

Item

Environmental Improvement Programme Project Submission Summary Report (2023) for Discussion

To: North Area Committee:

17 November 2022

Report by:

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Wards affected:

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

Key Decision: No

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report details the Environmental Improvement (EIP) applications and ideas received for 2023 funding for projects in the North Area. The Area Committee can comment on the applications and make recommendations. The area-based recommendations made by all the area committees and those put forward for city-wide strategic funding will be included in an overall recommendations report to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development, for an out of cycle decision on behalf of the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 The report provides information on eligibility, funding criteria and funding budgets for the Environmental Improvement Programme.

2. Recommendations

The North Area Committee is recommended to:

- i. To note the EIP budget allocation for North Area for 2022/23 and for Strategic EIP see 3.4,
- ii. To consider the new EIP ideas and project submitted for North Area, against the EIP Funding availability and the eligibility criteria (Appendix A),
- iii. Consider the recommendations made in Appendix B, discuss and clearly outline the committees' priorities in line with the available funding for consideration by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council's Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) has been operating as a rolling programme since 2004. The programme budget, which has been £170,000 per annum for the most recent period up to 2020/21. In 2020/21, Committee approved restructuring the programme budget, allocating £100,000 pa to a Strategic programme (which all Area Committees can bid towards) with the decision on Area and Strategic bids devolved to Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development; and £70,000 pa devolved between the four Area Committees (on a per capita basis) for Local project bids. The current EIP eligibility criteria are set out along with the programme application form in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 The programme has been subject to periodic review to improve flexibility, ensure good value and help speed up project delivery. That said, there have been delivery difficulties with much of the programme was put on hold for 2020/21 and 2021/22, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and the need to redirect resources towards Covid response and recovery.
- 3.3 As referred to in 3.1 above, there are now two forms of EIP funding:
 - **Local Area:** With a budget of £100,000 pa, which is devolved and divided between the four Area Committees (South, East, West/Central and North), in proportion to the size of each Area's population. Committees consider which projects in their area they recommend for funding, up to a project value of £5,000 (or £10,000 if strongly supported).

- **Strategic:** With a budget of £70,000 pa, this element of the programme is dedicated to priorities the Council has identified as being important across all areas of the city and which are aligned to the Corporate Plan and supporting strategies including Tree / Biodiversity / herbicide reduction plan, long grass policy etc. This includes making better use of roadside verges, enhancing tree canopy, improving biodiversity, benches (that promote community/ social interaction) and providing free public drinking water points.

3.4 Based on the devolved Area Committee Local budget, there is a total of £26,505 available for North Area as a proportion to the size of its population and £70,000 for citywide Strategic EIP.

3.5 An open application process for project bids within the city was started on the 21st September 2022 and closed on the 28th October 2022. The opportunity to submit project bids was advertised on the Council's website through the current consultations page with links through to Citizenlab (the Council's new community consultation and engagement platform).

3.6 North Area Committee members are asked to consider the projects included in Appendix B and after considering the funding parameters, eligibility and known public support (indicated from the Citizenlab platform) to make clear recommendations on priorities to be considered by the Executive Councillor.

3.7 Priority recommendations will be included in the final recommendation report and include both EIP Local area funded projects and Strategic projects.

3.8 Following consideration by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development of the final recommendation report the approved bids will be published in early 2023.

3.9 Following publication of approved projects, project delivery will commence through the Environmental Services - Project Delivery Team

throughout 2023, in liaison with project proposers and local ward councillors.

3.10 Those unsuccessful Local project bids, along with any Strategic project bids, supported by Area Committees but unable to be afforded this year, might be considered in any further available funding round in 2023 (subject to annual budget setting/ any available budget underspends), alongside any new applications received.

3.11 Note, funding and current status of projects, already approved in the North Area and other area programmes can be viewed at link.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The current EIP has an approved capital budget allocation of £170,000 per annum from 2021/22 (funding re-phasing from 2021/22 and 2022/23 to 2023/24 subject to annual budget setting).

(b) Staffing Implications

Historically a small number of projects have proven difficult to develop and deliver and have had a disproportionate impact on staffing resource in comparison with other programme work. The programme needs to be managed and delivered within the existing funded EIP programme management staffing resource (2 FTE).

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

EIP project bids have historically been prioritised across all areas proportionate to population and in accordance with locally identified need. The impact of all EIP projects on Equality Act 'protected groups' is assessed at the design/ planning stage of each approved project. All hard infrastructure schemes are designed to national standards to accommodate the needs of those with physical impairments, including mobility, sight and hearing. The overall impact of the programme is considered positive.

