

## Morley Town Deal: Greenspace improvements at Churwell Park (33393/MGC/000)

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Report of: Head of Projects & Programmes

Report to: Chief Officer/Director of City Development

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

This report is about proposals to deliver holistic greenspace improvements to Churwell Park in Morley. As part of the Morley Town Deal (MTD) Programme, this project forms part of the Greener and Connected Programme of improvements to eight existing greenspaces/parks in Morley. Churwell is the fourth park to be brought forward for delivery under that programme. The approval of the Director of City Development/Chief Officer under delegated powers as agreed at Executive Board in October 2023 is required to give authority to spend £265.6k funding to deliver the scheme.

### Recommendations

The Director of City Development is requested to :-

- a) Approve authority to spend £265.6k, on greenspace improvements at Churwell Park in Morley including footpath improvements, new signage, trim trail, tree planting and associated works, new entrance features and other planting.

### What is this report about?

1. This report sets out the context for authority to spend £265.6k on improvements to Churwell Park in Morley, a well-used and popular local greenspace as part of the Morley Town Deal grant funding award.
2. Consultation and engagement on the Greener and Connected programme was carried out whilst developing the Morley Town Investment Plan bid. This was designed in two phases: the first around idea generation and a second phase seeking feedback on project ideas which directly informed the bid.
3. In Summer 2021 Groundwork Yorkshire (GY), through the Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place between LCC and GY were commissioned to complete a site analysis for each of the parks including Churwell. Proposals were then developed for Churwell Park based on feedback from previous and more recent consultation that took place in November 2022.

4. The scheme has now been fully costed by Parks and Countryside (Internal Service Provider) who will be delivering the scheme. The works are due to start by the end of February 2024.
5. Churwell Park is in Leeds City Council ownership so there are no property implications.
6. No planning approvals are required for the proposed works.

#### **What impact will this proposal have?**

7. Enhancements to the park will create a more positive outdoor experience and encourage active travel. The scheme will aim to support the mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents, as well helping improve local air quality.
8. The improvements will consist of rationalised signage, introduction of new seating and new bins to ensure a high and consistent quality across all parks.
9. The additional tree and shrub planting will increase ambience and biodiversity within the greenspace. It will also provide ecological benefits that are sustainable in the long term.
10. The improvements will generate wider value in uplifting the town as a place to live, work and visit.

#### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing                       Inclusive Growth                       Zero Carbon

11. Improving the greenspaces and connectivity in Morley will provide better opportunities to practice physically active lifestyles and active travel. This will reduce the health inequalities that are recognised in deprived areas and improve the health of the area.
12. The proposal aims to support the climate emergency by investing in public greenspaces to enable a faster transition to a green economy whilst improving the quality of life for local residents.
13. By improving the public realm and connectivity of Morley there is greater incentive for businesses to move into and invest the area. This also supports the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy outcomes.

#### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected: Morley South

Have ward members been consulted?                       Yes                       No

14. In November 2021, Locality were commissioned to undertake an online community engagement exercise focussed upon obtaining the views of residents about the priorities under the Morley Town Investment Plan's Greener and Connected theme. The engagement exercise was live between November 2021 and early January 2022.
15. Detailed consultation took place in November 2022 on the initial plans for the park via Commonplace and an in-person session at the park. Feedback has informed the final proposals which have been designed by Groundwork Yorkshire. The scheme is now at delivery stage.
16. The Morley Town Deal Transport, Greenspace, Health & Wellbeing working group have approved the proposal.
17. The Parks Operations Manager for Climate, Energy and Greenspaces has approved the proposal.

## What are the resource implications?

18. The project will be delivered by the Parks and Countryside Service who will have overall responsibility of the works. All materials and plant for the hard material works and earthworks will be procured consistent with the city council's financial procedure rules and the council's standing orders to ensure that the proposal delivers best value.
19. Projects and Programmes in Asset Management and Regeneration are providing overall PM resource for the entirety of the Morley Town Deal timescales.
20. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) agreed to allocate funding of £24.3m across financial years 2021/22 to 2025/26 and the remaining balance of funding was injected as part of the capital programme.
21. Greenspace improvements at Churwell Park will be the fourth to be delivered through the Greener and Connected programme.

## Capital Funding and Cashflow

### Morley Town Deal 33393/000/000

Current Injections into the capital Programme as at August 2023	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2023 £000's	FORECAST			
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
			£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
PROGRAMME MGT	932.4	332.4	200.0	200.0	200.0	0.0
CONSTRUCTION WORKS	19,996.2	327.1	3,430.5	9,444.0	6,794.6	0.0
FEES & OTHER	3,734.0	705.6	1,335.6	926.7	766.1	0.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>24,662.6</b>	<b>1,365.1</b>	<b>4,966.1</b>	<b>10,570.7</b>	<b>7,760.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Authority to Spend to date as at August 2023	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2022 £000's	FORECAST			
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
			£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
DEVELOPMENT FUNDING	398.0	398.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
GREENER & CONNECTED	811.2	358.1	453.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,209.2</b>	<b>756.1</b>	<b>453.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Authority to Spend required for this current approval	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2023 £000's	FORECAST			
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
			£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
CHURCHWELL PARK G&C	265.6	0.0	265.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>265.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>265.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Total overall Funding	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2023 £000's	FORECAST			
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
			£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
LCC BORROWING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
MORLEY TOWN DEAL	24,300.0	1,348.8	4,869.8	10,570.7	7,510.7	0.0
NETWORK RAIL	250.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.0	0.0
SAFER COMMUNITIES (UKSPF)	35.0	0.0	35.0			
S106	77.6	16.3	61.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Confirmed Funding	24662.6	1365.1	4966.1	10570.7	7760.7	0.0
<b>Total Funding Balance</b>	<b>23,187.8</b>	<b>609.0</b>	<b>4,247.4</b>	<b>10,570.7</b>	<b>7,760.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>

## **Revenue Effects**

22. The majority of improvements are to the existing greenspace with the addition of new features such as the trim trail items. Churwell Park is already included on Parks and Countryside's ongoing maintenance schedule. The additional facilities will be managed within their existing maintenance budgets so no additional revenue costs will be associated with this scheme.

## **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

23. A comprehensive risk register has been produced for the Greener & Connected programme. A full risk assessment will be undertaken prior to commencement on site. Parks and Countryside will be responsible for all on-site Health and Safety.

## **What are the legal implications?**

24. Legal Services have been consulted on the approach and assessed the implications of this decision and there is no further due diligence to be undertaken.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

25. External procurements were considered for the delivery of the parks improvement programme. However, Parks and Countryside are an internal service provider so provide the Council with best value for money. Their existing Service Level Agreement with Groundwork Yorkshire has also been utilised.

### **How will success be measured?**

26. A robust programme of monitoring and evaluation is in place to ensure the outputs and outcomes are regularly assessed across the projects and provide assurance to the funding provider. The Project Manager will be responsible for monitoring progress through regular site visits.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

27. The works are scheduled to start February 2024 and expected to be completed by June 2024.

## **Appendices**

- Landscape proposals

## **Background papers**

- N/A