

Authority to Spend and Procure for a contractor to develop a community garden on Lindsey Road in Lincoln Green

Date: 15/09/2022

Report of: Investment Strategy Manager

Report to: Chief Officer Housing

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- Housing Leeds and partners are currently developing a programme of public realm improvements as part of the Lincoln Green wider regeneration investment plan. The aim is to develop proposals for a well-designed place which, by making better use of the space available this will play an integral role in creating healthier, safer, and a more welcoming environment for residents.
- This report provides information on the redevelopment proposals for the former Roxby playground and seeks authority to spend £150k to redevelop the site.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer, Housing is requested to:

- a) Approve the proposed procurement strategy in line with CPR 3.1.7 to procure an external contractor for the works following an open and competitive procedure utilising and inviting specialist landscaping contractors from Constructionline following an expression of interest which provided a list of four interested contractors.
- b) Authorise expenditure of £150,000 from the HRA for this project, noting that a grant application for £71k has been submitted to Veolia. If successful, the grant funding will be injected into the programme to replace the equivalent value of HRA funding which will then be utilised elsewhere.

What is this report about?

- 1 Lincoln Green is a densely populated inner-city neighbourhood with a significant number of high rise and medium rise buildings in close proximity to each other. Most properties do not have access to a private garden. Through the 'Planning for Real' consultation in 2019, residents highlighted a need for quality green space to enable members of the community to sit and meet as well as a safe environment for children to play.
- 2 The former playground on Lindsey Road, adjacent to Roxby Close is vested with Housing and is currently disused and has been identified as a suitable area for residents to use.
- 3 Housing Leeds has been working with colleagues from the Council's Planning Department and Localities team as well as in partnership with the residents and Mafwa Theatre who are a local community organisation to develop a concept design for the former playground.
- 4 The design includes the creation of a community garden with seating and trees thus creating an attractive and multifunctional community hub. This will allow residents to use the space as an outdoor venue for gatherings, workshops and events, an explorative play space for children, as well as support Lincoln Green residents' wellbeing through engagement and creativity. For details on the design see the appendices.
- 5 External match funding from Veolia has been secured on a conditional basis. The funding is subject to the completion of the tender evaluation, and the submission of a tender report to Veolia by 31st October 2022 in which the preferred bidder is identified. Once this has been completed, funding will be granted and then injected into the HRA.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 The proposal will provide a quality multifunctional outdoor space in the inner-city neighbourhood of Lincoln Green that will support resident well-being.
- 7 It will inspire and empower the residents of Lincoln Green by building their confidence and skills through a variety of mediums, particularly through art and growing/gardening activities, which will in turn, encourage participation and engagement which are key to decision making through the regeneration work underway.
- 8 This project will create opportunities and space for residents to meet, promoting social cohesion and resilience, reducing social isolation, and improving mental health.
- 9 It will also demonstrate how community space can be transformed and used creatively and how community involvement can shape the local environment giving residents an appetite for more environmental improvements led by the community.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 10 The project will contribute to the Best Council Plan outcomes of Health and Wellbeing supporting healthy physically active lifestyle; Sustainable Infrastructure improving the natural environment; Child Friendly City supporting families giving children the best start in life and enhancing the City now and for future generations; Age Friendly Leeds making Leeds public space accessible, clean and welcoming; Culture, ensuring culture can be created and experienced by everyone; Safe and strong communities being responsive to local need and building thriving communities
- 11 The new community space will encourage inclusive growth of the community through providing an area for a wide range of activities benefitting and including all demographics, therefore contributing to inclusive growth of the area.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: Burmantofts and Richmond Hill

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 12 Tenants and residents have been consulted through several community events and have fed back that they want more quality green space where they can sit and meet, and where children can safely play. Residents have been consulted on the design and choice of materials to be used in the space and they have expressed a strong support for the proposals
- 13 Burmantofts and Richmond Hill Ward members are aware of the work taking place in Lincoln Green and of the partnership work with Mafwa and have been regularly kept up to date throughout the design period.

What are the resource implications?

