

Report of the Director of Environment & Housing

Report to Housing Advisory Board

Date: 9th July 2015

Subject: Environmental Improvement Programme Update

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

Summary of main issues

1. An Environmental Improvement Programme has been established through the provision of £3m Housing Revenue Account Funding. The rationale behind the programme is to improve the quality of the Council's housing estates, improve tenant satisfaction and address long standing local concerns.
2. A programme of 82 schemes has been approved, which fall under the headings of dealing effectively with the city's waste, community safety, landscaping, play and parking.
3. Work is underway to develop project briefs into detailed scheme plans, including detailed designs, to be implemented across the city over the next 18-24 months.
4. This report provides the Housing Advisory Board with an update on progress to date.

Recommendations

5. Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the update on the Environmental Improvement Programme and comment as appropriate.

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Housing Advisory Board with an update on the Environmental Improvement Programme.

2 Background information

2.1 In June 2014, Executive Board agreed to allocate £3m of Housing Revenue Account funds to establish an Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) to improve the quality of the Council's housing estates. This investment aims to improve tenant satisfaction and tackle local long standing issues or concerns.

2.2 In autumn of 2014, proposals for environmental improvements were invited from Ward Members and Officers. This resulted in 105 project proposals with an estimated cost of £6.85m. These were subsequently shared with the local Housing Advisory Panels to ensure the views of local residents were taken into account as part of the approval process.

2.3 It was ensured that projects contributed towards the Best Council Plan priorities and were categorised under the following five main themes:

- Dealing effectively with the city's waste and to support alternative weekly collections
- Community safety including fencing, lighting and CCTV
- Landscaping
- Play
- Improving parking facilities

2.4 The criteria for decision making on schemes approved as part of the EIP included:

- Delivering a fair spread of schemes across the City;
- Delivering as many projects as possible with the available funding - schemes over £100k were evaluated and phased, if possible, to avoid a disproportionate level of resources going into a single project;
- Delivering projects which contribute to the Best Council Plan priorities;
- The support and prioritisation from local Ward Members; and
- The availability of match funding.

2.5 The recommended EIP of 82 different projects was presented to the Director of Environment & Housing in March 2015 and approved for implementation through delegated decision authority.

2.6 Alongside this, Housing Advisory Panels allocated a total of £176,600 as match funding against for specific projects to be delivered as part of the wider programme.

2.7 There is also just over £1m of Housing Leeds capital programme funding allocated to community safety schemes within the EIP and a further c£550k of other funding supporting schemes across the EIP.

3 Environmental Improvement Programme – Progress to Date

3.1 The sections of the report below provide an update to Housing Advisory Board members on progress to date with implementation of the Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP).

3.2 Programme Governance

3.2.1 A programme board has been established to oversee the delivery of the EIP. The Programme Board meets on a bi-monthly basis to review progress with the delivery of individual projects as well as to discuss the management of programme as a whole. The programme board is chaired by the Chief Housing Management Officer and has representatives from Housing Management (Tenant & Community Involvement), Property & Contracts and Parks & Countryside, who are all involved with the delivery of the programme.

3.3 **Project Delivery**

3.3.1 The Investment Projects Team, part of Housing Leeds Property & Contracts service, is overseeing the delivery of the programme. A dedicated Senior Project Officer has been assigned to co-ordinate delivery and report back to the programme board on progress. Additional project resource is in the process of being recruited; it is hoped that there will be two Project Officers in post in the coming weeks. Until all of the dedicated officers are in place, current staff are working up projects ready for delivery but HAB are requested to acknowledge this this is taking longer than anticipated due to current workloads.

3.3.2 Housing Leeds Property & Contracts are working in partnership with the Council's Parks & Countryside, Highways and other internal service providers to design and deliver schemes across the programme. The delivery programme is being planned to ensure that there are no potential resourcing and capacity issues amongst Housing Leeds staff and contracting partners, with projects delivered as part of a phased programme of work over 18-24 months.

