

Minutes of the Community Infrastructure Informal Panel Meeting
24th June 2021 (Via Teams)

Present: Councillor Russell Gordon-Smith (Chair) Richard Botham (Strategic Director –Services) Lisa Kirkman (Strategic Director – Resources) Simon Finch (Head of Regulatory) Michael Woods (Senior Solicitor- Planning and Environment) Corrine Phillips (CIL Implementation Officer)

1. Apologies – Received from John East (Strategic Director- Place)

2. Consideration of Winchester City Council Bids for funding.

2.1 – Abbey Gardens, Winchester– Bid for £110,000 for playground equipment. The bid meets the criteria for CIL funding as it contributes to improvements in built recreational facilities and the provision of enhanced open space and has wider as well as local benefits. Councillor RGS queried how the CIL bid amount had been calculated as the public consultation was still to be undertaken. CP and SF confirmed that there would be various types of play equipment which the Recreation Team would have costings for, and the proposed public consultation would allow preferences to be identified within the set budget. SF commented that the playground was widely used by those visiting the town centre from a wider area. RB confirmed that the proposed improvement would have a big impact. The rest of the funding required (c£120k) for the whole scheme (c£230k) is being met by from the recreation budget. Councillor RGS agreed that it was a good scheme for CIL funding.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £110,000

2.2 – Hookpit Farm Lane, Kings Worthy – Bid for £61,000 for Layby and footpath. The proposal meets the criteria as it addresses the impact of new development beyond that which has been secured through a s106 Obligation or s278 Agreement and links with priorities within the local plan for housing growth. It would provide a bay for 3 vehicles and a footpath link to new development nearing completion, so improves the connectivity of the housing scheme. A significant proportion of the cost was due to the moving of public utilities. Councillor RGS had visited the site. RB stressed that the community see the provision of the layby and footpath as very important and this was raised in the consultation regarding the development. CP will discuss the timescale of the works with Denise Partleton (who submitted the bid)

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £61,000

2.3 – Employment of Local Plan specialist – Bid for £90,000 over 2 years

This does not meet the criteria as it is not funding for infrastructure. SF had spoken to members of Winchester Town Forum and Councillor Craske to explain that whilst the panel will look at the request it may well fall outside the scope of the scheme because CIL cannot be used to fund plan making work. MW confirmed that the CIL Regulations do not allow this.

The Panel did **not** agree to recommend the allocation of funding

2.4 – Stockbridge Road Steps, Winchester – Bid for £50,000

The bid meets the criteria as it supports the objectives of the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which forms part of the Winchester Movement Strategy and Winchester Station Travel Plan. It will provide pedestrian steps up the embankment adjacent to Stockbridge Road, providing access to the rear of Winchester Railway Station. South Western Railways will be delivering the scheme. RB confirmed his support for the scheme which is long awaited and is supported by local members. SF confirmed the location. Councillor RGS regretted that a ramp could not be provided but the embankment is very steep and the costs would be prohibitive (total cost of the scheme for steps is £600,000) SWR is providing £400k with HCC providing £150k.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £50,000

2.5 – Unit12 Community Facility Winnall – Bid for £2,000,000

The bid is to provide an alternative building for community groups to use for recreation, cultural and community activities. It meets the criteria in principle as it would help extend and improve local community facilities and services. RB confirmed that the current building is owned by WCC, and is currently used by community groups for activities which could operate from elsewhere, thus freeing the building up for commercial use. A new community building would provide better up to date facilities more suited to the requirements of the user groups. LK queried how much revenue could be raised for a commercial use, but this would need to be investigated. However the panel although supportive of the principle of the project, felt that the bid was too premature and lacked detail including in relation to costings. Until a firm proposal (so an identified building, site to purchase etc.) was forthcoming, the bid could not be recommended at this stage. Cabinet is required to agree the recommendations of the panel, and without a firm proposal it is difficult to justify the allocation of £2m. A further bid could be made later in the year if a detailed proposal could be presented to the panel.