(d) Environmental Implications

The programme aims to preserve and improve the quality of the natural and built public realm environment across Cambridge, in a manner that does not

contribute towards climate change and leaves a positive legacy for future generations. The Council has declared both a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency and there is increased focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation and biodiversity protection and net gain. The overall impact of the programme on the environment within Cambridge is therefore rated as +M (positive; Medium).

(e) Procurement Implications

The programme projects are either delivered in-house, utilising existing internal resource within Environmental Services, or externally, via existing framework contract arrangements. To ensure value for money, the larger Strategic programme schemes may be delivered through competitive tender processes.

(f) Community Safety Implications

The programme is designed to deliver local public realm environmental improvements and foster increased pride of place and community cohesion. Several local area projects have been delivered in association with local community and voluntary groups. As a result, the programme is considered to have a positive impact on community safety.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

The Citizenlab engagement tool has been used to canvass public views directly and further involve and engage all sections of the community in the Council's EIP decision making process. All the programme projects are consulted on at the planning/ design stage, with the level/ type of consultation determined by and proportionate to the nature, scale, and scope of the proposed project. With much of the programme being small-scale projects, it is imperative that the proportionate principle continues to be followed.

6. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee Agenda and Minutes 21st March 2019.

7. Appendices

Appendix A – EIP application form and eligibility criteria,

Appendix B – EIP project submissions and recommendation for 2023 North Area.

8. Inspection of papers

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

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Appendix A

Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) 2023 Year Project Ideas

Proposal/ideas are open from the 21st of September 2022, the earlier you submit them the sooner we can post them on Citizenlab and once on their the greater the chance others may support. Submission ideas are unlikely to be accepted following the 28 October 2022.

First Name

Surname

Email Address
(not to be shared with public) so we can contact you for more project details if your idea is supported

Location of suggested Environmental Improvement - Street/Greenspace name or nearest postcode

Title - What: Issue/Problem/Improvement – please give a title to idea and what your idea is likely to achieve:

Description - How: Suggested Solution – please outline how you feel your objectives might be best met e.g., improve biodiversity on Joe Street – Plant wildflower grasses on greenspace on corner outside number 1 Joe Street and change grass cutting regime:

Outcomes - Why: Joe Street is part of an important Local Nature network corridor, it will help with health and wellbeing of local people, improve the environment, contribute towards secure nature species for the future.

Who: Please outline who or which Group is proposing the project or whether local Councillors support?

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Proposed Budget - Not compulsory - But may outline items required, and possibly an approximate cost of these giving an approx. budget requirement - note Officers with experience may add in estimate costs or change any costs inputted based on experience of delivering projects.

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Eligibility Criteria for Environmental Improvements

Please indicate which of these criteria would be met by your application:

Essential Criteria	tick	Desirable Criteria	tick
Projects have a direct, lasting and noticeable improvement to the appearance of a street or area		The project will benefit a large number of local people	
Projects should publicly visible and accessible		Ease and simplicity of implementation	
Should the scheme be on private land, the owners' permission must be granted – unless there are exceptional circumstances by which the Area Committee may wish to act unilaterally, with full knowledge and responsibility for the implication of such action.		It features the active involvement of local people	
Projects must ensure low future maintenance costs.		It meets one/more key policy objectives (e.g. improves biodiversity, community safety or contributes to equal opportunities)	
		There is potential for inclusion of employment training opportunities	
		Additional 'partnership' funding is available.	

Ineligible for funding:

- Projects costing more than £10,000; without Area Committee authority
- Where an available alternative source of funding is available
- Revenue projects (i.e. management and maintenance of existing facilities)

- Schemes that have already received Council funding (unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would not be 'top up' funding)
- Works that the City or County Council are under an immediate obligation to carry out (e.g. repair of dangerous footways)
- Play areas (S106 funding should pay for these facilities).

Other Information:

The following categories of work were agreed as being eligible for funding by the Area Committees:

- Works in areas of predominately council owned housing

Appendix B – EIP project submissions for 2023 North Area,

Please consider that the funding available is **£26,505** and the 19 project submissions for the Area EIP are estimated to cost £53,050, as set out in the table 1 below.

