

# Decision Pathway – Report



**PURPOSE:** Key decision

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 04 April 2023

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Investing in parks to support the city's growth areas</b>	
<b>Ward(s)</b>	Frome Vale, Hillfields, Windmill Hill, Hengrove and Whitchurch Park, Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston, Lawrence Hill, Ashley	
<b>Author:</b> Richard Fletcher	<b>Job title:</b> Parks Services Manager	
<b>Cabinet lead:</b> Cllr Ellie King, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Communities	<b>Executive Director lead:</b> John Smith; Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	
<b>Proposal origin:</b> Mayor		
<b>Decision maker:</b> Mayor <b>Decision forum:</b> Cabinet		
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>To seek approval for a series of investment projects in the city's parks and green spaces to enhance facilities and the visitor experience both for existing residents and new residents expected in areas of significant, expected growth.</li></ol>		
<b>Evidence Base:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bristol's parks and green spaces are a vital resource for the city's residents and visitors. Their important contribution to individual's health and wellbeing is increasingly recognised and understood. They afford access to nature, a space to be active and enjoy sports, a place to play and a place to relax and meet friends. They provide a pivotal, cohesive role in every community and neighbourhood.</li><li>As the city grows and our successful housing delivery programme results in more homes and more people visiting and benefiting from their local parks, there is a need for us to respond by investing in quality and new facilities - particularly in those green spaces close to new housing areas. An opportunity exists for us to respond to the requests of communities and make parks more accessible and welcoming.</li><li>This need and opportunity was recognised at the Budget Council at Full Council on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022 where the Mayor's Amendment Proposals to the Capital Programme 2022/23 included an allocation of £1.5M from the use of Strategic CIL to increase spending on the provision of outdoor equipment/facilities [in parks and green spaces].</li><li>To qualify for Strategic CIL allocation the funding needs to be associated with specific parks that require strategic improvements and are serving areas where there are significant levels of growth either planned for (existing local plan) or predicted moving forward. Only specific projects which align to regulations on use of Strategic CIL can progress.</li><li>To develop proposals the following were considered:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>The need to satisfy the criteria for the allocation of Strategic CIL and consideration of the role of Destination Sites, considered in the Council's Parks and Green Space Strategy to provide a green space function for the city as a whole and from which all residents benefit [these include Hengrove Play Park and Oldbury Court Estate].</li><li>The potential to support known community aspirations and funding efforts.</li><li>The potential to encourage participation in physical activity, including through play and through sport.</li></ol></li></ol>		

4. The presence, absence and condition of existing facilities in a specific park or in other local, neighbourhood green spaces.

6. A further consideration of the programme is to ensure that all schemes taken forward build-in improvements that improve access to parks, particularly for disabled visitors. We will consider upgrades to facilities, access paths, steps, signage, entrances and what type of equipment we install in the case of play areas. As a starting point for this we will draw on past work developed with the help and support of park groups and disabled representative groups. For all final scheme designs we will engage further with relevant stakeholders.

7. From this work a number of priority opportunities for investment have been identified. Two schemes benefit from a total of £131K funding already committed by Area Committees. This makes the total investment in the proposed schemes to be £1.631M:

Site	Investment opportunity	Funding available	Funding to be approved	Total
Hengrove Play Park	To improve the café facility and provide new equipment at the Play Park to maintain a high-quality play and physical activity offer close to the some of the city's most deprived communities.	£0	£300K SCIL	£300K
Argyll Road	Make significant improvements to the children's play area.	£50K Area Committee	£77K SCIL	£127K
Oldbury Court Estate	To make access improvements and significantly enhance the play facility at Oldbury Court Estate, one of the city's major destination sites, with relandscaping and replacement of broken and missing equipment including the pirate ship.	£0	£500K SCIL	£500K
St Agnes Park	To improve the infrastructure of the children's play area and provide a new multi climber play feature.	£0	£110K SCIL	£110K
Green Spaces in Lawrence Weston	Improvements to green space facilities in the Lawrence Weston area, including sport and physical activity facilities and enabling access. Improvements will include a new children's play area at Beverston Gardens Amenity Area. This investment will raise local green space quality, for children and young people and helps the Council meet its minimum provision standards.	£0	£250K SCIL	£250K
Rawnsley Park	To significantly upgrade the play and wider park environment – providing new equipment, safety surfacing, supporting infrastructure and improving boundaries and access.	£81K Area Committee	£72K SCIL	£153K
Victoria Park	Improvements to facilities that encourage access and participation in play, sport and physical activity. Facilities will help mitigate the impact on the park from new residents and communities in the Bedminster Green and Whitehouse Street developments.	£0	£191K SCIL	£191K
<b>Totals</b>		<b>£131K</b>	<b>£1.5M</b>	<b>£1.631M</b>

8. Outside of these proposals but alongside, the Council will also be investing £56K in to improving Redcatch Park in Knowle.

#### Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the allocation of £1.5M of Strategic CIL added to the Capital programme at Full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 to a programme of investment in the city's parks and green spaces as set out in the report.

- 2) Authorises the Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Communities, the S.151 Officer, and Director of Legal Services to take all steps required to spend the funding including to procure and enter into contracts (including any over the key decision threshold) required to deliver the park and green space investment projects proposed as outlined in this report.

**Corporate Strategy alignment:**

1. Children and Young People – the investment will deliver better neighbourhoods and help build communities to be safe for children and ensure good access to play and green spaces for young people to enjoy safely, and to support our children and families are to thrive.
2. Regeneration – the investment will help promote our place-based approach to regeneration, ensuring provision for and quality places, improving connectivity, protecting waterways and green spaces, and concentrating on improving access to opportunity for communities experiencing long term deprivation.

**City Benefits:**

1. Parks and green spaces provide welcoming, safe spaces to socialise with family and friends, play, take part in physical activity and explore nature. It is estimated that the financial benefit they bring to the city and its residents is worth £385m.
2. Continual investment and good management are needed to enable green spaces to continue to deliver these benefits. This investment programme will deliver both new and refurbished facilities in parks, enabling them to continue to be attractive to visitors. In particular, children’s and young people’s facilities will be enhanced.

**Consultation Details:**

1. Consultation has taken place with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Communities and the Mayor’s Office with separate conversations with Councillors in some wards benefiting from investment.
2. Some investment, particularly at Rawnsley Park, Argyle Rd Playing Fields and in Lawrence Weston, directly support local priorities expressed through local community plans or Area Committee community funding applications.

**Background Documents:**

Full Council 2 March 2022 - [Agenda Template \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/agenda-template)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	
<b>Capital Cost</b>	<b>c£1.7M</b>	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	NH02A SCIL £1.5M, Area Committee £0.131m, Other BCC funding £0.056m
<b>One off cost</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Ongoing cost</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Saving Proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Income generation proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**

**Finance Advice:**

1. This report is seeking approval to spend the £1.5m previously approved in 2022/23 budget for a package of investments across several city parks and green spaces. This will be funded from the allocation of £1.5m of strategic CIL previously approved and added to the Parks Capital Programme (NH02A).
2. The Parks Service has developed a series of investment opportunities to utilise the funding, and officers have confirmed that the funding allocations qualify for Strategic CIL and the approved usage criteria.
3. There are also several other smaller allocations to boost the investment funding, helping to deliver the project, including £0.131m already committed from Area Committees and £0.056m already approved from prior sale proceeds.
4. The total investments identified in the report for the City’s parks and green spaces will be £1.687m (£1.5m + £0.131m + £0.056m).

5. If for any reason, there are additional costs, these will have to be met from the Parks budget envelope or the project scaled back.
6. Robust project and contract management processes will be required to deliver the investment project on time, within the funding available and ensure value for money for residents and users of the city's parks and green spaces.

**Finance Business Partner:** Kayode Olagundoye, Interim Finance Business Partner, Growth and Regeneration, 24 March 2023

**2. Legal Advice:**

S216 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 59 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended) permit the use of CIL monies for the support of development in the Council's area by permitting the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure for sporting and recreational facilities. The proposals contained in this report to allocate £1.5M strategic CIL funding for the specified locations is permitted by the Act and the Regulations.

The report also seeks authority for the Executive Director to proceed with the delivery of the various projects, including procuring all necessary contracts, including where over £500k, without further reference to Cabinet. All procurement activities will need to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules.

**Legal Team Leader:** Eric Andrews, Team Manager: Commercial and Governance | Lawyer 16 February 2023

**3. Implications on IT:**

I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity

**IT Team Leader:** Gavin Arbuckle – Head of Service Improvement and Performance 12 February 2023

**4. HR Advice:**

There are no HR implications evident.

**HR Partner:** Celia Williams – HR Business Partner Growth and Regeneration

<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	Stephen Peacock, Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	8 February 2023
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Cllr King, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Communities	22 February 2023
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off</b>	Mayor's Office	6 March 2023

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix D – Risk assessment</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix G – Financial Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Legal Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix I – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix J – HR advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix K – ICT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix L – Procurement</b>	<b>NO</b>