

Morley Town Deal: Greenspace improvements at Cottingley Junior Playground (33393/MGC/000)

Date: 25th October 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 Cottingley Junior Playground on the Cottingley Estate. 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 within the Morley Town Deal boundary. 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 £190.4k funding to deliver the scheme.

Recommendations

The Director of City Development is requested to :-

- a) Authorise Leeds City Council to enter into a Contributing Third-Party Agreement with Veolia Environmental Trust for a total of £75k Local Communities Funding (LCF), following a successful bid application.
- b) Authorise Leeds City Council to pay the 10% mandatory contribution to the Landfill Operator providing the £75k LCF grant funding.
- c) Authorise Leeds City Council to inject the £75k grant funding into the capital programme.
- d) Approve authority to spend £190.4k (including the £75k Veolia funding), on greenspace improvements to Cottingley Junior Playground on the Cottingley Estate including a trim trail, new play equipment, footpath works, wildflower planting.

What is this report about?

1. This report sets out the context for authority to spend £190.4k on improvements to Cottingley Junior Playground on the Cottingley Estate, a well-used and popular local playground/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 Ltd (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 Cottingley Junior Playground. Proposals were then developed based on feedback from previous and more recent consultation that took place in May 2024.
4. The scheme has now been fully costed by Climate, Energy & Greenspaces (Internal Service Provider) who will be delivering the scheme. The works are due to start in early November.
5. Cottingley Junior Playground is in Leeds City Council ownership.
6. No planning approvals are required for the proposed works.

What impact will this proposal have?

7. Enhancements to the playground and the surrounding greenspace will create a more positive outdoor experience. The scheme will aim to support the mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents, as well as helping improve local air quality.
8. The improvements will consist of a new trim trail, new play equipment, footpath works, planting and an artist and community led mural.
9. The additional tree and wildflower planting will increase ambience and biodiversity within the greenspace. It will also provide ecological benefits that are sustainable in the long term.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

10. Improving the greenspaces and connectivity in Cottingley 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.
11. 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.
12. The proposal will aim to provide a safe and clean environment for young people to exercise, socialise and reconnect with nature which will improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing.

Wards affected: Holbeck and Beeston

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

13. Detailed consultation took place in May 2024 on the initial plans for the park via Commonplace and in-person sessions at the playground. Feedback has informed the final proposals which have been designed by GY. The scheme is now at delivery stage.
14. The Parks Operations Manager for Climate, Energy and Greenspaces is supportive of the proposal.
15. There has been engagement and consultation with ward member representatives via the Morley Town Deal Transport, Greenspace, Health & Wellbeing working group. They are supportive of the proposal.
16. A copy of the final design proposal has been shared with the Executive Member for Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Spaces.
17. A highlight report is provided to the Morley Town Deal Board (MTDB) on a bi-monthly basis. The Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development is a member of the MTDB.

What are the resource implications?

18. The project will be delivered by the Climate, Energy and Greenspaces 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 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) 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. Leeds City Council has successfully secured £75k from the Local Communities Funding via Veolia Environmental Trust. The Grant is to be used as a contribution towards elements of the project at Cottingley Junior Playground which includes new play equipment and biodiversity improvements. The project has to commence within four months of the date of the Agreement and must be completed within twelve months of its commencement. LCC must submit frequent and timely submissions of evidence of expenditure of the Grant.
22. The Landfill Operators who provide money for the LCF are able to claim a tax credit of 90% of the money they give towards the LCF. This leaves a shortfall of 10%. Therefore, each grant beneficiary is required to cover that shortfall and arrange payment to the Landfill Operator. In this case, LCC are required to make a £7.5k contribution.
23. Greenspace improvements at Cottingley Junior Playground will be the fifth scheme 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 October 2024	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's
PROGRAMME MGT	932.4	532.4	200.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
CONSTRUCTION WORKS	20,071.2	2,009.1	3,650.4	14,411.7	0.0	0.0
FEES & OTHER	3,734.0	705.6	1,335.6	1,692.8	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	24,737.6	3,247.1	5,186.0	16,304.5	0.0	0.0
Authority to Spend to date on G&C as at October 2024	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's
G&C DEVELOPMENT FUNDING	499.4	499.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
GREENER & CONNECTED	1,436.3	1,436.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	1,935.7	1,935.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Authority to Spend required for this current approval	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's
COTTINGLEY JUNIOR PLAYGROUND	190.4	0.0	190.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	190.4	0.0	190.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total overall Funding	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's
LCC BORROWING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
MORLEY TOWN DEAL	24,300.0	3,230.8	5,014.7	16,054.5	0.0	0.0
OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES	250.0	0.0	0.0	250.0	0.0	0.0
SAFER COMMUNITIES (UKSPF)	35.0	0.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
S106	77.6	16.3	61.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS	75.0	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Confirmed Funding	24737.6	3247.1	5186.0	16304.5	0.0	0.0
Total Funding Balance	22,611.5	1,311.4	4,995.6	16,304.5	0.0	0.0

Revenue Effects

24. The majority of improvements are to the existing greenspace with the addition of new features such as the trim trail items. Cottingley Junior Playground is already included on Climate, Energy and Greenspaces 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?

25. A comprehensive risk register has been produced for the Greener & Connected programme. A full risk assessment will be undertaken prior to commencement on site. Climate, Energy and Greenspaces will be responsible for all on-site Health and Safety.

What are the legal implications?

26. 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?

27. External procurements were considered for the delivery of the proposed scheme. However, Climate, Energy and Greenspaces are an internal service provider so provide the Council with best value for money. Their existing Service Level Agreement with Groundwork Yorkshire Ltd has also been utilised.

How will success be measured?

28. 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?

29. The works are scheduled to start early November 2024 and expected to be completed by March 2025. Projects and Programmes will be responsible for implementation of the scheme.

Appendices

- Landscape proposals

Background papers

- N/A