



CABINET: 13 September 2016

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**Report of:** Director of Development and Regeneration

**Relevant Portfolio Holder:** Councillor J Hodson

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**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDING PROGRAMME  
2017/18**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To propose for consultation the possible options for a CIL Funding Programme for 2017/18 based on the CIL monies anticipated to have been collected by the Council by 31 March 2017.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the updated Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS) provided at Appendix 2 be noted.

2.2 That the public consultation for four possible options for spending CIL monies in 2017/18 set out in paragraph 4.11 of the report be approved.

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## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council adopted a CIL Charging Schedule in July 2014, and has been charging CIL since 1 September 2014. In March 2015, the Council approved a CIL Governance Framework which set out how decisions would be made on the spending of CIL monies by the Council, amongst other matters. Key to this Framework is the production each year of a CIL Funding Programme to prioritise how the CIL funds raised in a given financial year will be spent the following financial year. A draft of this CIL Funding Programme must be publicly consulted

upon before Cabinet make a final decision on it in January of any given year in readiness for spending the monies from April that year.

- 3.2 This report marks the preparation of the second such CIL Funding Programme prepared by the Council and offers possible options on how CIL monies already collected by the Council since 1 September 2014 and those anticipated to be collected by 31 March 2017 could be spent in 2017/18. The options have thus far been prepared in line with the approach set out in the CIL Governance Framework.
- 3.3 The 2016/17 CIL Funding Programme allocated funding to three projects as follows:
- Car parking improvements at Station Approach, Ormskirk - £15,000
  - New allotments, Skelmersdale - £20,000
  - Boardwalk at Haskayne Cutting Nature Reserve - £8,000
- 3.4 A key document in the process of preparing a CIL Funding Programme is the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS). The IDS is a database of infrastructure projects that are planned or desired to take place during the current Local Plan period. It originally formed part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and the CIL Charging Schedule but has become more of a “live” document now, allowing monitoring of all infrastructure projects in the Borough and so monitors how the Local Plan is performing in delivering this key aspect of sustainable development.
- 3.5 Many projects on the IDS should have a connection to new development in that they are needed or demanded because of the new development proposed and being delivered through the Local Plan. However, other projects are not necessarily linked to new development in this way, but are still needed to upgrade existing infrastructure provision or reflect aspirations that infrastructure providers have and which, in some cases, may enable further new development in the future.
- 3.6 In relation to CIL, therefore, the IDS provides the basis for assessing which infrastructure projects CIL monies should be spent on, although it should be clarified that not all projects on the IDS will be eligible for and / or need CIL monies. This is discussed further below.
- 3.7 Infrastructure providers, ward councillors, parish councils and relevant council officers have all been given opportunity to input ideas and suggestions on schemes that could go into the latest update of the IDS, and to update details of schemes that are already in the IDS. This has enabled officers to update the IDS (see Appendix A) and then, based on the information submitted, to rank proposed schemes to inform recommendations on how CIL monies could be spent.
- 3.8 In terms of CIL monies collected thus far or anticipated to be collected by 31 March 2017:
- £45,703 was collected in 2014/15
  - £144,959 was collected in 2015/16

- £75,866 has thus far been collected in 2016/17 (at the time of writing this report)
- A further £446,773 (minimum) is anticipated to be collected by 31 March 2017

3.9 This therefore provides an anticipated total income in 2016/17 of £522,639. This total may however increase if a development comes forward sooner which was not anticipated to come forward this year or decrease if a developer fails to pay the required CIL charge when it is due.

3.10 Of this total, 5% is allocated to the Council's administrative costs of running CIL and 15% is allocated in accordance with statutory requirements to the Parish Councils in which the developments paying CIL take place. We call this the neighbourhood portion. Where there is no Parish Council, the Borough Council must spend this neighbourhood portion within the non-parished areas it has derived from. No CIL income has thus far been received from developments in non-parished areas. The remaining 80% of CIL is retained by the Borough Council for use on strategic infrastructure.

3.11 Of the £266,528 total CIL income received to date at the time of writing this report, the strategic portion equates to £213,787. Subtracting those strategic CIL monies previously allocated through the 2016/17 CIL Funding Programme (£43,000) (as set out at paragraph 3.3 above) means that there is currently **£170,787** of CIL monies available to spend by the Council across the Borough in 2017/18 from the "strategic" portion, which may rise to £528,205 if all that is anticipated to be collected through CIL between now and 31 March 2017 is realised.

