

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of a meeting of the Capital Strategy and Allocation Group held in The Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth on Wednesday, 5 December 2018

Attendance list is at the end of the document

The meeting started at 2.33 pm and ended at 4.10 pm.

13. Report of the meeting of the Group

The report of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2018 was noted. Councillor Megan Armstrong asked for

14. Declarations of interest

None were declared.

15. Capital bids proposed for the Capital Programme

The Strategic Lead for Finance reminded the Group of the projects currently listed in the Programme, and took them through the bids proposed.

The capital programme financing showed a total of £21,511,259 for expenditure. The proposed budget set for 2019.20 is £10,302,459 for expenditure.

The Chairman reminded the Group that the focus should be on whole life cost and revenue potential of each bid. The statutory or non-statutory status should also be taken into account.

27 of the 29 bids proposed had been scored reflecting on both revenue costs and the safety requirements. The Portfolio Holder Finance was requested to check that the savings identified from capital spend was reflected in the revenue budget.

The new bids were:

1. Brixington play area, Exmouth, where equipment and safety surfacing had reached the end of its economic life. Options were a like for like replacement at £75k or an enhanced site for £100k. Equipment in use at Queens Drive would still be in use for 2019/20 and therefore could not be related to this or other play areas; the Queens Drive equipment was also of a different scale.
2. Budleigh Salterton skate park, where the equipment had reached end of economic life. The bid covers replacement with concrete equipment which will have a lower maintenance requirement. £35k of section 106 contribution has been allocated to the project.
3. Car park improvements (various sites) including Exmouth Echelon car park, Honiton Lace Walk, Sidmouth Bowling Club, Sidmouth Manor Road, Sidmouth Mill Street, Sidmouth Ham East, Exmouth Rolle Mews.
4. Cherry Close Honiton play area, requiring removal of aging play equipment, safety surfacing and perimeter fencing. Options were a like for like replacement at £60k or an enhanced site for £75k.
5. Exmouth beach study covered a review of the 2015 Beach Management Plan, and feasibility of beach recharge and beach structures to maintain an amenity beach at Exmouth. The area that fell under the BMP was clarified to the Group, and the Group were assured that assessment is always made after storms to assess if there is any damage to coastal defence; however

- the project related to the amenity beach which would not attract funding from DEFRA as it did not relate to protecting properties from flooding.
6. Exmouth campervan & boat park bid consisted of a realignment of Exmouth Estuary Lorry Park to provide winter boat storage and summer campervan parking with associated waste facilities and services, providing a new income stream from 2021. Funding would not be spend until 2020/21, with the bulk of the work being undertaken in 2021/22.
 7. Exmouth groyne navigational markers replacement due to corrosion. Temporary repairs have been made in parts, but replacement is required to prevent the markers becoming a hazard.
 8. Foxhill Axminster play area, where equipment and safety surfacing had reached the end of its economic life. Options were a like for like replacement at £80k or an enhanced site for £120k.
 9. Greenway Lane Budleigh Salterton footbridge repainting with suitable protective metal paint, or prevent accelerated corrosion and deterioration of the iron bridge. Discussion on the bridge raised questions over the existing structure, designed originally to pass over a railway line. The Group agreed that the bid should be deferred in order to assess if a more suitable replacement would provide a cost effective solution rather than maintaining the existing structure.
 10. Imperial Recreation Group parking improvements to realign existing parking bays to add over 30 additional spaces at a cost of £55k to provide an estimated additional £30k in annual income.
 11. Maer Road car park Exmouth partial resurfacing and relining to rectify poor surface condition.
 12. Membury Sump Trash Screen to replace the existing screen that is extremely difficult and hazardous to clear in flood conditions. The local flood group have made a number of improvements to the flood scheme themselves already to help reduce debris and provide lighting to aid operations.
 13. Millwey Rise Axminster play area where equipment and safety surfacing had reached the end of its economic life. It is estimated that all costs will be met by available section 106 funding.
 14. Land of Canaan Ottery St Mary footbridge reinstatement. The footbridge was removed by the Council in 2017 as it had come to the end of its useful life; an alternative crossing nearby has better access. Ottery St Mary Town Council have asked for replacement, and have offered to pay for 50% of the cost minus a £1,000 contribution from locality funding. Overall cost is £55K for construction.
 15. Parks and play area fencing (various sites)
 16. Phear Park Exmouth access road resurfacing and new parking area, including lining of access road to discourage parking where obstructive. Discussion on the park centred around the priority to review the amenities on site following lease surrender, before further investment on parking at the site. The Group felt that the bid should be deferred to allow the lease review to be completed.
 17. Redgates Exmouth play area, where equipment and safety surfacing had reached the end of its economic life. Options were a like for like replacement at £75k or an enhanced site for £100k.
 18. Rolle Mews Budleigh Salterton car park resurfacing.
 19. Seafeld Gardens Seaton play area, where equipment and safety surfacing had reached the end of its economic life. Options were a like for like replacement at £65k or an enhanced site for £100k.

