed plans are worked up for any schemes then further approval will be sought then either through EMD or a Cabinet decision.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

| Report Author: | Email: | Telephone: | Date: |
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