



To: South Area Committee 18/04/2016

Report by: Simon Payne,
Director of Environment

Wards affected: Cherry Hinton, Queen Ediths, Trumpington

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (EIP)

1.0 Executive summary

This report requests that the Committee determine the allocation of funding to existing and potential new schemes as part of the 2016-17 Environmental Improvement Programme.

2.0 Recommendations

The South Area Committee is recommended:

- 2.1 To note the utilisation of £4,500 of remaining South Area EIP funding to the provision and maintenance of 26 hanging baskets along Cherry Hinton High Street during 2015-16.
- 2.2 To allocate further funding in 2016-17 of £4,500 for the annual provision and maintenance of 26 hanging baskets along Cherry Hinton High Street.
- 2.3 To consider the allocation of additional funding (up to £10,000) towards the existing committed scheme to improve street trees in Bateman Street.
- 2.4 To determine whether or not to progress with an outstanding commitment to introduce controls on verge parking in Mowbray Road and Fendon Road.
- 2.5 To consider the allocation of unallocated funding from the 2014-15 programme year, and additional funding available for 2016-17, to the list of previously proposed projects in Appendix A of this report.
- 2.6 To approve those projects for implementation, subject to the schemes being deliverable, obtaining consents necessary, positive consultation where required and final approval by Ward Councillors.
- 2.7 To note the progress of existing schemes listed in Appendix C of this report.

- 2.8 To consider a second EIP application invitation round during 2016-17 to utilise any funding uncommitted from the present round plus any savings arising from the delivery of previously committed schemes.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) funds and delivers small scale projects around the city that make a lasting and noticeable improvement to streets and public places. The programme was reviewed during 2015 to put more emphasis on smaller, community supported applications that can be developed and delivered more quickly. The programme eligibility criteria are attached at **Appendix D**.
- 3.2 The programme is supported for the next four years up to 2019-20 with an annual capital budget which is split across the council's four areas depending on population, with devolved decision making to Area Committees to allocate the budget available to project applications each year.
- 3.3 There were no new EIP projects adopted during 2015-16. However, £30,000 was provided in order to enable Cambridgeshire County Council to undertake a programme of Local Highways Improvements (LHI) across the city, and in South area some £4,500 of remaining funding from previous years was utilised in order to continue to provide summer hanging baskets in Cherry Hinton High Street.

4.0 Delivery of existing scheme commitments

- 4.1 Progress in implementing previous programme commitments is outlined in **Appendix C**. There are two remaining EIP schemes to be delivered in South area, both requiring close liaison with the County Council's highways service, and arrangements are in hand to complete these during 2016. In addition to the schemes completed, new parking restrictions have been implemented at various locations across the three South area wards, funded by the remainder of the South Area Committee 2011-12 joint minor highway works budget.
- 4.2 Appendix C includes details of some schemes aimed at improving damage to verges caused by vehicular parking and access to off-street parking facilities. A significant number of areas across Cambridge are suffering similar problems, many of which have been subject to bids for improvements through EIP rounds. A review is underway of the effectiveness of the most recent work undertaken.

- 4.3 Development work on the project to improve street trees in Bateman Street (Trumpington ward) is well advanced but suggests there may be a budget shortfall if a quality solution is to be provided at several locations throughout the length of the street. The proposal is to rebuild tree pits where trees have failed, and replant with suitable tree species. Existing healthy trees would be left in place. Area Committee is consequently asked to consider the allocation of a further £10,000 to this project.
- 4.4 There appears to be one further outstanding previous historic commitment (not listed in Appendix C); to introduce a prohibition of verge parking in Mowbray Road and Fendon Road (Queen Ediths ward - £4,000 allocated); which thus far appears not to have progressed. It is understood this may have been expected to be considered as part of the County Council's South Area Parking Review, but there is no indication that it remains a priority as part of any further work. Area Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to continue with this project, or reallocate the funding to other potential schemes.
- 4.5 On 23 June 2014 South Area Committee considered the allocation of funding available during 2014-15 year towards new project applications. The Committee determined to split the funding available equally across the three area wards, with each receiving £12,433. It was anticipated that this funding would then be allocated to individual projects at a later date. Whilst in Cherry Hinton ward agreement was reached to allocate the additional funds towards the Rectory Terrace improvement project, there appears to have been no similar agreement for Queen Ediths or Trumpington wards. Sums of £12,433 therefore remain uncommitted to individual projects in each of these areas.

5.0 2016-17 Year Applications

- 5.1 The budget available to develop and deliver new EIP projects across South area has been reduced from £41,800 in 2014-15 to £35,530 annually from 2016 to 2020. This is in order to support the city-wide £30,000 contribution to ensure an LHI programme can be delivered across Cambridge, where the majority of costs involved are met by the County Council.
- 5.2 The revised annual budget available in 2016-17 has an existing funding commitment; £4,500 for the annual provision of summer

hanging baskets in Cherry Hinton High Street. This leaves a budget available for the application to existing and new projects of some £31,030.

- 5.3 Depending on the appetite of Area Committee to approve further, or reallocate existing, funding to previous programme commitments as outlined in 4.3 and 4.4 above, the final budget available for allocation to new project applications could be as high as £35,030, or as low as £21,030.
- 5.4 In each of Queen Ediths and Trumpington wards there is a further £12,433 funding available and as yet not committed to individual projects (see 4.5 above).
- 5.5 No new project applications have come forward for South area in the latest invitation round. One suggestion to again split new funding available from 2016-17 across the three south area wards was however received from Councillor M Ashton (Cherry Hinton).
- 5.6 Area Committee is asked to consider this suggestion, along with the decisions needed as set out in 4.3 – 4.5 above. In the absence of any specific new scheme requests, the Committee may wish to re-consider those applications previously considered from the 2014-15 year bidding round, as listed in **Appendix A**. Preliminary feasibility work was carried out on each of these in 2014, including an initial assessment of the likely costs involved in delivering those projects considered to be potentially feasible
- 5.7 Following the review of EIP operating process in 2015, Area Committees are now able to consider more than one application round each year; depending on resource availability. South Area Committee therefore has a further option to either allocate the currently known budget available entirely now, or hold a proportion back for further allocation later in 2016. Should the latter option be favoured, the focus would need to be on small, straightforward projects that could be delivered within a time frame of a few months.
- 5.8 It is possible that there could be further savings arising from the delivery of projects from previous years outlined in Appendix C, which might be carried forward and added to the budget for 2016-17. The precise amount has yet to be quantified and is dependent on final out-turn costs of projects currently being completed. It might however provide some contingency for any unforeseen costs incurred in delivering any new projects adopted in this current round.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 South Area Committee needs to determine how to allocate EIP funding remaining from the 2014-15 year to existing and potential new projects in Queen Ediths and Trumpington wards. The Committee is also requested to consider the allocation of new funding available in 2016-17 across all three South area wards.
- 6.2 This report outlines a number of options for allocating this funding to existing and previously considered potential projects. Area Committee may wish to support a further scheme application invitation round later in 2016 to utilise any funding uncommitted from the present round, plus any savings arising from the delivery of previously committed schemes.

7.0 Background papers

None

8.0 Appendices

APPENDIX A

Summary of Feasible EIP Scheme Applications from 2014-15.

APPENDIX B

Further Details of 2014-15 EIP Scheme Applications Received.

APPENDIX C

Progress on Existing EIP & Minor Highway Improvement Schemes.

APPENDIX D

EIP Eligibility Criteria.

9.0 Inspection of papers

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

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