The Panel did **not** agree to recommend the allocation of funding at this time

2.6 – Wayfinding Signing, Winchester – Bid for £6,000

The bid is for top up funding for the provision of wayfinding and pedestrian signing around Winchester to encourage walking to the major destinations such as the Cathedral, shops, the new leisure centre and railway station. CIL funding of £50,000 was allocated in 2020/21 but additional signing work was required. The scheme meets the criteria as it supports the objectives of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which forms part of the Winchester

Movement Strategy. Councillor RGS agreed that better signing for pedestrians was necessary and RB confirmed that as people were still turning up to use River Park Leisure Centre (which is now closed due to the opening of the new leisure centre at Bar End) new signing is vital to make sure visitors are made aware of the location of the new leisure centre and other amenities in the city.
The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding £6,000

Total agreed allocation for WCC schemes = £227,000

3. Consideration of Community Bids received

3.1 – Bishops Waltham skate park – Bid for £60,000

The bid was made to provide a new skate park at Priory Park recreation ground. CP informed the panel that the previous skate park at the site was removed for health and safety reasons. The new skate park would be built in the same location. SF stated that there was a number of new developments under construction in the village. LK agreed that it would be well used by teenagers and this age group generally lacked appropriate recreational facilities. LK also enquired about the CIL funding that the Parish Council would have received from the developments in Bishops Waltham (15% of the CIL collected) and what this funding was used for. CP confirmed that there are regulations requiring Parish Council's to publish their CIL funding and expenditure on their websites and this would be followed up with Parish Council's this year. The proposal meets the criteria as it improves the public open space and the built recreational facilities of the area. However, as there is not enough CIL funding this year to enable all bids to be fully funded (even if the criteria is met) the Panel agreed to award a proportion of the funding requested.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £45,000.

3.2 – Bishops Waltham, South Pond purchase – Bid for £45,000

The bid was made to enable the Parish Council to buy the pond which is already able to be accessed by the public but is privately owned. It would therefore not enhance or increase community facilities available in the village and was not actually infrastructure so did not meet the CIL funding criteria.

The Panel did **not** recommend the allocation of funding

3.3 – Colden Common Tennis Club lighting upgrade – Bid for £25,000

The bid was made to upgrade the lighting of the tennis club to LED lighting. The scheme meets the criteria as it will improve the recreational facilities available to the community and has wider benefits. LK raised the fact that this was not a 'free' recreational activity, and although a registered charity, the Tennis Club charges fees. There were also other funding streams available. The Panel agreed that more efficient lighting would be beneficial and agreed to award some of the funding requested.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £10,000

3.4 – Arlebury Park, New Alresford outdoor gym – Bid for £20,000

The bid is for an outdoor gym at the local recreation ground and meets the criteria as it contributes to improvements in recreational facilities. Councillor RGS declared an interest in this as he is the local member for the area so did not vote on the proposals. The remainder of the panel agreed that it would offer good benefits, free of charge to the public and supported the bid. There is new development planned in New Alresford which is likely to increase the demand for recreational facilities in the future.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £20,000

3.5 – River Arle footpath, New Alresford – Bid for £100,000

The bid was for footpath repairs (repairs to potholes and bank erosion) to the existing footpath adjacent to the River Arle. The footpath maintenance is the responsibility of Hampshire County Council, who carry out repairs which then quickly deteriorate. This did not meet the criteria, as although the footpath is infrastructure, the funding was required for repairs and not any enhancement or significant improvement that would justify supporting a bid of £100,000.

Councillor RGS declared an interest in this as he is the local member for the area so did not vote on the item. There was general agreement by the panel that the bid had not been presented as providing any significant improvement to facilities and was more about seeking to rectify existing deficiencies (for which CIL funding cannot be used, unless made worse by development which is not the case with this proposal) The panel were unable to support the bid for any funding based upon the information given in the submitted bid.