#### **4.0 PROPOSED FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR 2017/18**

4.1 The IDS now contains over 100 potential projects but the vast majority are not deliverable within the next year. However, many of those that are not immediately deliverable are projects that will deliver infrastructure that is needed and that might become deliverable in the near future. Therefore, a balance must be struck between funding appropriate and deliverable projects now with the CIL monies available and consideration for "saving" CIL monies to contribute to bigger, more beneficial projects that the infrastructure provider can work towards making deliverable while the necessary CIL monies are "saved up".

4.2 In addition, the IDS also serves a function as "living" evidence base to support monitoring and delivery of the current Local Plan and will inform the preparation of the next Local Plan, and so it includes all suggested infrastructure projects in the Borough, regardless of whether that infrastructure is directly related to new development or requires CIL monies to fund it. Therefore, some IDS projects will not meet a local need or demand that has arisen from new development, which is a key test of whether CIL monies can be spent on a project, and / or may not require CIL monies as the scheme has secured funding from another source.

4.3 To help inform deliberation on whether a project is eligible for CIL funding and then to assist in prioritising those eligible projects, council officers have used the information collated on each project to assess schemes against six key criteria:

1. Are CIL monies needed to deliver the project?
2. Does the project meet a local need or demand that has arisen from new development?
3. Does the infrastructure fall under the Regulation 123 list, which sets out what type of infrastructure the Council will spend CIL monies on?
4. When can the infrastructure be delivered?
5. Does the project help meet at least one of the Council's Corporate Priorities?
6. Is the project identified within a relevant local strategy, e.g. the Local Plan, the Highways & Transport Masterplan and the Leisure Strategy?

4.4 The first criterion ensures that all infrastructure projects on the IDS which do not require CIL monies are separated off at the outset, reducing unnecessary assessment of projects. The second and third criteria are essential as CIL monies can only be spent on infrastructure that meets a local need or demand that has arisen from new development and on types of infrastructure that are on the Regulation 123 list (<http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/media/132578/Regulation-123-list.pdf>). At this point, we have effectively ruled out all infrastructure projects from further assessment which would never receive CIL monies based on the current information.

4.5 The fourth criterion is necessary to understand whether the project is deliverable by 31 March 2018 and so might benefit from having CIL monies allocated to it for spending in the next financial year. The fifth and sixth criteria are necessary to help differentiate and prioritise between projects, where several meet all of the first four criteria.

4.6 A further consideration is also the cost of the project and what CIL monies are required to deliver it, so as to encourage greater value for money by using CIL monies to lever in other funding.

4.7 When applying the above criteria, it has been concluded that at the current time there are a number of projects on the IDS that are potentially eligible for, and have a need for, CIL funding and which the submitter considers has the potential to be delivered by 31 March 2018, or are at least worth discussion and consideration. However, not all may be suitable at this time. All of these projects require fairly small sums of CIL monies (£10,000 to £60,000) with the exception of the Canal Towpath improvements in Burscough (£150,000). These projects are discussed in more detail in Appendix 1.

4.8 As time progresses, and development occurs throughout the Borough, then the 15% "neighbourhood" portion of CIL that Parish Councils hold (or that the Council holds in unparished areas to be spent in that area) will grow and could be utilised on lower cost projects, where sufficient funding is available, or expected to be available, from the "neighbourhood" portion. That being the case, the larger portion of CIL monies that the Council retains can instead be spent on larger, more strategic projects. At the current time, the 15% "neighbourhood" portion has not raised significant funds within the areas that the projects discussed in Appendix 1 are located but given major housing allocations in the Local Plan that

are due to come forward through the planning process shortly, it is reasonable to assume that the areas of Burscough, Ormskirk and Halsall may have “neighbourhood” portion CIL monies available in the next few years.