- 14 The pre-tender estimate for the site redevelopment is £150k. The full value of the project will initially be funded from within the existing HRA capital investment programme. Grant funding of £71k has been conditionally secured from Veolia however formal award of the grant will not take place until shortly prior to tender award. Once the grant is formally awarded to the Council the funding will be injected into the HRA capital investment programme. If the Council is not awarded the grant, the project will continue to be funded from within the existing HRA capital investment programme.
- 15 The garden has been designed with future maintenance in mind ensuring that its upkeep can be carried out withing the current arrangements. We are also working with our partners to build residents capacity for them to take care of the planted beds.

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

- 16 A risk register for the project is in place and will continue to be managed by the project team to monitor, mitigate, and identify any new risks as they arise. Once a contractor is in place the council will work with them to review risks regularly. Notable key risks include:
- 17 Timescales for delivery – The project team is working to deliver against the set timescales by Veolia, which is proving challenging. Housing Leeds has been offered a conditional grant of £71,048 towards the project on the basis that a tender report will be provided before the 31st October 2022 to secure this funding.
- 18 Market challenges and contractor interest – The construction market is currently experiencing a highly busy period, this means contractors are experiencing limited resourcing capacity to tender for works, leading to low contractor interest on schemes. The risk this poses is few or no tender submissions are received. This is being managed through undertaking an EOI process to gauge market interest, and thorough supplier engagement throughout the tender process.
- 19 Procurement challenge – This is being managed through ensuring that a robust procurement process is being conducted in line and compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. A fair, transparent, and robust competitive tender process will be followed to ensure the risk of procurement challenge is mitigated.
- 20 Quality –The appointed contractor will have specialist skill, technical expertise and knowledge that will be assessed and evaluated using quality criteria during the procurement and as part of any tender evaluation process. This will ensure all works are completed with regards to Health

and Safety and Environmental consideration but also in relation to the quality of the design and materials used.

What are the legal implications?

- 21 This report is a Significant Operational Decision and is therefore not subject to call in. There are no grounds for keeping the contents of this report confidential under the Access to Information rules.
- 22 The use of Constructionline, a government approved database of contractors is in line with internal Contract Procedure Rules. The tender process will be conducted in an open, transparent, and competitive manner in line with regulatory requirements and allow for the use of specialist landscaping contractors who have the experience and knowledge to deliver the works to a high standard. An Expression of Interest has shown four interested contractors which provides enough interest for a tender to be undertaken.
- 23 The procurement will be undertaken in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 24 The tender evaluation process and recommendation for contract award will be the subject of a further separate report prior to award of any contract

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

25 Other procurement options have been considered, and these are set out below

Option 1 - Do nothing - The Council has the option to do nothing, but the scheme will not be delivered and the benefits to our tenants and the commitment to the regeneration of Lincoln Green will not be realised.

Option 2 – ISP - Delivery by Internal Service Provider, Parks and Countryside. This option was discounted due to the external grant requiring a competitive process with a tender report provided to secure the funding. Parks and Countryside have been consulted and have subsequently declined the offer to tender for the work

Option 3 – Framework Call Off – The use of established external framework to source potential contractors. The YORBuild 3 framework had been considered but have been discounted on the basis that they would not provide access to the correct market, and we would incur additional fees associated with utilising the framework with little benefit. The use of Constructionline will allow the targeting of landscaping contractors who have the experience and knowledge to deliver the works. An Expression of interest has shown four interested contractors which provides enough interest for a tender to be undertaken.

Option 4 – Find a Tender Service (FTS). This option was not considered as the contract value is well below the works threshold of £5.3m.

How will success be measured?

- 26 Key benefits will include improved resident satisfaction with their environment and increased resident engagement. These will be measured through future survey questionnaires post installation works, through anecdotal feedback, the number of events delivered in the refurbished space, including attendance levels, and through the Housing STAR survey which is undertaken every two years.

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

27 Indicative timescales for this project are shown within the table below

Tender Published	Mid-September 2022
Tender In	Mid October 2022
Tender Evaluation Period	Mid October 2022
Award governance approval process	Mid- Late October 2022
Contract Award	End October 2022
Contract Commencement	November 2022
Contract Completion	April 2023

Appendices

- Equality, Diversity, Cohesion, and Integration (EDCI) impact assessment
- Stage 3 Concept design

Background papers

- N/A