Prior to the committee the project list and details were sent out to ward councillors for the North Area with the advice that Councillors consider the projects put forward giving an opportunity to indicatively prioritise which ones they would wish to proceed. Within the Table below there is an Officer Funding suggestion based on Officer comments and analysis. However, this is to be discussed with the final recommendation for project funding approval coming from Area Committee Board Members. Where applicants have estimated costs of works, or not included, Officers have added or adjusted to appropriate estimated amounts.

Table 1 - Summarised project submissions for North Area:

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Ward	Proposed by	Est. Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£			
N1 - 2023	Logan's Meadow noticeboard improvement	Improving information of Local Nature Reserve, to promote the works undertaken to improve the biodiversity of the site.	East Chester ton	Local Residents	1.5k	Green	Thumbs up 7	Yes
N2 - 2023	Jubilee Gardens establishing the space as a Green Asset.	Building on the establishment of the space following s106 investment in access footpath and biodiversity improvements. To develop space further by installing additional benches, allowing users to rest/ enjoy the local environment whilst improving the social interaction for residents/community and visitors to Cambridge.	West Chester ton	Cllr R Swift	4.5k	Green	Thumbs up 4	Yes - Potentially reduced to £3k
N3 - 2023	Hazelwood Close - Seating installation	To install a bench on the greenspace opposite 68 Hazelwood Close.	Arbury	Cllr I Divkovic	1.5k	Amber	Thumbs up 2	Unclear - support levels?
N4 - 2023	Green End Road Park - Benches and Biodiversity	To improve the park including installation of benches and biodiversity improvements on the greenspace to create an area for social interaction following consultation (support) from Local Residents/schools and improved biodiversity.	East Chester ton	Cllr G Bird	5k	Green	Thumbs up 4	Yes – Full funding only if area budget allows

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Ward	Proposed by	Est. Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£			
N5 - 2023	Community Noticeboard Mayfield Area	Noticeboard to provide Shared information helping with community cohesion and inclusion.	Arbury	Cllr C Payne	1.5k	Green	Thumbs up 5	Yes
N8 - 2023	Environmental improvements on land corner of Downhams Ln & Woodhead Dr	This proposal seeks to improve the entrance to Woodhead Drive on the corner of Downhams Lane with some simple landscaping. The land is owned by BT/Openreach and is grassed, bare, scruffy, and partially covered in grasscrete to facilitate occasional offroad parking for their work vans.	King's Hedges	CB4 People and Local Resident	3k	Amber - May require Officer time for consent	Thumbs up 4	No - require private landowner permission potential for future rounds
N9 - 2023	Boost biodiversity and keep tidy the area around Arbury Court	Improve biodiversity in the number of small spaces and margins around Arbury Court (wildflower planting etc). To be implemented with budget to keep the area cleaner and tidier on an ongoing basis. Targeting the small footpath behind the Butchers / Chemists, the bins along the back. Project help ensure the whole space around the court feels safe and well looked after.	Arbury	Local Resident	5k	Red	Thumbs up 11	Unclear - Limited potential impact from EIP? Alternative Funding available
N10 – 2023	Improvements to the back of Arbury Court	The rear of Arbury Court is in a tatty state, there is a fair amount of pedestrian and cycle traffic. Some small scale improvements would make a cost-effective difference, suggestions chiefly aesthetic e.g paint doors, brickwork hide commercial bins etc	Arbury	Local Resident	5k	Red	Thumbs up 14	Unclear - See N9 above.
N11 - 2023	Replant a tree on Darwin Drive! It's now a car park - it should be green space!	On a corner of Darwin Drive there used to be a mature tree but was removed and now used for parking. The pavement is quite wide and could support not only a new tree but also a planted area around it with shrubs, bulbs and flowers.	Arbury	Local Resident	5k	Amber Other Funding LHI/Trees	Thumbs up 20	Potentially – Balance between parking and environmental needs