20. Seaton Coast Protection Scheme to improve the coastal defences between Heaton Hole and West Walk. The project will require approximately £150k of partnership funding to proceed.
21. Seafield Gardens Seaton outdoor gym, where equipment had reached the end of its economic life. Some questions raised on the frequency of use of the equipment and how the location of it had a bearing on the corrosion level of the equipment. The Group concluded that the bid be deferred subject to a review and report.
22. Seaton Jurassic car park extension, clearing disused scrubland to create an estimated additional 19 bays.
23. Seaton skate park replacement of equipment with concrete equipment that will cost less in maintenance than the existing aged park.
24. Homesafeguard call handling system upgrade has been recommended by Cabinet to Council on 12 December 2018. The project covers the provision of a system compliant with current Telecare Standards Association standards. The project cost of £44k will provide additional revenue from the service in future years, as it is expanded following the upgrade.
25. Replacement of Big Belly bins, following the decision not to renew the lease (expected cost of £252k for next five years, with 240 litre standard bins. The trial proved successful on Sidmouth Seafront. Bin The project also includes installation of bin lifts on 8 vehicles, bringing the total cost of the project to £84k. The bid was commented on as a clear saving in replacing with traditional bins and a much valued service by both locals and visitors.
26. Car parks capital maintenance covering relining at Sidmouth Roxburgh, Ham East/West and Manor Road, replacement lighting at Camperdown, repair of wall at Popular Mount Axminster, and minor drainage improvements to the cliff top car park at Beer.
27. Members IT system, approved by Cabinet on 3 October 2018, would provide a software solution for the Democratic Services Team in delivering documentation to Members. The software included an app for smart devices whereby Members could access the information required for meetings from their device, and download the calendar appointments for Council meetings.
28. Axminster skatepark, on land owned by the Cloakham Lawn Sports Centre for replacement with a concrete park. The bid was for £100k towards the project. In discussion, members of the Group commented that the skatepark was not an asset of the District Council, and therefore should not be supported with capital funding. There were also comments that in agreeing to the request, a precedent would be set for other bodies to request capital funding for assets not owned by the Council.
29. Automated mower trial, included in the Transformation Strategy (approved by Cabinet on 31 Oct 2018). A number of technical aspects of the practicalities of the mowers were asked by Members, and the purpose of the trial explained. Linking the mowers across a number of sites (such as pitches) over a period of time would enable the team to assess if overall savings could be made. The mowers could be purchased and therefore be an asset for the Council.