4.9 Looking further ahead to projects on the IDS in the medium-term delivery category (1-5 years) that would be unlikely to be delivered by 31 March 2018, there are a great many projects that the Council could choose to save CIL monies toward, some of which are very significant and may offer more strategic benefit and value for money than some of the projects listed above. Some of the more significant projects in the medium-term delivery category that may require some level of CIL funding (total estimated cost in brackets) are:

- A new Skelmersdale Leisure Centre (£12million, CIL funding could only provide a small proportion of this)
- Improvements to, or replacement of, Park Pool, Ormskirk (£12million, CIL funding could only provide a small proportion of this)
- Improvements to Burscough Sports Centre (£5million, CIL funding could only provide a small proportion of this)
- Improvements to enhance open space provision in the Tawd Valley in Skelmersdale (£300,000)
- Redevelopment of Birleywood Health Centre, Skelmersdale (unknown, but Health funding likely to provide vast majority of funds)
- Investment in health facilities in Burscough (unknown, but Health funding likely to provide vast majority of funds)
- Investment in health facilities in Northern Parishes (unknown, but Health funding likely to provide vast majority of funds)
- Ormskirk to Skelmersdale Linear Park (unknown)
- River Douglas Linear Park, Tarleton / Hesketh Bank (unknown, but Section 106 funding and on-site delivery within a development site will provide some of the funding needed)

4.10 Predicting how much CIL income may be collected in future years is extremely difficult given the number of variables involved, not least uncertainty over when sites will actually commence on site (which is when CIL can begin to be collected). However, based on the anticipated delivery of CIL-chargeable housing to 2021 in West Lancashire and a conservative average house size of 80m<sup>2</sup>, a rough estimate of income over the next five years would be in excess of £3million. This is important to consider if the Council is to think about saving CIL monies towards a larger project to be delivered in the next five years.

4.11 Taking into account all of the above information, and that provided in Appendices 1 and 2, it is therefore recommended that the Council consult on four options for spending CIL monies in 2017/18:

1) That one strategic project is prioritised and has CIL monies allocated to it for spending in 2017/18, (with the remaining “strategic” CIL monies saved for spending in future years):

- *Canal Towpath Improvements between Burscough Wharf and Glovers Swing Bridge (CIL expenditure: £150,000)*

This project would upgrade a key section of a strategic route for cycling and walking on the Pier-to-Pier route and on the West Lancs Wheel and so sits within wider proposals contained and supported by the Leisure Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and LCC’s West Lancashire Highways & Transport Masterplan. The project could be delivered by 31 March 2018 by the Canal and River Trust, who would contribute £30,000 to the project as well.

2) That several smaller projects are prioritised and have CIL monies allocated to them for spending in 2017/18, but that the majority of the anticipated “strategic” CIL monies are saved for spending on projects in future years:

- *Stanley Coronation Park Play Area, Skelmersdale (CIL expenditure: £20,000)*

This project would enhance a priority site in the Council’s Play Area Strategy and could be delivered by 31 March 2018. The CIL monies would be matched by £20,000 of funding from the Council’s Capital Programme.

- *New changing facilities at Whittle Drive playing fields, Ormskirk (CIL expenditure: £60,000)*

This project would deliver new changing facilities to serve well-used playing pitches in an area (Ormskirk) that has seen significant new development and will see more in the coming years. The project could be delivered by 31 March 2018.

- *Improvements to Cheshire Lines Cycle / Footpath in Great Altcar and Downholland (CIL expenditure: £40,000)*

This project would invest in improvements to an existing strategic cycle / footpath which provides connections into the wider sub-regional and national cycling network. The project could be delivered by 31 March 2018.

3) A hybrid of the first two options incorporating the Canal Towpath Improvements between Burscough Wharf and Glovers Swing Bridge and one or two other projects from option 2, depending on how much “strategic” CIL monies are actually collected by 31 March 2017. This would only mean a small proportion of the anticipated “strategic” CIL monies would be saved for spending in future years.

4) That all “strategic” CIL monies raised by 31 March 2017 are saved for spending on projects in future years, e.g. towards improved facilities in

Tawd Valley Park, one of the Borough's proposed Linear Parks or towards new / improved built leisure facilities.

## **5.0 NEXT STEPS**

5.1 Should Cabinet resolve in accordance with the Recommendation at paragraph 2.2 above, the options set out at paragraph 4.11 will be publicly consulted upon. Should Cabinet put forward an alternative resolution, the proposals / options within that resolution would be publicly consulted on instead. The consultation will include all infrastructure providers, as well as the general public and other stakeholders, and will seek views on the options for spending CIL monies in 2017/18 put forward or whether other projects in the IDS should be prioritised instead or whether entirely new projects should be considered by the Council.

