

CABINET

Wednesday, 13 March 2019

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPENDING FOR PLAY AREA EXTENSION AT ROYAL GREEN, LOWESTOFT (REP1989)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The extension to the play area at Royal Green, Lowestoft will provide important new facilities at a strategic location on the seafront which will support the Council's plans for the seafront and the upcoming First Light Festival. Approving funding at this time will allow work to commence quickly for the summer season.
2. The Council's Local Plan Working Group has recommended that £123,500 of Community Infrastructure Levy funding is made available to deliver the project. It is recommended that Cabinet make Community Infrastructure Levy funding available to deliver the project.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Wards Affected:	Kirkley
Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management
Supporting Officer:	Dickon Povey Principal Planner (Policy and Delivery) (01502) 523043 dickon.povey@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is the main way in which the Council now collects contributions from developers for infrastructure provision to support development planned in the Council's Local Plan. It largely replaces the old system of Section 106 planning obligations.
- 1.2 In 2014, Full Council agreed process and governance arrangements for the spending of CIL. Decisions on what to spend CIL on are made through an annual programming process supported by an annually updated Infrastructure Plan. Recommendations on CIL spending are made by the Council's Local Plan Working Group and the final decision is taken by the Council's Cabinet. There is allowance for further CIL funding to be considered after the annual CIL spending has been determined by Cabinet.
- 1.3 The play area extension at Royal Green has been identified as a project which will deliver significant benefits which will be maximised if it is delivered for summer 2019 and is recommended to receive CIL funding.

2 PLAY AREA EXTENSION AT ROYAL GREEN, LOWESTOFT

- 2.1 This project involves an extension to the existing play area on the Lowestoft seafront at Royal Green to provide a self-contained toddler play area with inclusive play provision for disabled users. The project would be delivered by Waveney District Council in partnership with Sentinel Leisure Trust and Waveney Norse. It would address a need for good quality play provision on the seafront, especially toddler play equipment. The cost of the project is £125,000.
- 2.2 Sentinel Leisure Trust's Play Space Evaluation Report (2015) recommends that the Royal Green play space is improved for toddlers and juniors. Waveney Green Infrastructure Strategy (2015) recommends improvements to play equipment in this location to address the shortfall and enhance the promenade as a destination, complementing the beach front and nearby businesses. Waveney Open Space Needs Assessment (2015) identifies limited facilities in this location and recommends improvements to play equipment to complement the facilities in the area.
- 2.3 The project would contribute to key objectives in the Final Draft Waveney Local Plan (particularly with respect to central and coastal Lowestoft) thereby supporting growth across the district. These objectives include improving tourism; enhancing the quality of the public realm; and enhancing the vitality and viability of Lowestoft Town Centre.
- 2.4 The extension to the play area would also support the delivery of the 'Lowestoft Seafront Vision'. It would meet a number of its objectives including provision of additional seafront amenities; contributing towards the promotion of an active seafront; increasing visitor numbers; and driving economic growth.
- 2.5 Evolving from the Lowestoft Seafront Vision, the 'First Light Festival' will be held on Lowestoft seafront. The first one is taking place at the end of June 2019. Improving the facilities for all in this location will support and enhance the festival as it starts out.
- 2.6 The extension to the play area at Royal Green would also support a number of the objectives of the East Suffolk Business Plan as set out in section 3 of this report.
- 2.7 The project is included in the abovementioned Infrastructure Plan and was part of the CIL funding considerations when the annual CIL funding was approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 12th September 2018. The project was not supported as a project for CIL funding at that time due to ongoing discussions around its delivery. Since then the

project has evolved and a proposed car park extension has been removed and the costs have significantly fallen.

- 2.8 Planning permission would not be required for the play area extension and procurement has already taken place.

CIL Spending Considerations

- 2.9 For a project to receive CIL funding it should: be within a type of infrastructure that is included on the Council's Regulation 123 list (contained in the Infrastructure Plan); be identified in the latest Infrastructure Plan; be capable of starting in the financial year; and be broadly in line with the phasing of infrastructure delivery outlined in the Infrastructure Plan unless there are good reasons for earlier/later delivery.
- 2.10 Decisions for the annual cycle of CIL funding for the 2018/19 financial year were made by Cabinet at their meeting on 12th September 2018. To date there has been £858,963 of CIL funding approved for seven different projects. Using the latest CIL accounts from April 2018, this shows that following this funding it will leave £856,414 of CIL remaining.
- 2.11 The Council's Funding Manager has explored options for external funding. Lowestoft Town Council has been contacted to discuss the possibility of making a financial contribution to the project. Otherwise there is no other external funding available. Section 106 contributions of £1,500 can be made available to help fund the project. As such, the project must be funded substantially through CIL if it is to go ahead.

3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

- 3.1 Improving the play equipment in this important central location would boost the local economy; improve the tourism offer; and support active, healthy lifestyles. All of which are part of the Vision. Furthermore, the project would support Economic Development & Tourism, Leisure, Communities, and Community Health Critical Success Factors. Relevant Planned Actions include increasing physical activity across all age groups; increasing visitor numbers; developing and sustaining local tourism; and supporting high profile cultural events.

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's Local Plan Working Group considered and endorsed the proposal to provide CIL funding for this project at their meeting on the 13th February 2019. Having regard to officer's advice, the Working Group resolved to recommend to Cabinet that CIL funding should be made available to finance the project.

5 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 This report has been prepared having taken into account the results of an Equality Impact Assessment, a Sustainability Impact Assessment and a Partnership Impact Assessment. The Equality Impact Assessment, Sustainability Impact Assessment identified positive effects.

6 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Members have the option of not agreeing CIL funding for this project and retaining CIL funds for future use.

7 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 Given the role the project would play in supporting growth in the Local Plan; the benefits arising from the project; revisions to the design of the project; along with the timing of the First Light Festival in June and the up coming main summer holiday season; the project is recommended for £123,500 of CIL funding.

RECOMMENDATION

That £123,500 of CIL funding is made available for the play area extension at Royal Green

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Date	Type	Available From
2019	Lowestoft Seafront Vision	http://www.lowestoftsouthbeach.co.uk/the-vision
2015	Sentinel Leisure Trust Play Space Evaluation Report	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Your-Council/WDC-Council-Meetings/2016/November/WDC-Cabinet-02-11-16/16-Item-9-Appendix-A-Play-Evaluation-Report-2015.pdf
2018	WDC Cabinet minutes 12 th September 2018	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Your-Council/WDC-Council-Meetings/2018/November/Cabinet-20-11-18/Item-3-Minutes-12.9.18.pdf
2018	WDC Final Draft Local Plan	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/new-waveney-local-plan/
2015	WDC Green Infrastructure Strategy	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Background-Studies/Green-Infrastructure-Strategy.pdf
2018	WDC Infrastructure Plan	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Your-Council/WDC-Council-Meetings/2018/September/Cabinet-12-09-18/06a-Appendix-A-Infrastructure-Plan-18-19-Cabinet.pdf
2015	WDC Open Space Needs Assessment	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Background-Studies/Open-Space-Needs-Assessment.pdf
2019	Equality Impact Assessment	WDC Planning Policy Team
2019	Sustainability Impact Assessment	WDC Planning Policy Team
2019	Partnership Impact Assessment	WDC Planning Policy Team