

## Programme Review

Programme Title	Environmental Improvement Programme
Manager	Andrew Preston
Approved Timescale	1 April 2005 to 31 March 2011
Scrutiny Committee	Environment Scrutiny
Committee Date	11 January 2011

### Recommendation

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 1 Note the progress and achievements to date of the Environmental Improvement Capital Programme (PR010).
- 2 Include a bid of £200,000 per annum to be considered in the Budget Setting Report to extend the programme to 2014/15 in accordance with a revised remit.
- 3 Recommend to Council the carry forward of unspent funding from the Environmental Improvement Capital Programme (PR010) estimated to be £355,000.

#### 1 Programme Remit

This programme, allocated to Area Committees based on population, allows local people and organisations, Councillors and Officers to put forward ideas to improve their neighbourhood. Both small and large-scale schemes can be considered if there is local support and if the proposal is likely to be a significant and long-term improvement to the street or place. This programme incorporates funding previously held on Capital Programmes for pavement replacement, traffic calming road safety schemes and pedestrian crossings.

#### 2 Review of Achievement of Project Objectives

- 2.1 Since the commencement of this programme in its current form in 2004, 124 environmental improvement projects have been delivered across the four area committees with a further 41 currently in development, the majority of which will be complete by the end of this financial year. Councillors, members of the public and officers have suggested a broad variety of schemes. Many have involved environmental landscape improvements and a significant proportion have been highway related schemes such as traffic calming and verge parking measures. The chart below shows the different categories of schemes that have been delivered over the past five years.

