

Morley Town Deal: Greenspace improvements at Hembrigg park (33393/MGC/000)

Date: 24th November 2022

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 Hembrigg 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. Hembrigg is the first 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 December 2020 is required to give authority to spend £358.1k MTD funding to deliver the scheme.

Recommendations

- a) For the Director of City Development to give authority to spend £358.1k on greenspace improvements at Hembrigg Park in Morley, including footpath improvements, upgraded play area, fitness equipment, planting works and signage.

What is this report about?

1. This report sets out the context in which authority to spend £358.1k on improvements to Hembrigg Park in Morley, a well-used and popular local greenspace as part of the Morley Town Deal funding award.
2. In March 2020, Morley was identified as one of 100 places across the country invited to bid for up to £25m funding from the Government's £3.6 billion Towns Fund.
3. A condition of the Towns Fund was to establish a Town Deal Board. This was done in September 2020 following an open recruitment process led by Leeds City Council. Members of the Morley Town Deal Board include the MP for Morley and Outwood, Leeds City Council Ward and Morley Town Council Councillors, members of the Morley business community, representatives of local voluntary organisations, and local residents.
4. The role of the board was to oversee the development of the Town Investment Plan (TIP) and ensure its contents reflected the needs and aspirations of the Morley community. The board have overseen the community engagement to ensure the findings from it were reflected in the content and will also oversee the delivery of the plan. The TIP and the Board proposed seven individual projects, two of which Greener Morley and Connected Morley were merged into a wider programme of greening and active travel projects which included improvements to eight existing parks.
5. Consultation and engagement on the Greener and Connected was carried out whilst developing the Morley Town Investment Plan. 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.
6. In Summer 2021 Groundwork Yorkshire (GY), through the SLA in place between Parks and GY were commissioned to complete a site analysis for each of the parks including Hembrigg. Proposals were then developed for Hembrigg park based on feedback from previous consultation. The scheme has now been fully costed and early works on site have commenced in preparation for the main works which will be delivered by Parks and Countryside – the Internal Service Provider.
7. Hembrigg Park is in Leeds City Council ownership so there are no property implications.
8. No planning approvals are required for the proposed works.

What impact will this proposal have?

8. Improvements at Hembrigg park will consist of rationalised signage, introduction of new benches and new bins to ensure a high and consistent quality across all parks. Other interventions will include entrances improved and brought up to DDA standards, repaired and improved pathways and replacement fencing. Additionally, there will be tree and shrub planting to increase ambience and biodiversity within the green space, more defined boundaries and fencing. The existing amenities will be refurbished as well as the introduction of new features such as the fitness-based equipment and a woodland sculpture trail. The proposals are shown on Appendix A.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

9. 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.
10. The proposal aims to support climate emergency by investing in our public green spaces to enable a faster transition to a green economy whilst improving the quality of life for local residents.

11. 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

12. 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. An in-person event was also held in November 2021 at Morley Town Hall outlining all the Greener and Connected proposals.
13. Detailed consultation took place in November 2022 on the initial plans for parks via Commonplace and in-person sessions at each of the parks. Feedback has informed the final proposals which have been designed by Groundwork Yorkshire. The Hembrigg scheme is now at delivery stage.
14. Ward Councillors in Morley South have been consulted and the Executive Member for Public Health and Active Lifestyles has been briefed.
15. Sean Flesher (Chief Officer for Parks and Countryside, Communities, Housing and Environment) has approved the proposal.

What are the resource implications?

16. 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 procedures and the council's standing orders to ensure that the proposal delivers best value.
17. Projects and Programmes are providing overall programme and project management resource for the entirety of the Morley Town Deal timescales and significant resource has been applied to the Greener and Connected project.
18. 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 £20,550.0k was injected as part of the February 2022 capital programme. Leeds City Council, as lead council for the Town Deal are developing Full Business Cases (FBCs) for each of the five proposed projects and will assure these locally. Greenspace improvements at Hembrigg Park will be the first scheme from the Greener and Connected project.

Capital Funding and Cashflow

Morley Town Deal 33393/000/000

Current Injections into the capital Programme as at November 2022	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2022 £000's	FORECAST			
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
PROGRAMME MGT	800.0	211.6	188.4	200.0	200.0	0.0
CONSTRUCTION WORKS	20,952.7	0.0	522.2	7,593.2	9,736.9	3,100.4
FEES & OTHER	2,547.3	186.4	98.6	1,335.6	926.7	0.0
TOTALS	24,300.0	398.0	809.2	9,128.8	10,863.6	3,100.4
Authority to Spend to date as at November 2022	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2022 £000's	FORECAST			
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024 & on
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
DEVELOPMENT FUNDING	398.0	398.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	398.0	398.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Authority to Spend required for this current approval	TOTAL	TO MARCH 2022	FORECAST			
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024 & on
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
HEMBRIGG PARK G&C	358.1	0.0	358.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	358.1	0.0	358.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total overall Funding	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2022 £000's	FORECAST			
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024 & on
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
LCC BORROWING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
MORLEY TOWN DEAL	24,300.0	398.0	809.2	9,128.8	10,863.6	3100.4
Total Confirmed Funding	24300.0	398.0	809.2	9128.8	10863.6	3100.4
Total Funding Balance	23,543.9	0.0	451.1	9,128.8	10,863.6	3,100.4

Revenue Effects

19. The majority of improvements are to the existing greenspace with the addition of fitness-based equipment and a woodland sculpture trail. Hembrigg park is already included on Parks and Countryside's 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?

20. 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?

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

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

22. 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?

23. A robust programme of monitoring and evaluation will be put into place to ensure the outputs and outcomes can be assessed across the projects and provide assurance to the funding providers. The monitoring and evaluation framework will be maintained by the Project Managers. The Project Managers will be responsible for monitoring progress through regular site visits.

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

24. The works are scheduled to start imminently at Hembrigg park and expected to be completed by early Spring 2023.

Appendices

- Landscape proposals

Background papers

-