



**To:** North Central Area Committee 15/12/2016

**Report by:** Joel Carre,  
Head of Streets and Open Spaces

**Wards affected:** Arbury, Kings Hedges, East Chesterton, West Chesterton

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (EIP)**

### **1.0 Executive summary**

This report requests that the Committee:

- Considers the allocation of funding expected to be available for EIP projects in North Area in 2017-18 towards the applications recently received and outlined in Appendix A of this report, and to consider extending a further application opportunity during 2017 to utilise any thus far committed funds.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

The North Area Committee is recommended:

- 2.1 To consider the allocation of £39,000 of the new EIP funding expected to be available for North Area during 2017-18 towards the list of proposed projects in Appendix A of this report.
- 2.2 To consider whether to extend a further application opportunity in 2017-18 with the modest amount of funding expected to be available, or defer this invitation to 2018-19.

### **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) and to offer councillors more than one application opportunity

each year (subject to resource availability). The programme eligibility criteria are attached at **Appendix D**.

- 3.2 The programme is supported by the City Council up to year 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 individual project applications each year.
- 3.3 First round applications for new EIP projects to be funded from the 2016-17 year budget were invited in early 2016, and considered by North Area Committee on 31 March 2016. With the budget available for North area during 2016-17, Area Committee determined to add the four new project submitted to the programme, and to allow Councillors a further application opportunity later in 2016.

#### **4.0 2016-17 Year Applications**

- 4.1 Applications for further potential EIP projects were invited from North area councillors during summer 2016. In order to assist with delivery, the guidance provided to applicants suggested that the focus be on small, straightforward projects that could be delivered within a time frame of relatively few months.
- 4.2 Preliminary feasibility work has been carried out on each of the applications that have been suggested for the 2016-17 Environmental Improvement Programme. This included an initial assessment of the likely costs involved in delivering those projects considered, at this stage, to be potentially feasible.
- 4.3 The table in **Appendix A** lists the eight new project applications that could be feasibly considered as part of the EIP Programme, should they be allocated funding by North Area Committee. Whilst some are relatively straightforward, others would take time to develop and deliver and are thus likely unachievable during the 2016-17 programme year.

#### **5.0 Funding Position**

- 5.1 The budget available to develop and deliver new EIP projects across North area has been reduced from £59,200 in 2014-15 to £50,320 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. The County Council has recently invited applications to this programme for 2017-18.

- 5.2 The City Council's revised EIP budget available for 2016-17 has a number of existing funding commitments for schemes already adopted into the programme (but yet to be completed) as outlined in Appendix C, plus £5,954 for the annual provision of summer hanging baskets in Chesterton High Street. A further £23,000 was committed to progress the four new EIP projects adopted by Area Committee on 31 March 2016. These commitments exhaust the funding currently available for EIP projects within North Area.
- 5.3 The total anticipated cost of the eight new scheme applications received and listed in Appendix A is £39,000. Until such time as further budget is available to support the programme (anticipated from April 2017), it is impractical to make a start on further projects.
- 5.4 However, should it be the wish of the Area Committee, the eight new schemes could be adopted into the programme for funding and development from 2017-18. In combination with the existing annual commitment for hanging baskets, it is currently anticipated that this would leave approximately just £2,000 available for allocation towards further projects during 2017-18.
- 5.5 It is possible that there could be some small 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 2017-18 onwards. 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 those projects currently under development.

## **6.0 Items for Determination**

- 6.1 Area Committee is asked whether it wishes to support the adoption of the eight new scheme applications received into the EIP programme for North Area for funding from 2017-18. This would obviate the need to seek further bids at the start of next year, as would normally be the case.
- 6.2 Instead, it is suggested that budget spend incurred in completing the outstanding programme commitments be monitored carefully, such

that any un-committed funds, or savings, might be made available either to enable a second (albeit modestly funded) project application round later in 2017, or carried forward into the 2018-19 year.

- 6.3 The latter of these two options would be preferable from an overall programme management perspective, as well as avoiding raising expectations and Councillors needing to determine how best to utilise what is expected to be only a very modest remaining budget, prior to the addition of further programme funds anticipated during 2018-19.

## **7.0 Background papers**

None

## **8.0 Appendices**

### APPENDIX A

Summary of Feasible Second Round EIP Projects for 2016-17.

### APPENDIX C

Progress of Existing EIP Schemes – North Area.

### 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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