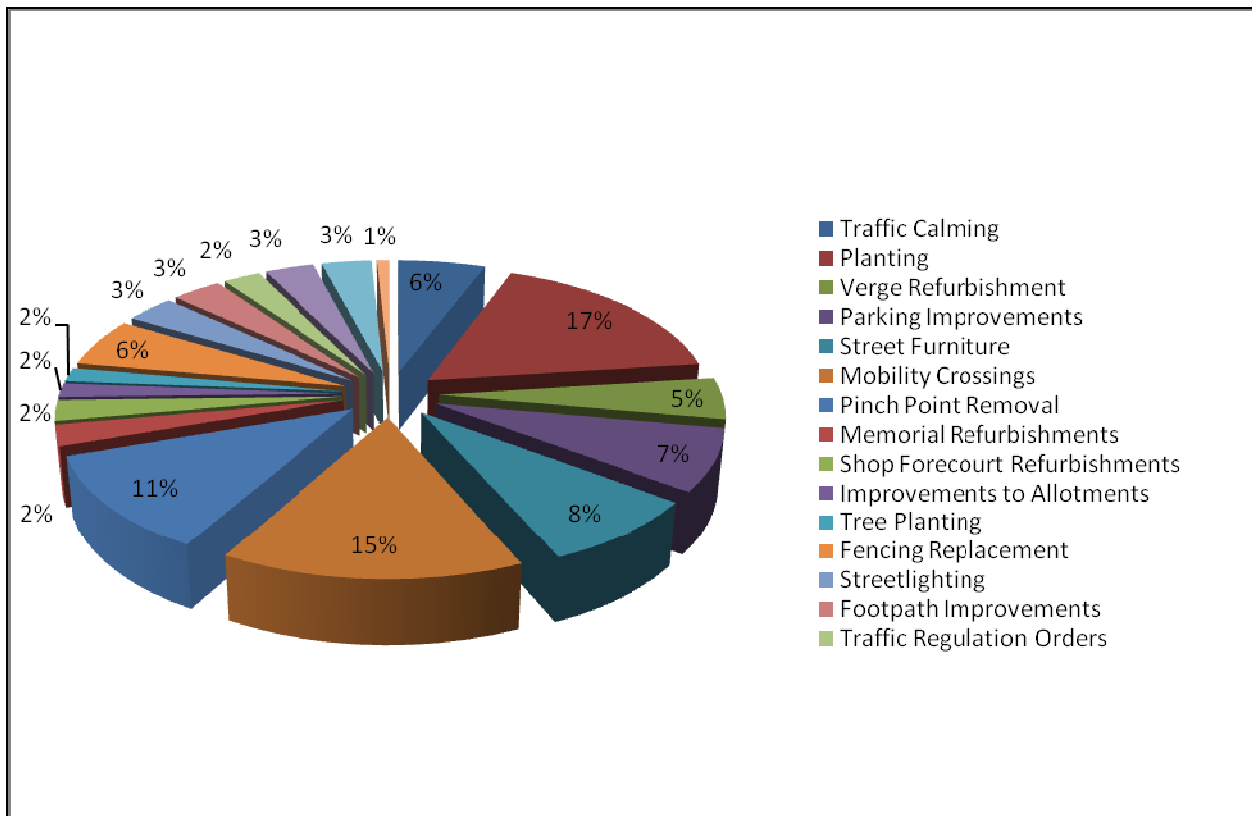
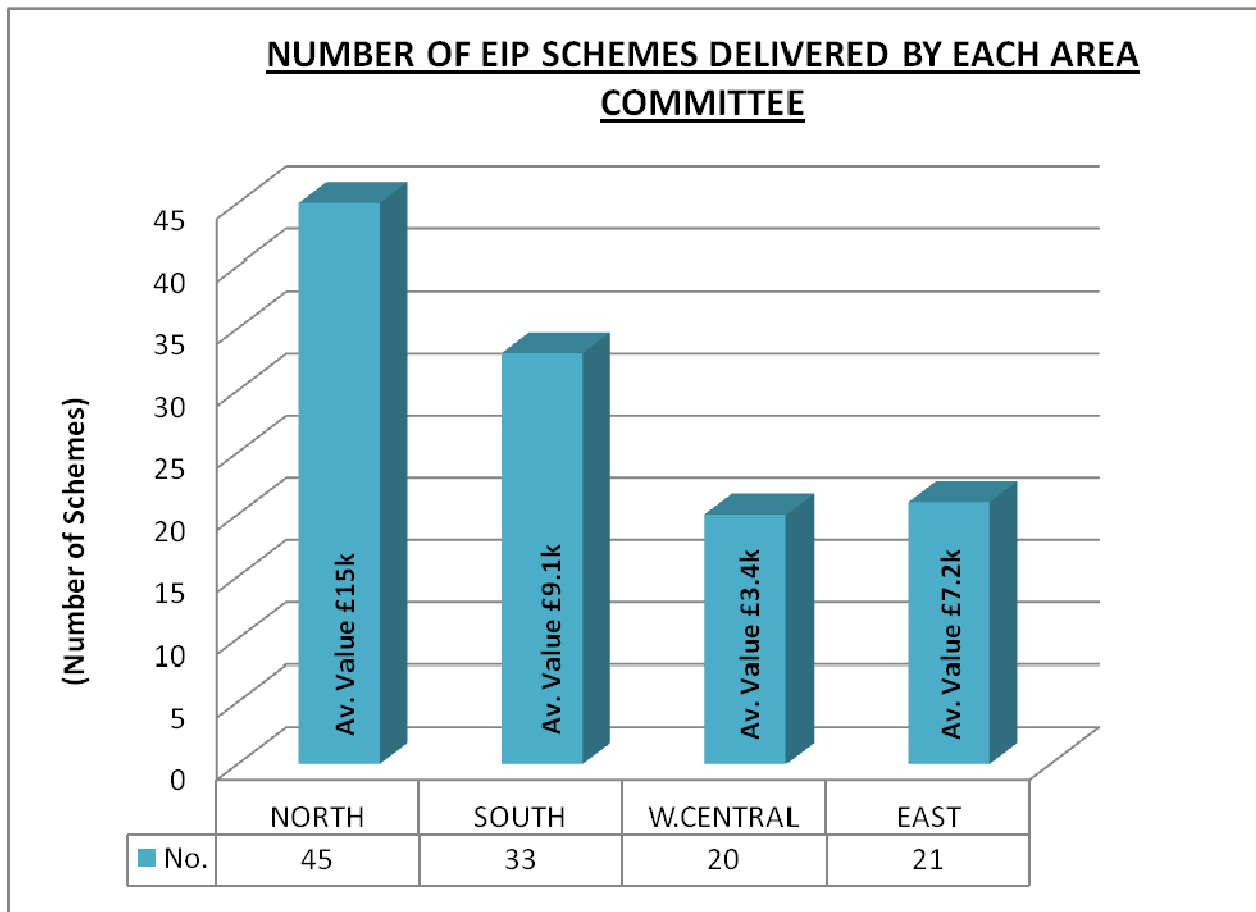


Fig.1. Types of EIP Scheme Delivered by the Programme.