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Ward	Proposed by	Est. Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£			
N13 - 2023	Restore benches at the 'Cyclops' junction on Histon Road	Additional or restored benches under the trees on the new junction would be welcomed by people carrying their shopping to the McManus Estate and Borrowdale. The green spaces under the trees would be an appropriate place to sit down and socialise or simply rest.	Arbury	Local Resident	2k	Amber	Thumbs up 2	Potentially dependent on support
N14 - 2023	The Grove Nursery - Sensory Garden	Our "garden" is a fully concreted school playground area. Many of our children lack have limited or no garden at home and no access to green areas to play and learn, so we are looking to create a sensory garden and growing area in our outside space. A sensory garden encourages sensory development, encourages exploring, allows us to engage with the environment, helps cognitive development, develops communication and can be a calming area.	Kings Hedges	Nursery Manager	2k	Amber	Thumbs up 15	Unclear - concern about publicly accessibility except for users.
N15 - 2023	Attract honeybees into communal yard by planting a bee friendly garden	More bee friendly plants and flowers into our communal garden to make a sanctuary for honeybees and other beneficial pollinators. Make small garden around which attracts the polinators all around the year. Use Zinc-Aluminum-Magnesium Stainless Steel Metal raised planters these are an ideal solution for growing in difficult climatic conditions.	Arbury	Local Resident	5k	Red	Thumbs up 4	No - Questionable broader public benefit for investment
N16 - 2023	Pearl Close - Biodiversity, seating and verge parking discouragement	Improvements to open space on Pearl Close to address off street parking. To introduce play, nature and seating to encourage use of the open space.	East Chester ton	Officer (Cam City)	5k	Amber / Red	Thumbs up 1	No – requires investigation with Highways into parking needs

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Ward	Proposed by	Est. Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£			
N17 - 2023	Community Planting on Campkin Road	Improving the two small circular roundabout areas set into the pavement outside the row of shops on Campkin Road (Tesco's, Ocean Dragon). To engage interested residents in the local area, eco-friendly low fencing to protect spaces, to replant and manage these two areas. They are manageable in size and we can make them really attractive to look at by turning them into community gardens, planting them up with wildflowers to encourage pollinators.	King's Hedges	Cllr A Collis	500	Green	Thumbs up 8	Yes – As £2k Funding already in place which might be used for this
N18 - 2023	Community Planting in Minerva Way/Kings Hedges Rec	There is a concreted area which would lend itself well to a small community garden project on the corner of King's Hedges Rec, backing onto Minerva Way, that is currently unused and out of step with the green space nearby. This proposal would see the addition of some raised beds/planters. Planters would be accessible to residents in wheelchairs. With community involvement planters could then be used as a small-scale community food growing space, that would have the additional benefit of encouraging pollinators.	King's Hedges	Cllr A Collis	950	Green	Thumbs up 7	Yes - suggest work with Environmental Services Community Engagement Team
N19 - 2023	Making the most of small spaces in King's Hedges	King's Hedges (North) has dense housing stock, laid out in courts and closes with small patches of public land, on the corners of streets etc. These spaces are underutilised the proposal is to work to improve two of those small incidental spaces, making them more green and biodiverse. 1. At the top of Aragon Close and 2. In Caithness Court - both patches of land could make a great wildflower garden or community growing space with Caithness possibly installing a listening bench.	King's Hedges	Cllr A Collis	800	Green	Thumbs up 9	Yes - suggest work with Environmental Services Community Engagement Team

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Ward	Proposed by	Est. Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£			
N20 - 2023	Create a community haven on Green End Road, East Chesterton	Chesterton Methodist Church proposes the creation of a safe outside sitting area, a landscaped wildlife-friendly garden open to everyone at the front of the church on Green End Road. The landscaping work would be carried out by Groundwork East, the garden itself would contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents and users providing a pleasant green outdoor space to sit and socialise, sheltered from the road by planting. Improving the environment and increasing biodiversity in the area by replacing areas of grass that currently surrounds the church with new trees and shrubs, perennials and wildflowers. Contribution to the project.	East Chesterton	Chesterton Methodist Church in partnership with others	5k	Green	Thumbs up 6	Yes - Consider budget reduction if unaffordable in Area EIP.
N21 - 2023	Play equipment and football nets - Scotland Rd Rec	Local consultation with children has resulted in football nets as it's too far to go to Green End Rd and a seesaw and a climbing frame as favourite options. Also additional benches to improve social interaction and health and well-being.	East Chesterton	Cllr G Bird	1.5K	Amber	N/A	Unclear – fund benches other elements ineligible
N22 - 2023	Moving Forward – Arbury Court Community Garden Project.	Project to create an inclusive and healing green space that encourages nature-appreciation and social bonding. Installation of raised flower beds on the large green space outside Budgens. To include seasonal plants, flowers, spring bulbs, perennial grasses and small shrubs. The proposed planter layout will allow cut-across paths with spaces wide enough for wheelchairs or walking comfortably. Benches under the trees, wildflower and a bug hotel corner are crucial features in the plan. We started the initiative in January 2022 with spring bulbs planting and a commitment to weekly litter picking, weeding and sweeping around the area.	Arbury	Volunteer group of the charity Tzu Chi Foundation UK	3k	Green	N/A - Late Submission 29/10/22	Yes - proviso work with Env Services Community Engagement Team and need support of neighbours and to consider best location further.

