



CIL FUNDING PROGRAMME 2017/18

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK SUMMARY REPORT

NOVEMBER 2016

CIL Funding Programme – Consultation Feedback

West Lancashire Borough Council invited comments on the CIL Funding Programme proposals between 7 October and 4 November 2016. The consultation sought comments on how the unallocated strategic CIL monies received 2014-2017 should be spent in 2017/18, and on what projects they should be spent on.

33 responses were received. A summary of the comments, and results, of the consultation are outlined through this feedback report, whilst the actual responses received can be viewed through the appendix.

To assist with the feedback, non-structured general comments have been combined with those received through the structured consultation proformas.

Which option do you support most? Do you agree with that proposed?

Option One (Prioritise one strategic project)

Respondents gave strong support to the canal towpath improvements, proposed along a stretch of canal at Burscough, on the grounds that it would encourage use, promote health and wellbeing, promote sustainable /environmentally friendly transport modes, and would extend those towpath improvements works already undertaken on the Wigan and Sefton stretches of the canal. Consultees stated that it would establish the 'Pier to Pier' cycle route between Southport and Wigan, which is also part of the National Cycle Network (Route 562). Representors confirmed that the towpath section is already very popular with walkers and cyclists but surface improvements are needed so all users can enjoy it. Consultees suggested that, ideally, the project will need to be followed by further investment in future to improve other substandard sections, including that in the Parbold area.

Some respondents argued that visiting boaters would be more likely to moor to access the facilities and services within the village, thereby supporting businesses within Burscough. They stated that the existing permanent moorings are sited along the next stretch of canal towpath which serves to discourage boaters to moor to use Burscough village. There was a further request that the Canal and River Trust install mooring bollards or rings, through this project, in order to protect the towpath as boaters would then not have to knock mooring pins into the new towpath.

The canal towpath improvements were supported because of the recent and anticipated levels of development over future years in Burscough, and representors considered use of CIL monies on this project would therefore be appropriate and in line with the CIL regulations. The project sits within the draft Green Infrastructure Strategy and brings benefits to a wide area. Surveys for the emerging Burscough Neighbourhood Plan also expressed general support for canal improvements and recognised its green space value. The project is considered to improve the environment and enhance the canal as a visitor attraction.

The Canal and River Trust have confirmed that, should £150,000 of CIL monies be allocated to this scheme, the project would be deliverable by March 2018.

One objection was received to the canal towpath because the project was “not in my area”.

Option Two (Prioritise several smaller projects)

Some respondents supported the Cheshire Lines improvement proposals but others also judged the project to be lower priority than the towpath at Burscough which they considered had a larger number of users/visitors.

Limited support was received for Whittle Drive. One representor considered that the project should be delivered as the current changing rooms “are an eyesore, as are other aspects on the Scott Estate”. Sport England noted that it is an action within the Council’s 2015 Playing Pitch Strategy and has the support of Sport England and the pitch sport national governing bodies. Others considered that the scheme would benefit too few people generally to be considered viable or appropriate use of monies.

Whilst the Stanley Coronation Park play areas might be deliverable before 2018, some respondents considered that there has been insubstantial development in the area over recent years to warrant improvements and therefore the project would not be supporting new development in the short term. Similarly, the consultee queried whether use of monies on the Cheshire Lines scheme would be an appropriate use of CIL monies in the short term given their distance from any development.

Some representors considered that prioritising several smaller projects would be a good use of CIL monies, allowing for a distribution of funds and projects. Others considered that the split would serve to dilute the benefits of CIL and instead recommended that the Council spend CIL on the Burscough canal towpath improvements with the remainder saved for medium-long term schemes. One consultee highlighted that the proposed projects all appear to be weighted towards the central and southern areas of the Borough, with no schemes proposed in the northern parishes.

Option Three (A hybrid)

The Burscough canal towpath improvement project was supported along with the Cheshire Lines as they both provide a facility to support health and wellbeing. There was a small level of support for Whittle Drive changing rooms.

Some respondents considered that other options would be a more appropriate approach.

Option Four (Save CIL for future years)

A number of respondents considered that CIL funds should begin to be used so that the benefits of developments could start to be seen as being delivered in local areas. As development is being delivered across the Borough in the short term, it would be appropriate to begin to use some monies on projects now, with the remaining monies saved for medium-long term schemes.

Other respondents considered that CIL monies should be saved to enable greater amounts of money to be built up and to give sufficient time for any match-funding sources to be identified. Lancashire County Council suggested that a long-term strategic approach should be adopted, considering a period at least 3-5 years in the future, whilst allocating some small amounts of money to short-term schemes. They considered this would support constructive discussions on what infrastructure can or should be delivered with this money and would facilitate a discussion on the long-term benefits of saving some or all of the CIL money to deliver larger schemes.

Council comments

Opinion varies on the most suitable option, or projects, with which to spend CIL monies upon in 2017/18. However, the largest consensus of opinion appears to support use of CIL monies for the Burscough canal towpath improvements on the justification they deliver a strategic project which promotes sustainable transport, environmental betterment and health and wellbeing whilst being supported by a range of policies and strategies and in an area which has had, and is anticipated to have, relatively large levels of development.

The Canal and River Trust have confirmed that, should £150,000 of CIL monies be allocated to this scheme, the project would be deliverable by March 2018.