- 2.2 The number of project categories illustrated above highlight the variety of projects adopted by the Area Committee's as part of their work to improve the local neighbourhood and respond to issues raised by local residents and the community as a whole.
- 2.3 Local schemes have been at the heart of all environmental improvement schemes throughout the programme, creating direct, lasting and noticeable improvements to the appearance of the streetscape and have been accessible to all residents of Cambridge.
- 2.4 The number of projects has made management of the programme challenging at times, particularly with small scale schemes being disproportionately more time consuming than larger scale projects to deliver.
- 2.5 A procedures document for EIP delivery was recently approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee, which also incorporated a proposed reduction in the number of separate decisions required by area committees in a bid to improve delivery times for projects.
- 2.6 Highway schemes have formed a considerable proportion of expenditure on this programme. Whilst these schemes fall within the remit of the County Council as the Highway Authority, they have been delivered by the City Council due to a lack of funding priority or non-compliance with County Council policies.
- 2.7 The number of schemes funded by each individual Area Committee is illustrated in figure 2 below, including the average value of scheme delivered.



*Fig. 2. Number of schemes delivered by each Area Committee and average scheme values from 2004/05 to 2009/10*

- 3.3 One of the major achievements of this programme is the Riverside cycle conflict reduction and environmental improvement scheme. This scheme will deliver a significant improvement to the public realm and street environment of a section of Riverside between Stourbridge Common and Priory Road.
- 3.4 The scheme also incorporates funding from the joint capital cycle fund and section 106 public realm contributions. The total scheme is valued at £640,000 with just under half funded by this programme.
- 3.5 The significance of this scheme meant that it was regarded as a scheme of city wide benefit, with allocations agreed from more than one Area Committee.
- 3.6 Other recent larger scale schemes such as Fitzroy/Burleigh Street and the Wulfstan Way improvements have been welcomed by local traders and residents and will have a substantial impact on the local area and Cambridge as a whole.

### 3 Assessment of project costs and resources

Period	2004/05 to 2010/11
	£000
Programme Budget	2,901
Actual Expenditure to 2009/10	1,487
Expenditure Planned for 2010/11	1,059
Over/(Under spend)	(355)

Programme funded by:	£000
General Reserves	2,896
Repair & Renewal Funds	
S106	
Other	5
Total	2,901

Project	Budgeted costs £000	Actual cost £000	Over / (under spend) £000
Individual projects within the programme:			
Programme Professional Fees	365	365	0
North Area Committee	501	435	(66)
South Area Committee	388	221	(167)
West/Central Area Committee	273	187	(86)
East Area Committee	577	259	(318)
<b>Total actual cost to 2009/10</b>	<b>2,104</b>	<b>1,487</b>	<b>(637)</b>
Individual projects planned:			
Programme Professional Fees	105	105	0
North Area Committee	226	243	17
South Area Committee	88	131	43
West/Central Area Committee	260	261	1
East Area Committee	118	339	221
<b>Total cost of planned projects to 2010/11</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>1,059</b>	<b>282</b>
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>2,901</b>	<b>2,546</b>	<b>(355)</b>

3.1 As shown in the tables above, the Area Committees have allocated the majority of the programme, with 41 schemes currently in development..

- 3.2 Taking into account public realm contributions for Riverside and Fitzroy/Burleigh St, the total estimated value of schemes to be delivered this year amounts to just under £1.6 million.
- 3.3 This is proving difficult to achieve within this final programme year, although a significant proportion of the planned schemes have already been in development for construction this year. A delay to the construction of schemes had an impact on the programme due to the unexpected need to procure a new Contractor midway through the year.
- 3.4 It is proposed that all unspent funding be carried forward into the new programme in order to maintain delivery of all schemes currently in development or close to construction. This is estimated to be £355,000, a breakdown of which is shown below.

Area Committee	Underspend £000
<u>North Area</u>	
Mortlock Avenue	39
Downhams Lane	6
Woodhead Drive/Milton Rd	4
<i>Not Committed to schemes</i>	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>
<u>South Area</u>	
Rectory Terrace Cherry Hinton High St *	60
Wulfstan Way - part	41
Clarendon/Shafsbury	22
<i>Not Committed to schemes</i>	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124</b>
<u>West/Central Area</u>	
Prospect Row*	12
Lammas Land Pavillion rebuild*	20
Mud Lane Lighting*	5
Union Society building wall - Park St*	15
<i>Not Committed to schemes</i>	33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>
<u>East Area</u>	
Mill Rd/Cavendish Rd	15
Perne Rd Pedestrian Crossing	40
Highway Verges - part	42
<i>Not Committed to schemes</i>	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>355</b>