The Group discussed the approach to maintaining play park areas in detail, as five of the bids presented had two options – replace like for like, or replace with an enhanced play area. The Service Lead Streetscene explained to the Group that the two options had no difference in revenue implications, but the enhanced option concurred with the Council's adopted plans, including green spaces, that advocated enhanced facilities. Evidence from schemes such as the play equipment on

Queens Drive showed that there was a demand for more enhanced play areas as a more attractive option to the traditional schemes. Discussion also included:

- Public expectation was for more enhanced facilities
- Money well spent to enhance in comparison to other projects
- Enhancement should be a preference, as long as funding is available to do so
- Non statutory provision that could be argued as better kept at a minimum level of spend, therefore a like for like replacement.

The Group were in agreement to recommend the play area bids to Cabinet at the enhanced level, but felt that there should be a review of policy in order to look for other ways of securing funding (alongside any section 106 funding already identified) to cover this uplift in capital financing. This could be through precept, sponsorship or other options.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:

1. The following items to be added to the Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2022/23:
 - a. Brixington play area, Exmouth enhanced site £100k (part funded externally £6,985);
 - b. Budleigh Salterton skate park £150k (part funded £35k);
 - c. Car park improvements (various sites) £90k;
 - d. Cherry Close Honiton play area enhanced site for £75k.
 - e. Exmouth beach study £80k (part funded £60k);
 - f. Exmouth campervan & boat park £150K (phased over 2020 – 2022);
 - g. Exmouth groyne navigational markers £35k.
 - h. Foxhill Axminster play area enhanced site £120k (part funded £14,845);
 - i. Imperial Recreation Ground parking improvements £55k (phased over 2019 – 2021);
 - j. Maer Road car park Exmouth partial resurfacing £47k;
 - k. Membury Sump Trash Screen £30k;
 - l. Millwey Rise Axminster play area. It is estimated that all costs will be met by available section 106 funding of £136,629;
 - m. Parks and play area fencing (various sites) £55k;
 - n. Redgates Exmouth play area enhanced site for £100k (part funded £3,281).
 - o. Rolle Mews Budleigh Salterton car park resurfacing £30k;
 - p. Seafeld Gardens Seaton play area enhanced site £100k;
 - q. Seaton Coast Protection Scheme £450k (part funded £300k subject to EA funding confirmation);
 - r. Seaton Jurassic car park extension £85,600;
 - s. Seaton skate park replacement of equipment £200k;
 - t. Homesafeguard call handling system £44k (part funded £11k);
 - u. Replacement of Big Belly bins with 240 litre standard bins £84,500 (phased across 2019 – 2021);
 - v. Car parks capital maintenance £20k;
 - w. Members IT system (Modern.gov) £48k;
 - x. Automated mower trial £40k.
2. The following project be included in the Capital Programme but deferred from 2019/20 to 2020/21:
 - a. Phear Park Exmouth access road resurfacing and new parking area £99k, deferred due to the scale of the project including lease aspects of the site;

3. The following projects be deferred for review before further consideration by the Capital Strategy and Allocation Group:
 - a. Greenway Lane Budleigh Salterton footbridge repainting, in order to evaluate if it is more cost effective to replace rather than repair the footbridge;
 - b. Seafeld Gardens Seaton outdoor gym, to establish level of use and impact of maintenance due to location.
4. The following projects be rejected from the Capital Programme:
 - a. Land of Canaan Ottery St Mary footbridge reinstatement at £55k for reason of previous decision to remove the bridge in 2017 and an alternative being located 80 metres nearby;
 - b. Axminster skatepark £266k for reason of the skatepark not being an asset of the Council.

Councillors:

Present:

Ian Thomas (Chairman)
Geoff Pook
Dean Barrow
Tom Wright
Paul Diviani
Jill Elson
Alan Dent
Megan Armstrong
Tim Dumper

Other Councillors:

Pauline Stott
John Dyson

Apologies:

Philip Skinner
Marcus Hartnell
Alan Dent
Rob Longhurst

Officers:

Richard Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing Health & Environment
Andrew Hancock, Service Lead Streetscene
Rob Ward, Accountant
John Hudson, Accountant
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Chairman: Date:.....