The Panel did **not** recommend the allocation of funding.

3.6 - Sparrowgrove and Oakwood Copse, Otterbourne tree surgery – Bid for £14,000.

The bid was for the funding of tree surgery in an area of publicly accessible woodland. A survey had identified a number of trees requiring works to ensure that the site could continue to be accessed by the public safely. The bid does not however meet the criteria as CIL funding can only be used to provide infrastructure, and cannot be used to rectify existing deficiencies. The panel were sympathetic to the need for funding but CIL Regulations specifically dictate how CIL funding must be used and this proposal did not accord with those requirements. CP advised the panel that the bidder was making enquiries with Otterbourne PC in relation to funding.

The Panel did **not** recommend the allocation of funding.

3.7 - St Marks Church, Oliver's Battery kitchen and toilet upgrade. Bid for £30,000

The bid was for the funding of an upgrade and modernisation of the kitchen and toilets and improved access to the building. This will enable the building to be used as a community facility for local groups. An unsuccessful bid was made last year for funding of £100,000. Since this time the church and community have

raised much of the money to undertake some of the work required to the building, but this is not enough to complete all the work planned to provide an updated and more accessible community facility. The project meets the criteria as it helps extend and improve local facilities and also effectively levers in a large amount of funding raised by the community which can then be used to complete the project. The panel unanimously expressed their support for the project.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £30,000

3.8 – River Dever Boardwalk, Gratton Close Sutton Scotney. Bid for £20,000

The bid was made to fund a new wooden boardwalk along the River Dever linking to an area of woodland and open space, accessed by the public with information boards detailing local flora and fauna for the river and woodland area. The project meets the criteria as it contributes to the provision of enhanced open space and levers in additional funding. The panel supported the bid as it was of benefit to the local community and enhanced their ability to access the area for recreational purposes and was considered to be a reasonable amount of money for this type of work, so was good value.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £20,000

3.9 – Theatre Royal Winchester open space improvements and glass wall. Bid for £68,000

The bid is for the re-design of Tower Street (currently closed to traffic with bollards to prevent use) to provide an outdoor seating area, which would have a pop-up stage for outdoor performances. There is also a proposal for the replacement of the side wall of the Theatre adjacent to Tower Street with a glazed section which will be able to open up to link the street with the inside of the Theatre to effectively extend the café area. The proposal meets the criteria as being the only theatre in the district it has much wider as well as local benefits and improves the recreational facilities of the district. It also levers in other funding. The panel felt that the theatre was of significance for the whole district and not just the city area. Councillor RGS commented that the proposal would bring vitality to the area. LK enquired as to the status of Tower Street in regards to the use by traffic. CP confirmed that it would remain as public highway, although remaining closed to through traffic as currently is the case. Discussions had already taken place between the bidder and HCC as highway authority regarding the improvement as well as planning and listed buildings consents. The panel considered that due to the district wide significance of the theatre and the public realm works on the highway, the bid should not be funded from the community scheme, but from the wider district fund. CP would liaise with the Head of Community and Economy to confirm certain aspects of the bid and financial viability of the Theatre post Covid.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £68,000 to be met from the district CIL pot and not the community bid fund.

3.10 – Whiteley skate park refurbishment and extension. Bid for £100,000

The project will provide a new skate park on the site of the existing skate park, which is a well-used facility adjacent to the leisure centre and recreation ground. It has been in place for at least 20 years. The proposal will significantly increase the size of the facility and provide new ramps and other equipment. The proposal meets the criteria as it improves the built recreational facilities of the area and addresses the impact of new development beyond that being secured through s106 Obligations (North Whiteley MDA). Significant new development is currently underway in Whiteley. CP advised the panel that North Whiteley is a Major Development Area, and is therefore rated £0 for CIL. The Town Council does not receive CIL from the development. As with other larger bids, the panel supported the proposal but was not able to allocate the full amount of CIL requested. After considering what had been awarded to other similar projects, it was agreed to allocate some of the funding requested.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £65,000

3.11 – Wickham Community Centre kitchen extension and upgrade. Bid for £52,500.