\* denotes schemes that are proving difficult to deliver

## **4 Revenue Costs of the Programme**

- 4.1 Over the past five years, revenue funding has been limited to incorporation within existing funding streams, such as planting maintenance by Streetscene. No revenue budget exists for the programme, and as such existing budgets have carried the revenue costs of any new assets that have been created by EIP projects. The majority of schemes however, have been new highway assets owned by the County Council or improvements carried out to privately owned assets such as shop forecourts.
- 4.2 To date the County Council has taken on any maintenance liability created by these highway schemes. However third party funding of increased maintenance liability created by EIP schemes may in the future be requested by the County Council in the form of a commuted sum for a 20 year maintenance period. This is already in place for Parish Councils.
- 4.3 This might be facilitated through the agreement of a schedule of common highway assets with an associated estimated cost for their maintenance over a 20 year period.
- 4.4 This financial implication may therefore need to form part of any future decision made by Area Committees when scheme funding allocations are calculated and agreed in the future.
- 4.5 The current capital programme has a top slice of 20% that is transferred to a revenue budget to contribute towards the professional fees associated with delivering the programme. The budget has also been subsidised by the Housing Planning and Delivery Grant (HPDG) for the cost of one Project Engineer, until the end of the current capital programme.
- 4.6 The Environmental Projects Team responsible for delivering the Environmental Improvement Programme has three Engineers working full time on the programme with input from Landscape Architects as required and programme management support from the Environmental Projects Manager.
- 4.7 With the move of the Environmental Projects Team to Streets and Open Spaces, the restructure currently out to consultation will create a Project Delivery Team and incorporate delivery of Environmental Improvements and Developer Gain (S106) projects including open space, public art and public realm.

## **5 Value for Money**

- 5.1 The programme has delivered a considerable range of schemes across the whole city, from small scale mobility crossings to high profile public realm improvements, taking into account the differing views of residents and stakeholders and providing an end product that is both sustainable and cost effective

## **6 Review of lessons learnt**

6.1 There are six main areas that have been critical to the progress of this capital programme, these are;

- a) Area Committee Allocation.
- b) Committee Approval Process.
- c) County Council Approval Process.
- d) Private Land Agreements.
- e) Staff Resources.
- f) Project Management Support.

6.3 Past history of project expenditure by the Area Committees has shown that small scale schemes generally require just as much resource input as larger scale schemes.

6.4 In some cases schemes suggested have had inherent problems that other parties have not overcome in the past. Examples include;

- i) Highway Authority funding unavailable/against policy.
- ii) Highway Authority rejection of proposals.
- iii) Difficult land ownership issues.
- iv) Planning Approvals

6.6 The Agency Agreement between the County Council and City Council provides the mechanism for the City Council to propose and deliver schemes within the highway but until recently a lack of clear procedure for this process has also caused delays..

6.6 Highway EIP schemes therefore have had an extended delivery programme due to the level of involvement required from the Highway Authority. Initial approvals, two stages of road safety audits and final detailed approvals can add up to 6 months to the programme.

6.8 Projects that are proposed on privately owned land have also caused delay to the delivery of some projects.

6.9 Establishing land ownership and putting into place legal agreements, especially on schemes such as shop forecourt refurbishments can take months and involve Legal Services along with the EIP team.

6.10 Project and programme management support is critical to the efficient delivery of this capital programme due to the number and in some cases complexity of schemes, notwithstanding the Committee approval process.

6.12 This support has taken various forms throughout the programme, from being incorporated initially into the Urban Design Managers' position, then within the principal team member's role, until the creation of the Environmental Projects Manager in 2008, leading to a significant increase in expenditure on this programme over the past 2 years.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The Environmental Improvement Programme has delivered a large number of projects and achieved its remit to provide long-term improvements to the street or place. The size and number of projects has made it difficult for full expenditure of annual contributions with funding rephased each year.
- 7.2 A significant number of lessons have been learnt that can be taken into consideration when setting up any future programme.
- 7.3 The general issues surrounding project delivery outlined in this report have mainly been resolved as part of the management of the current programme.
- 7.4 Any future programme is critical to the street environment of the city and could also be supported by future Section 106 public realm contributions. .
- 7.5 A revised remit for this programme should be developed and presented to this Committee in March, subject to the approval of the bid to provide a new Environmental Improvement Programme.