Therefore, the Council should take this project forward for spending in 2017/18. In addition, the Council could allocate some monies to smaller projects although this should be limited so that a significant portion of the CIL monies thus far collected can be “saved” and set aside for more significant strategic infrastructure projects in the future. Registrations of support were received for the Cheshire Lines, and, although limited, Whittle Drive changing facilities. The Stanley Coronation Park play area did not have any specific registrations of support (although there was support for options which included this project), but did receive an objection.

Do you agree with our shortlist of projects?

Of those respondents who chose to answer this questions, all agreed with the shortlist of projects and some offered other schemes for suggestion. These are detailed below.

Are there any other projects on the IDS you think should be considered?

Two respondents suggested that greater consideration should be given to using CIL funding on library provision, particularly given the recent closures or relocations of some libraries in the Borough. Burscough library and Up Holland library schemes are already included in the IDS.

Council comments

WLBC are aware of the decision of LCC to close, or relocate, libraries across the Borough due to financial constraints. However, CIL monies must be used to support new development, and so, given that libraries are pre-existing services, CIL cannot be spent on extending current library provision without significant justification for the growth of a local area. That said, Burscough library is identified as a project on the IDS, to support the anticipated growth of Burscough as a result of development in the settlement, including that at the strategic site at Yew Tree Farm. Therefore, the Council will be liaising with the developer and County Council at that time to identify need and respond accordingly. Similarly, Up Holland library has recently closed and there are early suggestions that the library could be run by the community. There has been sufficient development in Up Holland to justify use of CIL monies in the area, but discussions are at a too early stage and therefore the project will be retained on the IDS for consideration across future years.

Can you suggest any other infrastructure schemes for inclusion on the IDS?

The following projects were suggested / supported:

- Mere Sands Wood Visitor Centre (#8)
- Canal towpath improvements from Burscough to Wigan boundary (#76, #96)
- Haskayne Pavilion (#116)
- Hilldale Jubilee Playing field and footpath (#127)
- Tanhouse Community Leisure Complex (#118)

- Road safety improvements in Burscough
- Rail crossings and rail station facilities
- Skelmersdale cemetery
- Flood defences
- Footpath alongside A5209 (Moss Bridge Lane- Tawd Vale Scout Camp)

Council comments

Mere Sands Wood Visitor Centre, the canal towpath to the Wigan boundary and Haskayne Pavilion are already included on the IDS. Hilldale Jubilee playing field was submitted by Hilldale Parish Council and accompanied by a proforma providing further details of the project. This has now been included on the IDS.

Road safety improvements and rail crossing and rail station facilities are feasible uses for CIL monies, and are both required as a result of new development. However, more detailed descriptions of exact projects and their requirements are needed before they can be included on the IDS. The comments on road safety improvements will be passed to Lancashire County Council, as the

highways agency, for their consideration. As they identify appropriate projects, they should notify WLBC so the schemes can be included on the IDS and assessed through the CIL funding exercise. Alternatively, it may be that such improvements can be delivered through S278 agreements, or planning conditions, secured through planning applications. Similarly, it will be for Network Rail to identify precise requirements and update WLBC accordingly.

The adopted CIL Regulation 123 list sets out those infrastructure items CIL monies can be spent on. The purpose of this is to prevent 'double-charging' of developers through both CIL and planning obligations. Flood defences are excluded from the R123 list and so CIL monies cannot be used to deliver flood mitigation, instead it must be secured through planning conditions or planning obligations on specific sites.

A Skelmersdale Cemetery has been a long-standing request and is, therefore, arguably not required as a result of new development and so unsuitable for CIL funding. Similarly, whilst traffic may have increased alongside the A5209, the need for a footpath has been long-standing and therefore cannot be identified as a need arising from new development. However the suggestion will be passed onto Lancashire County Council for their consideration. If they consider it to be an appropriate and feasible project, they can request its inclusion on the IDS.

Other comments

- Developers of YTF intend to provide allotments through development proposals for the site.

Council comments

Comments noted. The Yew Tree Farm Masterplan requires the developer(s) of the site to provide allotments through the development. Whilst allotments are listed as an infrastructure type on the IDS, it is anticipated that this delivery mechanism will mean that CIL monies are not required and can be used for alternate schemes.

Council comments

We would like to thank all respondents responding to this consultation.

Recommendations resulting from consultation:

Option 1 or Option 3 should be taken forward so that, as a minimum, the Burscough Canal Towpath Improvements are prioritised and have CIL monies allocated to them. While some comments are sought to see this improvement extended all the way to the Wigan boundary, it would be better to take these improvements section by section and, over several years, gradually upgrade the canal towpath.

In addition, a limited amount of CIL monies could be allocated in 2017/18 to one or more smaller projects but the majority of the remaining CIL receipts should be “saved” and allocated to significant strategic infrastructure projects in the future.

The smaller projects which should be considered for this limited additional CIL allocation in 2017/18 are:

- Stanley Coronation Park Play Area (#114)
- New Changing Facilities, Whittle Drive Playing Fields (#80)
- Cheshire Lines Path (#70)
- Mere Sands Wood Visitor Centre (#8)
- Haskayne Pavilion (#116)
- Tanhouse Community Leisure Complex (#118)

Actions resulting from consultation:

- Hilldale Jubilee Playing field and footpath added to IDS (#127)
- Update IDS with new information submitted regarding:
 - New Allotments in Burscough (#81)
 - Mere Sands Wood Visitor Centre (#8)
 - Haskayne Pavilion (#116)
 - Tanhouse Community Leisure Complex (#118)