The project will extend the existing kitchen facilities to provide two separate kitchens, with one for light refreshments and a larger one to provide cooked meals, and to be used as a teaching kitchen. The proposal meets the criteria, as it improves local facilities for the community and levers in other funding. Wickham has several areas of development under construction and the community centre is the only large community facility in the area. The panel were supportive of the project.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £52,500

3.12 – Wickham Community Centre architects fees. Bid for £5,000

The bid was made to employ the services of an architect to re-design the internal space of the community centre. The proposal does not meet the CIL funding criteria as it is not providing infrastructure and is also below the minimum bid threshold in the agreed council protocol for allocating funds.

The Panel did **not** recommend the allocation of funding

3.13 – Wickham Water Meadows – New footpaths, fencing and river bank improvements. Bid for £40,000

The project will fund new footpaths (currently muddy tracks) through the water meadows, new fencing and strengthened river banks to prevent erosion. The water meadows are a public space which has seen much higher use in the last year, which is set to increase due to the new developments being built now in Wickham. The proposal meets the criteria as it is improving the open space network, and public access within the natural environment in an area where new housing growth is proceeding. It is also leveraging in additional funding.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £40,000

3.14 – Winchester Football Club 3G pitch. Bid for £200,000

The project will provide a new third generation (3G) all weather pitch at Winchester Football Club which will extend the ability to use the facility, which currently becomes water-logged during periods of bad weather. Lighting will also be improved to increase the hours of play. There is an opportunity if CIL funding is secured to lever in substantial additional funding from the Football Foundation (£400,000). The project meets the criteria as it improves the recreational facilities and will lever in substantial funding from another source. The Panel were concerned regarding the amount of CIL the bid has requested, as it amounts to 80% of the CIL funding available for the community bids in 2021/22. RB stated that the Winchester Football Club premises were owned by the City Council, and were of a much wider benefit than just a local facility. The Panel discussed whether it was more appropriate to allocate funding from the 'district pot' of CIL rather than the funds for community bids. It was agreed that the bid would be supported from the district fund. The Panel asked CP to liaise with Leisure and Estates to discuss moving forward the proposal.

The Panel agreed to recommend the allocation of funding of £200,000 to be met from the district CIL pot and not the community bid fund.

4. Progress of previous bids in 2019/20 and 2020/21

4.1 – A total of twenty bids have been allocated funding in the previous two rounds of bidding (2019/20 and 2020/21) and many are progressing, with five now complete. The Covid pandemic has caused some delay with the completion of the schemes, particularly those allocated funding in 2020/21.

4.2 – In 2019/20 a bid for funding was made by 11th Winchester Scouts for the provision of a new scout hut and community facility. This was allocated funding of £200,000 but has neither gained planning permission, nor has all the funding required in place. CP had contacted the bidder prior to the panel meeting regarding any progress, but had not received a reply in time for the panel to be informed. The Panel considered the lack of progress with the delivery of the scheme, but concluded that due to the continuing issues caused by the pandemic and lockdown, the allocation would remain in place for the time being.

4.3 – In 2020/21 a bid was made by the Gratton Trust for funding of £30,000 to extend a sports pavilion at Gratton Close Sutton Scotney. This was allocated the funding required, but since then the Gratton Trust has confirmed that it will no longer be progressing the project. The Panel therefore agreed to recommend withdrawing the allocation of the £30,000 and add it to the community bid fund for this round of bids. This brings the total amount of funding available for 2021/22 to £280,000.

The total amount of CIL funding allocated to the community bids considered in this meeting by the Panel for 2021/22 was £282,500.

The meeting concluded at 11.35am.