

Report of: Chief Officer Housing Management

Report to: Director of Environments & Housing

Date: 20th March 2015

Subject: Environmental Improvement Programme

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. In June 2014 Executive Board agreed to allocate £3m of Housing Revenue Account funds to deliver Environmental Improvement projects to improve the quality of the Council's housing estates and provide significant additionality to the Housing Capital Programme.
2. Projects have been identified which support the City Priority Plan, under the following main themes:
 - Dealing effectively with the city's waste
 - Community safety / security
 - Landscaping Access and Amenity
 - Improving parking facilities
3. A total of 105 proposals have been received, which have an estimated total cost of £6.85M. They are broken down as follows:
 - Supporting recycling and dealing effectively with the city's waste. 24 schemes – estimated total cost £1.1M
 - Improving the Environment – landscaping access and amenity - including improvements to paths and play facilities. 26 schemes – estimated total cost £2.8M
 - Parking schemes. 28 schemes – estimated total cost £1.6M
 - Community Safety / security – including CCTV, security doors/ windows / lighting and fencing. 27 schemes – estimated total cost £1.1M

4. The report recommends 82 schemes with an estimated cost total of £3.5M to be delivered in utilising the £3M funding plus a significant contribution from the capital programme of £0.5M plus delivery costs. The Housing Capital Programme existing budget has been allocated to contribute and deliver a number of the identified community safety priorities.

Recommendation

5. That the Director of Environments and Housing gives approval to fund the schemes from the Environmental Improvement budget and Housing Capital Programme as outlined in this report.

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek authority to proceed with the prioritised Environmental Improvements.

2 Background Information

- 2.1 In June 2014 Executive Board agreed to allocate £3m from the Housing Revenue Account to fund Environmental Improvements on housing estates.
- 2.2 A report was presented to the Housing Advisory Board in September 2014 outlining the proposed approach for delivering a programme of Environmental Improvement Projects. Bids for Environmental Improvements have been invited from ward members and officers and collated for each area. In early February 2015 the final proposals were circulate to elected members to seek views on priorities for individual wards.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1 A total of 105 proposals have been received, which have an estimated total cost of £6.7M. They are broken down as follows:
 - Supporting recycling and dealing effectively with the city's waste. 26 schemes – estimated total cost £1.1M
 - Improving the Environment – landscaping access and amenity - including improvements to paths and play facilities. 26 schemes – estimated total cost £2.8M
 - Parking schemes. 28 schemes – estimated total cost £1.6M
 - Community Safety / security – including CCTV, security doors/ windows / lighting and fencing. 25 schemes – estimated total cost £1.1M
- 3.2 The Housing Advisory Panels have considered the proposals and £190K has been committed as match funding against specific schemes which are supported within the localities.
- 3.3 Some schemes have also attracted a range of other match funding from a number of sources totalling £578K.
- 3.4 £172K from the £3m Environmental Improvement budget was required to support three high priority waste related projects which required immediate attention to deliver Alternate Week Collection – these schemes are in development and are Minster Flats Farsley, Tinshill Lane / Mount Cookridge, and Hemminway (Phase 2&3) at Hunslet.

3.5 The criteria for decision-making schemes are:

- Deliver a fair spread of schemes across the City
- Deliver as many projects as possible with the available funding, therefore schemes over £100K will be evaluated and potentially phased / reduced to avoid a disproportionate level of resources going into a single scheme
- Deliver projects which contribute to the City's priorities improved recycling and play facilities which support the City's commitment to Child Friendly Leeds.
- Support and prioritisation from local ward members
- Availability of match funding for the project

3.9 All unfunded projects will be referred back to the Housing Advisory Panels to reconsider.

3.10 Tenant and resident feedback highlighted that car parking is a critical issue impacting on customer satisfaction. A number of schemes have not been approved due to the significant costs and disproportionate impact on the available budget, however, these schemes will be re-assessed to determine if and how we could deliver solutions to address residents' concerns.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Projects have resulted from local discussions and ward members have been informed of the potential projects and asked for their feedback which has been used to inform the decision-making.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment will be completed for each project. This has already been undertaken as part of the project to implement Alternate Weekly Collections across the city.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The projects will deliver against the Best Council Plan 2014-17 outcomes of:

- improving the quality of life for our residents
- supporting Child Friendly Leeds through provision of effective play facilities
- Achieving the savings and efficiencies required to continue to deliver frontline services by supporting the objective of dealing effectively with the city's waste.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.2 Resources are available in the HRA and the Housing Capital Programme to fund the projects. Housing is seeking to achieve value for money in delivering the projects by working closely with contractors and assessing price estimates.

4.4.3 The projects will support Alternate Weekly Collections which helps to achieve efficiencies through increasing recycling and diverting refuse from landfill.

4.4.4 To enable consistent and effective delivery the majority of the schemes will be delivered within the Housing Capital programme project management and delivery arrangements

4.4.5 Operational delivery of an additional 82 projects will be a challenge in addition to the 60 projects identified within the Housing Capital Programme. A delivery plan is in development and will be resourced from the Environmental Improvements reserve. The programme will be delivered over the 2015/16 financial year.

4.4.6 A summary of the schemes are below

Row Labels	Count of HRA Env Budget	Sum of HRA Env Budget	Sum of Potential HAP Match	Sum of Other Match	Sum of Total Project Cost
community safety and security	24	1,086,066	70,000	11,600	1,167,666
dealing effectively with the city's waste	20	612,435	-	197,000	809,435
landscaping, access and amenity	16	420,000	25,000	290,000	735,000
parking improvements	22	769,440	95,000	-	864,440
Grand Total	82	2,887,941	190,000	498,600	3,576,541

4.4.7 Appendix One contains the full schedule of schemes by theme.

4.4.8 To ensure programme delivery £250K will be allocated to Property & Contracts project resources; a specific delivery plan is in development.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications and this report is not subject to call in. The decision to spend the HRA fund on environmental projects was taken by Executive Board in June 2014. The Director of Environments has delegated responsibility for allocation.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are risks in delivering these all these projects although steps are being taken to minimise them. Main risks are tenant and resident satisfaction, minimised by involvement and direct communications.

4.6.2 Capacity of contractors to deliver the projects within timescales at to be minimised by effective project management and additional resources allocated to Property & Contracts to deliver appropriate and effective project and programme management.

4.6.3 A number of the schemes require further development to determine the exact project brief; therefore further consultation and in some cases planning permission is required which will impact on the overall timescales for delivery.

4.6.4 A contingency fund of £250K will be allocated from the resources to ensure total costs do not exceed the available budget

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The £3M plus Housing Capital Programme allocation of £0.5M plus delivery costs will support 82 projects across the City and make a major contribution to the environmental quality of housing estates.
- 5.2 Delivery supports projects that will deliver to the City's key priorities of dealing effectively with the City's waste and recycling and contributing to Child Friendly Leeds with increased investment in play. Investment in the housing estates will create more sustainable environments

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That the Director of Environments and Housing gives approval to fund the schemes from the Environmental Improvement budget and Housing Capital Programme as outlined in this report and detailed in the attached appendices.