



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS FOR FINANCE AND ESTATES

TOPIC - PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OPEN SPACE AT HILLIER WAY (L4)

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

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SUMMARY

In February 2016, Winchester City Council secured planning permission to build 13 new affordable homes on open space in Hillier Way, Abbotts Barton. A condition of the planning permission is the submission to the local planning authority of a scheme for mitigation measures for off-site landscape improvements to local open space (including a timetable for implementation). A sum of £100,000 has been set aside from the New Homes Development budget to fund these measures.

Consultation events have taken place over the last year and this decision notice seeks permission to allocate the funding to the projects and open spaces chosen by the local community which have been coordinated by the Landscape and Open Spaces Team.

A site in Hillier Way/Nuns Walk known as L4 (see site plan in Appendix 2) is the main location chosen for improvements as this gives an opportunity for previously inaccessible open space to come into the public realm. It also offers the opportunity for the local Scout Association to provide a hut with community use. This decision

notice also seeks therefore an in-principle agreement to lease a proportion of the land at L4 to the scouts for the provision of a scout hut with wider community use.

DECISION

1. That in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 6.4, authority to incur supplementary capital expenditure of up to £100,000 be given to the Head of Landscape and Open Spaces for the funding of landscape mitigation works outlined in Appendix 1 to this Decision Notice.
2. That the grant of a lease to the Scout Association of the land at Hiller Way known as L4 and shown hatched on the plan at Appendix 2 to this Decision Notice be agreed in principle, for the provision of a scout hut with wider community use, subject to the Assistant Director (Estates and Regeneration) agreeing acceptable terms.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

A Landscape Consultant was engaged by the New Homes Delivery Team to look at how the mitigation funding for the housing scheme could be used to provide suitable recreational facilities following the development for housing of the existing open space land at Hillier Way, and the resulting report identified 4 possible areas in Abbotts Barton (L1-L4) where improvements could be made. Initial consultation with the public was undertaken based on these findings.

This information was then passed to the Landscape and Open Spaces Team for the development of more detailed proposals and further consultation. The site at Hiller Way known as L4 was previously generally inaccessible to the public, had a history of anti-social behaviour and was favoured as an area for use by a local Scout group. Given the fact that the new development was resulting in the physical loss of open space land to housing, it was considered a priority to spend some of the mitigation funding on basic works to bring site L4 into public use. Consequently £25,000 has been set aside for these works (see Appendix 1 for details) leaving a total of £75,000 for the public to identify how this could best be used.

A joint consultation exercise with the Scout Association and Local Community Group was held on 25th February 2017 and was attended by 90 people. At the event, the public were given the opportunity to view 17 different costed proposals and choose which they considered a priority. The findings are shown in Appendix 1. This decision notice seeks permission for the release of the mitigation funding for the procurement of items up to the sum of £100,000 (£25,000 for works to bring L4 into public use and £75,000 for works chosen by the community).

The Scout Association have been involved in the mitigation project from the outset. The New Homes Delivery Team were in discussions with the Association about the possibility of leasing part of the site known as L4 to the Scouts for a community building. The New Homes Delivery Team and Landscape and Open Spaces Team have worked with the Scouts throughout the course of the project to negotiate and agree a solution that works for the Scout Association, Winchester City Council and the local residents. Appendix 2 shows the proposed area to be leased to the Scouts for the provision of a scout hut and this decision notice seeks in principle agreement for that lease. The proposed area to be leased is shown on the plans, but the Scout Association will be responsible for designing the building and submitting a planning application for its construction. The cost of the build will also be funded by the Scout Association.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Initial Project Expenditure

- Expenditure of up to £100,000, options shown in Appendix 1, for the improvement of open space in the Abbots Barton area. These works will be funded from the agreed landscape mitigation sum.
- The Landscape and Open Spaces Team will undertake the project management and coordination of the installation within existing team resources.

Ongoing Revenue Expenditure

- The scheme has been designed to be low maintenance although there will be ongoing costs for grass cutting and path maintenance as detailed below.

Grass cutting of wildflower area	£2900
Path maintenance	£887

- These costs will be met from existing Landscape and Open Spaces budgets. The changes in the structure of this year's budget have enabled funding for the management of this and other sites. As the site develops and matures and the usage becomes established, it may require additional resources as it has unique management issues such as the lease to the Scout Association.
- The expected life of the proposed works is shown in Appendix 1. The funding received for the mitigation works are for capital works only. There will be a need to seek an increase in the revenue budget in approximately 20 years time, to cover on-going maintenance. However, the cost associated with the maintenance of the items being provided is low. Any maintenance required in the shorter term will be delivered through the existing revenue budget. The

Council already incurs costs for this site and therefore it is not anticipated that it would be necessary to seek additional revenue funding in the short term.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Ward Members have been consulted, and are in agreement with and fully supportive of this project.

Consultation has been undertaken on this site starting in February 2016 and the public and local community group have been involved in the selection of all improvements to be made to the open spaces through public meetings and community engagement events. The public consultation event in February 2017 received very positive feedback and has the support of local residents.

Consultation with the Scouts Association has been ongoing throughout the project and agreement has been reached between the City Council and Scout Association on the area proposed for the lease.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

n/a

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by:

Date of Decision: 17.08.17

Councillor Guy Ashton – Portfolio Holder for Finance

Councillor Steve Miller – Portfolio Holder for Estates

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Consultation Results

Appendix 2 – Site plan for L4 showing proposed area for lease to scouts

Appendix 1

Basic works to open up the site at L4 costed at £25,000.

- Removal of all man-made rubbish across entire site
- Remove chain link fencing
- Preparation of area for wildflower planting
- Selective thinning, coppicing and pollarding of trees, the arisings will be used to create woodpiles and dead hedges for wildlife habitat.
- Selected dead trees and branches to be used in log piles and dead hedges.
- Construction of dead hedges.
- Remove invasive non-native species
- Creation of a central pathway
- Cutting through the bank in the centre of the site

The public approved the use of the funding for this and then selected items for the remaining budget of £75,000

Option	Votes	Cost	Estimated life span
Wildlife boxes to Area 3	51	£1,000	10 years
Improve footpath along Nun's Stream	42	£15,000	20 years
Provide non-stepped route into Area 3	40	£4,000	N/A
Wildlife days/Outdoor events	40	£3,000	N/A
New footpath through Areas 1 & 2	38	£25,000	20 years
Informal seating to Area 3	36	£2,000	10 years
Secondary bark paths to Area 3	35	£7,500	10 years
Stone fire circles to Area 3	31	£2,500	N/A
Timber sculpture trail to Area 3	30	£6,000	10 years
Interpretation to Area 3	29	£4,000	10 years
Provide trim trail to Area 2	27	£15,000	
Compacted gravel central path Area 3	26	£10,000	
Wildlife viewing platform to Area 3	25	£10,000	
Provide 3 seats to Area 1	24	£6,000	
Provide 3 seats to Area 2	24	£6,000	
Formal seating to Area 3	24	£6,000	
Provide trim trail to Area 1	22	£15,000	

The top ten items chosen are estimated at a cost of £70,000. The project will initially be tendered for these items.. Once a quote has been accepted and the costs confirmed it may be possible to consider further items 11-17 and tender for additional items up to the cost of £100,000.

Appendix 2 – L4