3.3.3 An exercise has been undertaken to review each scheme to ensure there is sufficient detail to enable draft designs and individual project plans to be developed. Some of the approved schemes require further approvals, such as planning permission, and surveys, for example parking schemes require Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) testing, to be completed before moving forward to consultation and implementation phase. Appendix 1 highlights the current status of the approved schemes.

3.3.4 There are a number of schemes which are already at an advanced stage. For example, the design and consultation work is already complete or supporting surveys have been undertaken / commissioned to move projects forward for implementation. These schemes are listed below:

HAP	Scheme	Anticipated implementation date
Inner East	Brignall, Gargrave and Scargill Fence Painting	Summer 2015
Outer South	Jarvis Dusk 'til Dawn Lighting	Summer 2015
Inner South	Middleton Skatepark	Summer 2015
Outer South	Wood Lane MUGA	Summer 2015
Outer South East	Oak Place Sheltered Security	Summer 2015
Outer South East	Birch Grove Sheltered Security	Summer 2015
Inner East	Cromwell Mount Fencing	Summer 2015
Outer South	John O'Gaunts Fencing	Spring 2016
Outer South	Harrops & Askeys Fencing / Gates	Spring 2016
Inner West	Fairfields Fencing	Spring 2016
Outer South	Dean Hall Close / Wynyard Drive Fencing	Autumn 2015
Outer South East	Stanks Drive / Hebden Place / Naburn Fold Home Zone	Delivery will be dependent on the results of ongoing site Investigation works
Inner North West	Tinshill Waste Solution Scheme	Autumn 2015

3.3.5 Some schemes which have been approved as part of the EIP are on hold and will be delivered within wider regeneration programmes. The affected schemes are:

- Beckhills Fencing and Waste Solution – a detailed environmental improvement plan is being developed for the estate as part of wider regeneration proposals. Therefore, these projects are currently on hold until further notice
- Clydes Parking Improvements – As the biomass scheme is currently on site in the Clydes, this project won't take place until the energy centre and associated pipework is completed.

3.3.6 The EIP CCTV schemes have been packaged together with wider CCTV proposals - the West network, LeedsWatch integration and digitalisation and overall maintenance requirements of existing CCTV. A detailed brief / project plan for CCTV is currently being developed by PPPU. We're hoping that there can be some quick wins with some of the ad hoc installations, but timescales are still unclear at the moment.

3.4 Communication and Consultation

- 3.4.1 To ensure that key stakeholders are kept updated with progress of the programme, a communications plan has been developed for the EIP. The communications plan outlines activities which will be undertaken to provide updates on the programme as a whole and also the consultation process for individual schemes to ensure consistency of approach and clarity on roles between Housing Management, Property & Contracts and internal service providers.
- 3.4.2 An update on the programme will be presented at the next Cross City Chairs Group and area based updates provided at the next round of HAPs to provide an overview of progress in each locality.

3.5 Financial position

- 3.5.1 The table below outlines the overall EIP budget position, incorporating current levels of staffing and design fees, alongside individual project costs.

Environmental Improvement Programme Budget - £3,000,000					
	EIP	HRA	HAP	Other	TOTAL
Parking	£942,328	0	£95,000	0	£1,037,328
Play	£164,000	0	0	£320,000	£484,000
Landscapes	£386,000	0	£25,000	£40,000	£451,000
Waste	£693,378	0	0	£197,000	£890,378
Community Safety	£137,817	£1,062,520	£56,600	0	£1,256,937
Project Delivery Team / Design / Management Fees	£112,070	0	0	0	£112,070
Total	£2,435,593	£1,062,520	£176,600	£557,000	£4,231,713
Budget Contingency	£564,407				

