

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Director of Environment

TO: North Area Committee

16/5/2013

WARDS: Arbury, East Chesterton, King's Hedges and West Chesterton

**DEVOLVED DECISION-MAKING AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS:
PROGRESS ON NORTH AREA PRIORITY PROJECTS**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Area Committees now have devolved decision-making powers over how certain types of developer (S106) contributions are used. In this Area, residents and community groups were consulted at a workshop last October on local needs and ideas for new/improved local facilities to help address the impact of development.

1.2 Having considered the range of suggested project ideas that were eligible for developer contributions and deliverable in the short-term, last November's North Area Committee identified (subject to project appraisal) three priority projects in the first prioritisation round:

- ▶ Community meeting space at the Sikh community centre (King's Hedges)
- ▶ Formalise BMX track next to Brown's Field Community Centre (East Chesterton) and
- ▶ Improve Nun's Way skate park (King's Hedges).

In line with a commitment to give a progress report to each area committee, Section 3 provides an update on the steps being taken to develop and deliver these priority projects by March 2014.

1.3 As this is a four-ward area, the North Area Committee had been invited to identify four priorities in the first round. However, it was not in a position to consider prioritising a play area improvement (for new equipment) last November because there were not enough 'provision for children and teenagers' devolved developer contributions available at that time. Since then, supplementary funding for play area improvements has been made available to the North Area from the city-wide fund. As a result, the Area Committee is now being given the opportunity to identify its fourth priority from the first round.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the steps being taken to deliver the North Area Committee's current first round priority projects, to be funded by devolved developer contributions.
- 2.2 To identify a play area improvement in the North area as its fourth priority project from the first round of devolved decision-making.

3. UPDATE

- 3.1 The planned milestones for the current three North Area priorities (in order for them to be delivered by March 2014) are as follows:

Description	S106 funding	Consult	Project Appraisal	Delivery start
Community meeting space at Sikh community centre	£50,000	N/A	July 2013	August 2013
Formalise BMX track next to Brown's Field Community Centre	£30,000	June/July 2013	July/Aug 2013	October 2013
Improve Nun's Way skate park	£65,000	June/July 2013	July/Aug 2013	October 2013

- 3.2 There are three main issues to highlight at this stage.
 - a. Having been out of contact for several months, the organisers for the Sikh Gurdwara & Community Centre got in touch in late April. They are now progressing designs for a large extension to the rear of their existing building instead of just refurbishing the existing space inside the old pub to provide a community room (ie, what the £50,000 allocated by the North Area Committee was for). Plans should be available soon.

The organisers will be asked to meet the Kings Hedges ward councillors and Head of Community Development in order to take stock and consider the next steps. The main issues to clarify will be about cost (whether they have the additional funding in place) and timing (whether it will be delivered by March 2014). Whilst Council officers will do everything possible to facilitate a March 2014 delivery date, it is important to recognise that – in the case of community facility capital grants – we are reliant on the grant recipients delivering their projects to their programme.

- b. More details on the consultation arrangements relating to the Brown's Field BMX track and Nun's Way skate park proposals will be publicised via the Developer Contributions web page (www.cambridge.gov.uk/s106). Residents neighbouring the proposed projects and local councillors will be contacted. Area workshop participants and local community groups will also be notified of the consultations by email (where up-to-date addresses are known).
 - c. In line with the Council's Constitution, project appraisals for area committee devolved priorities under £75,000 will be considered by the Area Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokes. The project appraisal will include consideration of running costs and future maintenance costs.
- 3.3 The delivery of the North Area Committee's priority projects needs to be placed in the wider context of the delivery of....
- a. the area-specific priorities chosen by the other area committees: in the first prioritisation round, 16 priority projects (over £550,000 in total) were identified across all four area committees.
 - b. strategic priority projects (benefiting more than one area): the Executive Councillors last January approved ten (over £900,000 of city-wide developer contributions in total) including Logan's Meadow Local Nature Reserve extension and St Andrew's Hall extension.
 - c. around 20 on-going projects funded from developer contributions, which have already been appraised and approved: this includes the Vie site public open space and play area projects and improvements to King's Hedges (The Pulley) play area.

There will be an oral update from officers at the committee meeting.

4. PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

- 4.1 **Background:** The Executive Councillor for Arts, Sport and Public Places agreed to make available to the North Area (from city-wide funding) at least £40,000 of extra developer contributions funding for provision for children and teenagers, based on the amounts available in December 2012. The actual figure for this supplement has been confirmed as £47,500. This is in addition to the £10,000 or so already in the North Area devolved fund for play area improvements.
- 4.2 **Process:** The North Area Committee is invited to identify one priority project to provide new equipment at a play area as a fourth priority from the first prioritisation round.

- a. Please note that developer contributions can only be used to fund new equipment: it is not for maintenance, which is dealt with through a separate budget.
- b. New equipment for a play area is likely to cost in the region of £30,000. Specific proposals for a prioritised play area will take account of local views and the local context of the space available and existing facilities. In broad terms, however, this amount of money could provide the following type of equipment for children under 7 years of age: two cradle swings; a mini-roundabout; a play-themed climbing frame (say, in the shape of a tractor or fire engine); a platform and slide; safety surfacing and fencing).
- c. Once the Area Committee has identified its new first round priority, officers will work up and consult on specific proposals, identify detailed project costs, carry out a project appraisal and secure approval before delivering the project (with an autumn 2014 target date).
- d. There will be further opportunity for the North Area Committee to consider its next set of area priority projects for delivery (from across the range of developer contribution types covered by devolved decision-making) in the second prioritisation round later this year. This will draw on project ideas not prioritised in the first round. The process for the second round (including an updated analysis of devolved developer contributions available per contribution type) is due to be reported to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee next month.

4.3 **Options:** The North Area workshop last October set out ideas for improving a number of existing local play areas. These are presented in the table (see next page) under their official names (some of which differ from the way they were described at the area workshop).

- a. Improvements to 'Campkin Road play area' were suggested: as there are two play areas off this road (and it was not clear which one was being referred to) both have been included in the table.
- b. The table includes an A-E 'play value' rating, based on Play England criteria and compiled as background information for the Parks Strategy 2010. This is an assessment of the amount and sophistication of the play equipment (where 'A' is the highest score available). That said, it is for the Area Committee to decide which play area it wishes to prioritise for additional play equipment to be funded from developer contributions.

- c. Whilst the play areas suggested for improvement are in the C-E 'play value range, it is worth noting that the North Area also features play areas with an 'A' rating (Nun's Way Recreation Ground) and a 'B' rating (eg, Arbury Court, Chesterton Recreation Ground, Green End Recreation Ground, Ramsden Square and St Alban's Recreation Ground).

Table: Play areas suggested for improvement

Play area	Where	Ward	Play value
Alexandra Gardens	Access from Carlyle Rd (off Chesterton Road)	Arbury	C/D
Beale's Way	Rear of 7 & 9 Beale's Way (off St Kilda Ave.)	King's Hedges	D
Blanford Walk	Rear of 101 Blanford Walk (off Brownlow Rd)	Arbury	D
Chestnut Grove	Rear of 26-49 Chestnut Grove (off Hawthorn Way)	West Chesterton	C/D
Discovery Way	Discovery Way	East Chesterton	C
Hawkins Road	By 27 Hawkins Road (off Campkin Road)	King's Hedges	D
Lawrence Way	Opposite 37 Lawrence Way (off Campkin Road)	King's Hedges	D
Woodhead Drive (de-commissioned)	Close to College Fields, next to Downham's Lane (not to be confused with the nearby play area at George Nuttall Close)	King's Hedges	E

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In the first prioritisation round of devolved decision-making, each area has been invited to identify as many priority projects as there are wards in their area. The reason for this is to ensure that there is sufficient officer capacity for delivering the range of area-specific and city-wide priority projects alongside existing, on-going developer contribution-funded projects.

- 5.2 The specific implications of particular priority projects will be carried out at the project appraisal stage.
- 5.3 The issue of insufficient devolved contributions for provision for children and teenagers for the North and East Area Committees was identified in the updated overview Equality Impact Assessment for devolved decision-making and developer contributions in January 2013. This was addressed in decisions made by the Executive Councillor later that month.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following papers on devolved decision-making and developer contributions were used in the preparation of this report.

- Report to North Area Committee, 22/11/2012
- Report to Community Services Scrutiny Committee, 17/1/13

This and other background information can be found on the Council's Developer Contributions web page (www.cambridge.gov.uk/S106).

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report, please contact:

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