

# Decision Pathway – Report



**PURPOSE:** Key decision

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 05 March 2024

<b>TITLE</b>	Investing in parks to support delivery of the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy in the city's growth areas	
<b>Ward(s)</b>	Citywide	
<b>Author:</b> Jonathan James	<b>Job title:</b> Head of Service, Natural and Marine Environment	
<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> Councillor		
<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member <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 that will help deliver the aspirations of the new Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and ensure they are fit for the future, support and protect nature and benefit people's health and wellbeing 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. 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 play a fundamental role in the wellbeing of every community and neighbourhood. However, our parks face increasing challenges brought about by austerity and by the need for us to respond to the impacts of climate change and the loss of our biodiversity. Our new Parks and Green Spaces Strategy sets out how we intend to meet these challenges and is clear that working with communities and volunteers and ensuring that parks are welcoming to all Bristol communities is essential to do so.</li> <li>As the city grows and the numbers of people needing to benefit from local parks increases, there is a need for us to respond by investing in quality and new facilities - particularly in those green spaces close to where we are tackling the housing crisis by building more much-needed homes.</li> <li>An opportunity therefore exists for us to both respond to the aspirations of the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and to respond to the greater demand being placed on our parks by growing local communities. Mayor's budget 2023/24-27/28 included an allocation of £2M SCIL to create a strategic capital fund for 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>When developing proposals, the following were considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being able to grow relationships with communities and enable them to influence how investment is spent.</li> <li>The potential to deliver against the strategic principles, priority themes and aspirations of the Parks and Green Space Strategy.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>		

- Measures that will deliver better access for citizens that are prevented or restricted from using parks and green spaces otherwise.
- The need to satisfy the criteria for the allocation of Strategic CIL.
- Investing further into existing projects to ensure they can be transformational.
- Whether a green space lies within an area of disadvantage.
- Whether a green space lies within an area with little social infrastructure.

6. From this work a number of priority investment themes have been identified:

Theme	Sites	Ward	Aims, benefits and works	Link to the Parks & Green Spaces and Food Growing Strategy	Budget recommended
Creating more food growing opportunities in Central Bristol	Boiling Wells	Lockleaze	We will invest in green space infrastructure in this area of the city to ensure more high quality collective and allotment food growing opportunities are available.	Investment will ensure the effective use of existing food growing land, deliver opportunities for more people to grow food and support the sustainable funding of the service.	£200K
Improve sports facilities in parks.	Netham Park Greville Smyth Park	Easton Southville	We will add to our existing capital investment of £500K designed to improve the provision of nine local sports facilities, increase participation in sport and physical activity and supporting communities to operate local facilities themselves. Investment will ensure facilities will be fit for purpose and able to be operated sustainably.	Investment will help deliver our commitments to work collaboratively and develop stronger links with community partners and to ensure services respond better to community needs and be better designed.	£200K
Improving access for disabled people in priority parks and green spaces	To be identified with the disabled community	Wards that contain or are close to areas of growth and are eligible for SCIL	We will work with disabled people, local communities and other stakeholders to identify and design improvements to a small number of parks where we can make a meaningful difference to the park visitor experience for disabled visitors. As well as improving parks we will improve the way we provide and present information about our parks so that disabled people can make informed choices about where to visit and why.	Investment will help deliver our key strategic principle of making parks and green spaces more inclusive for people of all backgrounds.	£500K

			We will encourage and add to match funding provided by Area Committees to make projects make a transformational difference.		
Investing in Oldbury Court's heritage and communities	Oldbury Court Estate	Frome Vale	By adding to a project in progress to significantly enhance the children's play experiences areas, the project will bring our investment in this important heritage estate to £1M. This further investment will bring the former kitchen garden of the estate back to life. We will work with the community to design a new space that will deliver on our strategic ambitions for culture, heritage, food growing, nature, community ownership and support our service be more financially sustainable. We will look for ways to generate more income through heritage grants led by local people.	Investment will help preserve important heritage assets in a registered park and garden for future generations. It will provide an opportunity to empower park users, volunteers and community groups to engage in the management and development of the Estate.	£500K
Providing new play experiences to include delivering accessible play at Hengrove Play Park	Various.  Hengrove Play Park	Wards that host or are close to areas of growth and eligible for SCIL.  Hengrove & Whitchurch Park	Investment should be transformational – making a meaningful difference to the play experience for children and young people, ensuring that young women and girls and Disabled children's experiences are enhanced and they are involved in the design of new facilities.  We will add to our £300K investment to renovate part of Hengrove Play Park, carrying out further work to provide accessible play opportunities and help parents/carers have an exciting and safe play-day out.	Investment will help deliver our vision for parks and green spaces to provide exciting and diverse play spaces that ensure that all children and young people can flourish, have fun and feel safe and included. It will also deliver our commitment to meet the needs of Disabled children and improve access for women and girls.	£400K  £200K
7. Area Committees will be invited to ensure investment of Strategic CIL is transformational, enhancing project scope by adding to project budgets with Devolved CIL allocations.					

8. This report seeks approval for the allocation of Strategic CIL funding in line with the original spend profile, to allow project work to commence in 2024/25 financial year. The delivery programme will therefore reflect this profile when community and stakeholder engagement work is being taken forward to identify individual projects and projects prioritised and delivered to fit the budget available. This will be carried out with the correct Portfolio Holder input and approval. All projects will be tested to ensure they meet the criteria set out in this report and that sites are eligible for Strategic CIL spending.

**Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the allocation of £2M of Strategic CIL added to the Capital programme at Full Council on 21 February 2023 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 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.
2. Proposals are informed by the aspirations and actions within the Parks and Green Space Strategy which was subject to public consultation between 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

**Background Documents:**

[Full Council 21 February 2023](#)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	£0	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	
<b>Capital Cost</b>	£2M	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	GR07A SCIL £2M
<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:**

1. **Finance Advice:** The report is seeking approval to spend £2m of funding previously approved by Full Council in February 2023. It formed part of a suite of budget amendments in the 2023/24 budget setting process for a

package of investments across several city parks and green spaces. The £2m expenditure will be funded from a £2m allocation of strategic CIL approved and added to the Parks Capital Programme (GR07A). This funding is being brought forward to begin spending in 2024/25 (instead of 2025/26 as currently planned)

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. If for any reason there are additional costs, these will have to be met from the Parks budget envelope or the project scaled back.

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:** Ben Hegarty, Finance Business Partner Growth and Regeneration, 16 February 2024.

**2. Legal Advice:**

The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Council's own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

**Legal Team Leader:** Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 20 February 2024

**3. Implications on IT:** I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.

**IT Team Leader:** Alex Simpson – Lead Enterprise Architect 26 February 2024

**4. HR Advice:** There are no HR implications evident

**HR Partner:** Celia Williams – HR Business Partner Growth and Regeneration 26 February 2024

<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	25 January 2024
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Councillor Ellie King, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Communities	21 February 2024
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off</b>	Mayor's Office	21 February 2024

<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>