5.2 The Council will publicise and consult through the following methods:

- Press release
- Information on the Council's CIL webpages and consultation webpages
- Electronic / paper mail out to all consultees registered on the Local Plan consultation database, parish councils and Members
- Electronic mail out to all infrastructure providers
- Printed information available at libraries and council offices
- Electronic and paper based survey forms will be available to complete
- "West Lancs Now"

## **6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

6.1 The delivery of new infrastructure funded by CIL monies will have positive implications for sustainability and contribute to the delivery of the development allocated in the West Lancs Local Plan 2012-2027 in a sustainable manner. Depending on which projects are ultimately selected for spending CIL monies on, various objectives of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy will be contributed towards by these decisions.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There is no additional cost to Council resources of preparing and consulting on a CIL Funding Programme given that any projects prioritised for funding will be funded by CIL monies and, in some cases, match-funded identified by the infrastructure provider from other sources; the administration of CIL (including the CIL Funding Programme) is covered by the 5% administration fee retained by the Council from CIL receipts together with the Planning Services revenue budgets.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 There are no significant risks related to this report, which is for consultation on the potential allocation of CIL funding to a variety of infrastructure schemes, but it must be stressed that the availability of CIL funds towards projects in 2017/18 beyond the £170,787 currently collected and available to allocate cannot be guaranteed at this time because the Council does not control when development that has permission will commence (and so be required to pay their CIL liability).

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore, an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Projects which potentially fulfil the six key criteria

Appendix 2 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

## **Appendix 1 – Projects which potentially fulfil the six key criteria**

### *Stanley Coronation Park Play Area, Skelmersdale*

Stanley Coronation Park is one of six play areas identified in the Skelmersdale / Up Holland area that is a “priority” site for enhancement in the Council’s Play Area Strategy because it is high value but of a low quality. The proposed project has a cost of £40,000 but only £20,000 of CIL monies is being sought as the Council’s Capital Programme is contributing the other half of the funding required. Given this match funding, and the fact that the Council’s Leisure service would deliver the project, it is likely that the project would be deliverable by 31 March 2018.

As a fairly strategic public open space asset adjacent to the local centre at Sandy Lane, it serves a fairly wide area which would include the Firwood Road housing allocation on the western edge of Skelmersdale as well as other, smaller, unallocated potential housing sites in the area when they deliver housing, although there has not yet been a significant amount of development in that area in recent years.

### *Tanhouse Community Leisure Complex, Skelmersdale*

The Tanhouse Community Leisure Complex project involves the upgrade / creation of a Leisure Complex around the Tanhouse community centre through the construction of a new bowling green and upgrading of outside football pitch, skate-park, teenage shelter, the MUGA and the landscape surrounds. The cost of the project is estimated to be £75,000 and £43,000 of CIL monies is being sought to help meet these costs (the other £32,000 is proposed to come from S106 monies but this has not been agreed by the Council).

Tanhouse ward has seen the most housing development since 1 April 2012 of all Skelmersdale wards (and over half of all such development in Skelmersdale) but, even so, the actual quantum of new housing is not especially large and Tanhouse is not expected to see significantly more housing development in the coming years. In addition, while some of the proposals in this project are referred to in the Leisure Strategy, they are listed as a high priority and do not form part of the Action Plan. Given this, and the uncertainty of match-funding and deliverability, it is not recommended that this project is allocated CIL funding at this time.

### *Thompson Avenue Play Area, Ormskirk*

The Thompson Avenue Play Area was assessed as high value, high quality in the Play Strategy but there are improvements that could be made to improve the play area further. The proposed project has a cost of £60,000 which would need to be entirely funded through CIL and is deliverable by 31 March 2018 as a project put forward by the Council’s Leisure Service.

However, while Derby ward (which the play area falls within) has seen the second highest level of housing development of all West Lancashire wards since 1 April 2012, the entrance to the play area is not especially close or accessible to any new

development or any housing allocations or other potential housing sites. It may be more appropriate to consider this project in the future (together with the Ormskirk allotments project below) once further consideration has been given to an improved access to this site.

#### *New Allotments in Ormskirk*

This project proposes the creation of new, additional allotment plots at Thompson Avenue / Tower Hill Road in Ormskirk. As such the project would serve the whole of Ormskirk and surrounding areas, where at least 750 dwellings are proposed in the Local Plan. A site is available that is in Council ownership, although the current access arrangements for the site are far from ideal, and the Council's Leisure Service are well equipped to be able to deliver the new plots by 31 March 2018, subject to planning permission.