Table 2 - Submissions for Projects Strategic Area Funding; note sN - 2023 project(s) that fall in North Area.

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost	Cost, Delv, elig,	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£	R/AG		
sN6 - 2023	Grass verge biodiversity improvements additional for Gilbert Road	Biodiversity work to be undertaken as part of approved Gilbert Road EIP strategic project however more biodiversity enhancement works identified than current budget.	Arbury	Officer (Cam City)	8k	Green	Thumbs up 3	Yes - dependent on budget pressures
sN7- 2023	Improving Biodiversity on Carisbrooke Road's central greenspace	Improving Biodiversity on community amenity greenspace adjacent and leading to Mayfield Primary School off Carisbrooke Road. There is an opportunity to improve biodiversity through a number of measures and this may include invertebrate and wildflower banks, with the banks creating a wildflower seed bank, bee-mounds, wildflower swathes under the trees and in the central greenspace areas, import and other biodiversity landscaping improvements appropriate.	HRARA and Local Cllrs	Arbury	10k	Green	Thumbs up 38	Yes - dependent on budget pressures
sN12 – 2023	Bee Balconies! Pollinator-friendly planting for flats	Enable pollinator-friendly planting on balconies in high-rise flats around the city. Adding a vertical pollinator corridor to our growing horizontal ones. This could be simply done with bulbs and wildflower seeds, compost and planting tubs. A trial - identify a block of flats, talk to the residents' group, order (peat-free) compost/bulbs/seeds, publicise, have a free bulbs and seeds day!	Local Resident - On the Verge Cambridge	Arbury	3k	Green	Thumbs up 3	Yes - dependent on budget pressures
City 1	Citywide Community Engagement led Biodiversity and Habitat	Established volunteer work groups led by Environmental Services Community Engagement Team to work with residents to develop local community gardens and food growing spaces on works such as benches (to increase social interaction), local food production, wildflower meadows, trees, and invertebrate (bees) and wildflower bank(s)/features as well as projects that focus on Food	Environ Services Community Engagement Team	All	circa 15k	Green	Thumbs up 1	Yes – Amount dependent on budget pressures

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost	Cost, Delv, elig,	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
					£	R/AG		
	Improvement Projects	Poverty by creating growing spaces – cultivating areas of green space several small scale projects – assisting groups cultivate farm and harvest land for social benefit, during the current national financial crisis.						
City 2	Genuine Biodiversity gain	Work with homeowners street by street, ward by ward, and offer to put green roofs on flat roof extensions, bring back front gardens with as much or as little planting the home owner will allow.	Local Resident	All		Amber/Red	Thumbs up 6	Unclear - Deliverability other Council Teams could help delivery, very high time resource.
City 3	Environmental map of Cambridge	Wildlife need corridors to enable travel around the city. An environmental map would look at the City's open and closed spaces to highlight the spaces that are great for wild birds, reptiles, fish, insects, amphibians and mammals but also the spaces that are used for domesticated animals, pets and farm. It could identify the spaces of travel, for these creatures plus showing areas which may need more corridors created.	Local Resident	All		Red	Thumbs up 1	No - ineligible

Table 3 - Submissions of Project Ideas for North Area EIP or Strategic EIP that more appropriately funded through Other Funding Such as LHI, S106, and or others.

Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Estimated Cost	Persons in Support
				£	
Improved children's playarea at pulley play area buchan street	To improve the children's play area at the pulley play area on Buchan Street for the under 5s.	Local Resident	Kings Hedges	5,000	Thumbs up 3
Make Stretten Avenue/Bateson Road cross roads safe for school kids	Project to redesign this cross roads to make it safer. The Stretten Avenue/Bateson Road cross roads has overgrown bushes and make it hard to understand and cross safely.	Local Resident	Arbury	15,000	Thumbs up 10
Introduce electric auto rickshaws in Cambridge City	An Auto electric Rikshaw solution: People could use auto rikshaws to reach the boarding points for buses/railway stations.	Local Resident	Citywide	?	Thumbs up 4 down 2