



CABINET:
14 March 2017

Report of: Director of Development and Regeneration Services

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Hodson

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SUBJECT: CIL FUNDING PROGRAMME – ASSESSMENT OF SCHEMES

Wards affected: Whole Borough

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To agree slight changes to the assessment of potential schemes for CIL Funding Programmes in future years, in order to facilitate greater participation of Members in the assessment process.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the new approach to the assessment of schemes for CIL Funding Programmes as set out at section 4 of this report be approved.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Each year the Council prepares a CIL Funding Programme to set out what CIL monies are anticipated to be received in the current financial year and which infrastructure projects will receive funding from that CIL income in the coming financial year. The backbone of this CIL Funding Programme is an assessment of potential infrastructure schemes on the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Schedule to identify the most suitable schemes to benefit from CIL funding in the coming financial year.
- 3.2 The Council has now prepared CIL Funding Programmes for two successive years, allocating some £216,000 of CIL monies to six infrastructure projects in Skelmersdale (x2), Ormskirk, Burscough, Haskayne and Rufford. In the region of

£250,000 of CIL income has also been set aside to save towards a significant, large infrastructure project in the future.

- 3.3 Whilst the current assessment process does already provide an opportunity for Ward Member involvement, officers have reviewed the process to facilitate enhanced Ward Member participation in the shortlisting of schemes for consideration by Cabinet. Under the new proposals, Officers will engage with Ward Members about potential projects earlier in the year at the beginning of the process and will ensure that clear information is sent out to Ward Members so that they are fully aware of what is needed should they wish to submit a project for inclusion on the IDS. An additional stage of engagement has been introduced where Ward Members will be briefed on the initial assessment of eligible projects undertaken by officers and be invited to make written comments on that assessment to inform officer's final recommendation on the options for the CIL Funding Programme and, ultimately, Cabinet's final decision on what options to consult upon. It should be noted that not all projects submitted for consideration will be eligible to go forward to the initial assessment stage. Details of those projects that are excluded, along with reasons for exclusion, will be provided so that Members are aware of this at the initial assessment stage.
- 3.4 The review has also provided an opportunity to consider the application of a more flexible approach to the issue of project deliverability, i.e. currently the assessment process requires projects to be delivered within 12 months of having received CIL funding approval and the proposal will be to increase this to 2 years. Notwithstanding these proposed changes to the assessment of schemes, Members must bear in mind that there are some criteria which the Council cannot assess differently and which, if a scheme is assessed negatively against them, must result in that scheme being discounted from receiving CIL monies.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The following provides an overview of the slightly amended approach to preparing a CIL Funding Programme which would be used under the proposals:
- March / April – contact all Infrastructure Providers, Ward Members, Parish Councils and other relevant organisations to invite updated submissions for projects to go on the IDS. As part of this, officers will ensure that the information which is sent out is very clear about what the Council needs in a response, and how responses will feed into the assessment of projects, so encouraging respondents to put in sufficient detail about their project, its funding and its timescales for delivery.
 - May / June – Officers to undertake initial assessment of projects on IDS as to eligibility and suitability for CIL Funding in 2018/19. This will involve a new, clearer assessment to show the reasons why a project has been assessed the way it has. The first step in this assessment will be identifying those projects on the IDS which should be excluded from the initial assessment for CIL Funding because they do not require CIL Funding, they are not for infrastructure on the R123 list or they are not needed because of new development. These excluded projects will be listed with the reason for their exclusion so that Members will be aware of the detail when the initial assessment is presented to Members in July. It should be noted that the

CIL Regulations prevents certain projects from receiving CIL funding. The most difficult element of this first step will be the judgement of whether a project is needed because of new development as it is not always clear-cut. Officers will ensure that the assessment is very clear on this criteria and that it is applied consistently.

The second step at this stage will then be the assessment of the eligible projects in relation to deliverability and their priority / value in light of reference to Corporate Priorities, Council (and other) Strategies, as well as whether the projects have match-funding and whether there is other funding available to enable the projects such as the 15% neighbourhood portion. On deliverability, this criteria will be made more flexible to allow projects deliverable within two years (extended from 1 year previously) to be assessed positively, and with this any projects ultimately awarded CIL monies will be given two years in which to complete their project (or potentially face the CIL funding being withdrawn).

- July – Present this initial assessment to Members at a briefing session and seek their input through a written feedback exercise. After the initial briefing session, officers will send the assessments to Members by email and ask them to provide feedback by email. In this way, Members will be able to put forward their views on the assessments at an early stage.
- September (for October Cabinet) – Formulate an officer recommendation for a draft CIL FP (i.e. the options the Council will consult on), drawing on the Members' input and reporting the full feedback from Members with the Cabinet Report, to inform Cabinet's decision.
- November – Public Consultation
- December (for January Cabinet) – take consultation feedback and the officer view on a Final CIL FP to Corporate & Environmental at the start of December, and report their comments with officer recommendations to Cabinet in January.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS / COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 5.1 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.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The slightly amended proposals for assessing schemes for CIL funding will not have any additional implications for financial and resource implications for the Council.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There is no risk associated with this decision and, in fact, increasing the transparency of the assessment process will, if anything, reduce risks associated with decisions made by the Council on CIL funding.

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 no direct impact on members of the public of this decision. Therefore, an Equality impact Assessment is not required.