The cost of the project is estimated to be £20,000 and would need to be entirely funded by CIL monies. Given the uncertainty surrounding the accessibility of the site, it may be more appropriate to consider this project in the future (together with the Thompson Avenue Play Area project above) once further consideration has been given to an improved access to this site, as it may be that an alternative site needs to be identified if a suitable access solution cannot be achieved.

#### *New changing facilities at Whittle Drive Playing Fields, Ormskirk*

Whittle Drive Playing Fields are well-used but could be used more if the changing facilities were upgraded. This project seeks to deliver that upgrade at a cost of £60,000 and would be entirely funded by CIL monies. The Council's Leisure service has confirmed that this project could be delivered by 31 March 2018 if it were to receive CIL funding.

Ormskirk has seen plenty of new development in recent years, and more is to come with the Grove Farm housing site in particular, and playing fields such as Whittle Drive serve clubs that draw players from across the town (and beyond), so CIL funding could be invested in this project.

#### *Station Approach Linear Park, Ormskirk*

This project would form the first section of the Ormskirk-Skelmersdale Linear Park, utilising the former railway line to create a new cycle / footpath from Station Approach to the bridge at Dark Lane. The Council's Leisure service could deliver this section for £40,000 (all CIL monies) but it may not be deliverable by 31 March 2018.

The section of Linear Park is part of a strategic cycle route identified in the Local Plan, West Lancashire Highways & Transport Masterplan and is also in an area (Ormskirk) where there has been recent development and more is to come. However, there is no urgent need for this link until there is more certainty on the remainder of the Ormskirk-Skelmersdale Linear Park route.

### *Canal Towpath Improvements between Burscough Wharf and Glovers Swing Bridge*

This project has been submitted by the Canal and River Trust (CRT) and fits within proposals in the Leisure Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and LCC's West Lancashire Highways & Transport Masterplan to improve the well-used and popular canal towpath between Burscough and Parbold as part of the Pier-to-Pier and West Lancs Wheel cycle routes. The towpath is in need of an upgrade, particularly to facilitate cycling. The cost of the project is estimated to be £180,000 and the CRT is seeking £150,000 of CIL monies toward these costs. Given the CRT's track-record in West Lancs and elsewhere, there is every reason to consider that this project would be delivered by 31 March 2018.

Due to the wider context this project sits within it can be considered to be of strategic importance and so can be considered to serve a wide area where there has been significant levels of development, with even more proposed. As such, this project is very appropriate for the use of CIL monies.

### *Burscough Cricket Club / School Lane connectivity and canal enhancement*

The project is to create a cycle / footpath route from School Lane and the Cricket Club to the canal and to improve the amenity of land fronting the canal to enhance canal users and visitor's enjoyment of the canal-side. Therefore, there is some overlap and mutual benefit with the Canal Towpath Improvements between Burscough Wharf and Glovers Swing Bridge.

The cost of the project is approximately £79,000, and Burscough Parish Council is seeking £22,000 of S106 monies to use on this project and has secured £10,000 from Tesco. Depending on what other funding the Parish Council can secure for the project, it is unclear how much CIL monies would be needed to fund this project. Burscough Parish Council stand to receive a very large "neighbourhood" portion of CIL monies as developments such as Yew Tree Farm commence, and so the Parish Council may, in due course, have their own CIL monies to apply to this project.

There has been new development in the Burscough area in recent years and significantly more is proposed, and the project sits alongside the wider set of projects to enhance the canal corridor between Burscough and Parbold.

Given the uncertainty over the funding for the project, while the Parish Council do have fairly detailed plans for the improvements proposed, it is uncertain whether the project would be deliverable by 31 March 2018. Therefore, it may be appropriate to focus CIL funding on the associated project identified above (canal towpath improvements) in 2017/18 and for funding to be considered for this project at a later date once the main towpath improvements have been completed.

### *Heathfields connectivity and canal enhancement, Burscough*

This project is to improve access to the canal from Heathfields and to improve connectivity with shops, schools and local amenities in the centre of Burscough, while

enhancing the canal as a leisure facility, by providing a pedestrian bridge over the canal. Burscough Parish Council is seeking £10,000 initially to fund a feasibility study into the proposals.