- 3.5.2 HAB is requested to note that the above figures are only indicative costs at this stage and are subject to change. For example, it is anticipated that parking scheme costs could increase following the completion of Sustainable (Urban) Drainage Systems (SUDS) testing and any remedial works which may be required to ensure that the parking areas are SUDS compliant. Design and management fees are also expected increase dependent upon the complexity of the design of each scheme.
- 3.5.3 The EIP has managed to generate a significant amount of additional or match funding - £1,796,120 in total from a range of internal and external sources, which is equivalent to over a third of the total programme costs.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.2 As part of the approval process for the EIP, Ward Members and HAPs were consulted on the schemes and formed a crucial part of the approval process, to ensure that decisions were made with the support of local knowledge.
- 4.1.3 Individual project consultation will take place with tenants who will benefit from or live close to where the EIP scheme will be implemented. The consultation will be undertaken jointly by the Housing Office, Tenant & Community Involvement Team and Property & Contracts. Tenants will be consulted on draft scheme designs and will have input into the types of materials used on some schemes.
- 4.1.4 As highlighted above, a communication plan has been created for the programme as a whole. As projects are starting to be implemented, information will be sent out to HAPs, local tenants and residents groups and via social media to increase awareness of the schemes which are being implemented. Further publicity and promotion will also be undertaken on scheme completion.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Funded projects address a range of local environmental and related issues that will have a positive impact on communities and customer groups. For example, security enhancements in areas where crime and fear of crime is of a concern to local residents.
- 4.2.2 As part of the consultation process, the demographics of the community will be taken into account to ensure that all tenants have an opportunity to input into the consultation process.
- 4.2.3 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment has been completed for the programme as a whole.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The delivery of the Environmental Improvement Programme contributes towards the following Best Council Plan 2015-2020 priorities:
- Supporting communities and tackling poverty
 - Building a child-friendly city
 - Dealing effectively with the city's waste

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 As part of the partnership working with service providers and contractors, measures will be put in place to be undertaken to ensure value for money. For example, service providers will order materials for a variety of schemes together to ensure economies of scale as far as possible. Schemes will also be packaged together as far as possible to ensure that contractors deliver a number of scheme elements at one time, rather than going back to an area on a number of occasions.
- 4.4.2 A number of the schemes funded through the EIP under the 'waste' category will support Alternate Weekly Collections which helps to achieve efficiencies through increasing recycling and diverting refuse from landfill.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.
- 4.5.2 There is no exempt or confidential information contained in this report.

4.5.3 There are no key decisions associated with this report, so it is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are a number of risks associated with the delivery of the EIP and a risk register has been established for the programme as a whole. The risks associated with the EIP and measures put in place to negate these risks are as follows:

- Difficulties in securing a contractor to deliver schemes – a partnership has been developed with Parks & Countryside to ensure that scheme delivery is planned in such a way that there will not be an impact in resources and delivery can move forward as scheduled
- Inaccurate project briefs / budgets – a thorough review of all project briefs has been completed to gather any missing information in order for designs to be drafted prior to consultation being undertaken. With regards to budgets, a contingency has been built into the programme to cover any additional costs
- Project Delivery Team not established –Housing Leeds staff have been working on the programme on an interim basis until a dedicated resource has been recruited. A programme tracker has been established, so there is an up to date comprehensive programme overview in one place
- Assumptions made on delivery timelines – as part of the project brief review, clear indicative timescales have been indicated. This will ensure that there is no miscommunication or raised expectations when it comes to scheme delivery. This also connects to the communication plan for the scheme

4.6.2 Alongside this, each scheme will be risk assessed individually. This is due to the variety of projects which are being funded through the EIP and some of the complexities associated with the delivery of some schemes.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The projects being delivered as part of the Environmental Improvement Programme will make a significant impact to the quality of a number of housing estates across the city. The projects which have been approved will address local priorities which have been identified by our tenants through the STAR survey or via local HAPs. Some schemes also provide added value to other initiatives, such as local regeneration frameworks and master plans.

5.2 There are a high number of schemes in the programme, some of which are complex in nature. Scheme proposals and briefs are also at very different stages of development. It will take time to develop detailed briefs for all the schemes, so a phased approach to delivering schemes on site will be used, with more advanced schemes, such as those outlined in 3.3.4, starting first.

5.3 An overall programme for the EIP as a whole will be brought to a later HAB, once briefs are finalised for all schemes and delivery dates can be assessed more accurately, taking into account the details and extent of work required for each scheme, contracting resources, design and consultation requirements etc.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the update on the Environmental Improvement Programme and comment as appropriate.

7 Background documents

7.1 None