While there has been new development on the Heathfields estate recently (Ivy Close), it is not a substantial addition, but it does exacerbate the existing need to better connect Heathfields with Burscough Town Centre. The proposal would also complement other improvements proposed along the canal corridor. However, at this point in time, there are more deliverable and higher priority needs on this strategic canal corridor (such as the main canal towpath improvements discussed above) and it may be more appropriate for the Parish Council to utilise the CIL monies from the “neighbourhood” portion as and when they receive it on the feasibility study.

### *New Allotments in Burscough*

This project requires the allocation of £30,000 of CIL monies to deliver allotment plots in the Burscough area (approximately 20 plots), where 850 new homes are planned over the Local Plan period. As such, this project would meet all the key criteria. However, delivery of this project is dependent upon identifying a suitable site and securing any necessary planning permission and so there can be no certainty of the project being deliverable by 31 March 2018 until a site is identified and secured.

### *Bickerstaffe Gateway to Green Spaces*

This project is essentially for new / improved car parking facilities to access the recent improvements in leisure / open space facilities in Bickerstaffe. The cost of the project is uncertain, with the Parish Council asking for between £10,000 and £35,000 of CIL monies depending on which option for improvements that they take forward. The project would appear deliverable by 31 March 2018. However, Bickerstaffe has seen very little new development in recent years, and no new development of any significant size is anticipated.

### *Halsall Memorial Hall Extension*

This project was submitted by Halsall Parish Council and is to provide additional facilities at Halsall Memorial Hall where the current facilities are insufficient and too small to satisfy the community demands, which will only increase given recent development in Halsall and the two housing allocations in the Parish in the Local Plan. The Parish Council have sought £30,000 of funding from other sources and so is seeking £30,000 of match funding from CIL monies. This project would meet all the key criteria (with the exception of being identified within a local strategy) and would be deliverable by 31 March 2018, subject to detailed design and any necessary planning permission.

However, there has been little new development in Halsall in recent years to justify this new infrastructure, though two allocated sites on the Sefton boundary are expected to come forward with new housing in the coming years. As such, it may be more appropriate to consider this project at a later date, when the new housing developments

are coming forward and generating the demand for this improved facility, by which stage the Parish Council will be in receipt of the “neighbourhood” portion of CIL monies from those developments which would likely cover the £30,000 being sought.

#### *Refurbishment of Haskayne Pavilion*

This project is a proposal from Downholland Parish Council to refurbish the disused pavilion building to acceptable standards to provide a safe environment for young people’s activities in a very rural area. Part of the proposed usage is a youth club and a rehearsal studio for local musicians. The project has a total cost of £14,500 and the Parish Council are seeking £13,500 of CIL monies towards that cost.

Haskayne has seen some development in recent years (Former LO Jeffs site), but is unlikely to see much more in the coming years, and it is unclear whether the need for this facility is genuinely arising from (or exacerbated by) the increased population created by the recent development.

#### *Improvements to Cheshire Lines Cycle / Footpath in Great Altcar and Downholland*

This project seeks to invest in improvements to the existing strategic cycle / footpath route known as the Cheshire Lines which cuts across the south-west corner of West Lancashire providing links to Formby and Southport and to Maghull and beyond as part of a national cycle route. The project would cost £40,000 and would be entirely funded by CIL monies. The Council’s Leisure service has confirmed that this project could be delivered by 31 March 2018 if it were to receive CIL funding.

Given its location, the project is not in the vicinity of new development, but it is a strategic route that serves a much wider area being part of a national cycle route, and is part a strategic network of cycle routes, and so CIL funding could be invested in the project.

#### *Mere Sands Wood Visitor Centre, Rufford*

This project seeks the extension and refurbishment of Mere Sands Wood visitor Centre to improve public facilities and financial sustainability of attraction. It would cost £400,000, but only £10,000-15,000 of CIL monies would be required to lever in other funding sources. The Wildlife Trust has submitted this project and would deliver it. However, while the Wildlife Trust are a reliable delivery body for this project, given that other sources of funding have not yet been identified for the project, it is unlikely that the project would be delivered by 31 March 2018.

Little development has been delivered recently in Rufford, although a housing development at Sluice Lane is anticipated to come forward in the near future, but Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve is a strategic facility that attracts visitors from across West Lancashire and beyond.