



Northumberland County Council

CABINET

12 OCTOBER 2021

Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group

Report of: Jan Willis, Interim Executive Director of Finance

Cabinet Member: Councillor Richard Wearmouth, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

1. Purpose of Report

The following report summarises proposed amendments to the Capital Programme considered by the officer Capital Strategy Group via email on 6 September 2021.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 **East Cramlington Nature Reserve Car Park:** approve a capital investment of £18,000 to relocate and expand the car park with £10,000 jointly funded by Councillor Scott, Councillor Dunbar and Councillor Lee through their Local Member Contributions and £8,000 funded from the Parks Enhancement Capital Programme in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021-24.
- 2.2 **Flood and Coastal Erosion Works:** approve the amended budget allocations for Environment Agency funded schemes within the Council's 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Plan for Otterburn Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme, Wark Surface Water Scheme and Red Row Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme and approve the delivery of these schemes for Autumn 2021; and approve the addition and delivery of Bingfield/A68 Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme in Autumn 2021.

2.3 **Sustainable Warmth Grant:** support a grant application to upgrade energy inefficient homes of low-income households in Northumberland from two centrally funded schemes and, if successful, deliver the appropriate works:

- Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3) with a refined scope to support low-income households heated by mains gas. Grant requested: £2,116,541
- Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUG1) for low-income households with homes off-gas. Grant requested: £3,509,866.

3. **Links to Corporate Plan**

The Council's Capital Programme is consistent with the priorities in the Corporate Plan in particular the 'Living', 'Enjoying' and 'Thriving' priorities.

4. **Background**

This paper summarises reports considered by the officer Capital Strategy Group on the allocation of funding within the Medium Term Plan to specific projects.

SUMMARY OF NEW CAPITAL PROPOSALS CONSIDERED BY OFFICER CAPITAL STRATEGY GROUP VIA EMAIL ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2021

5. EAST CRAMLINGTON NATURE RESERVE CAR PARK

- 5.1 The Group was asked to approve the proposal to construct a new car park in East Cramlington Nature Reserve at a cost of £18,000.

Background

- 5.2 East Cramlington Nature Reserve is a large reclamation site in South East Northumberland situated between Seaton Delaval and Cramlington. The site has two entrances with a small carpark at each entrance. The site is very popular with locals for dog walking and general recreation purposes. Maintenance of the site is managed by NCC's Countryside Team which is supplemented by the Cramlington District Red Squirrel Group and the local Model Aeroplane Club. Both groups carry out valuable work on site including small scale footpath repairs, tree management, vegetation control and litter picking.
- 5.3 The car park to be relocated is situated at the end of an approximately 200 metres long access road which is constructed from crushed stone and is accessed from the A192 (Keel Row Road). This car park is small with parking for up to 6 vehicles. Due to its isolated position, this car park attracts varying degrees of antisocial behaviour, drug misuse and fly tipping. This adds an extra burden onto NCCs NEAT team who collect waste from this site.
- 5.4 Due to the construction of the access road and the growing usage of the site the track leading from the A192 to the existing carpark is often heavily potholed and at times is not fit for purpose. This is causing visitors to park outside the car park on verges or surrounding roads which in turns leads to further damage to these areas as well as restricting access by blocking pedestrian access routes. Road repairs to fill in potholes are carried out by the Countryside team and user groups on an almost monthly basis; however, this is becoming unmanageable as much of the work relies on good will from the user groups.
- 5.5 It is therefore proposed to construct a new car park directly to the north side of the access road as it leaves the A192 with parking for up to 17 vehicles. Construction will be crushed stone finished with type 1 stone and recycled road planings. The area will be bunded to restrict access to adjacent

farmland. A lockable barrier will be installed beyond the carpark to control vehicular access to the site. The existing access road will be lifted and relayed to provide suitable access for pedestrians and service vehicles only and a barrier will be installed to restrict motorbike access. A step over horse access point will also be installed, this is designed to allow horse access but deter motorcycles.

5.6 The benefits of relocating this car park include:

- Increased parking capacity
- Reduction in Antisocial behaviour
- Safer access to site
- Reduction in damage to verges etc.
- Reduction in future maintenance costs

CSG Recommendation

5.7 The Group supported the proposal and recommends Cabinet to approve a capital investment of £18,000 to relocate and expand the car park with £10,000 funded from Local Member contributions and £8,000 funded from the Parks Enhancement Capital Programme in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021-24.

6. FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION WORKS

6.1 The Group received a proposal to approve amended budget allocations within the Council's 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Plan for Otterburn Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme, Wark Surface Water Scheme and Red Row Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme and approve the delivery of these schemes for Autumn 2021; and approve the addition and delivery of Bingfield/A68 Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme in Autumn 2021. These schemes are fully funded through the Environment Agency.

Background

6.2 In July 2020, NCC submitted details of coast protection and flood alleviation schemes to the Environment Agency, to be included in their 6-year Medium Term Plan (2021/22 to 2026/27), with funding to be provided through FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA), Local Levy (LL) and contributions from NCC and others. Since this time, the programme has been refreshed to ensure it reflects the

priorities of risk management authorities and remains on course to deliver the Government's national target of 336,000 homes better protected.

- 6.3 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for NCC's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to be updated to reflect the EA's refreshed programme and include details of additional projects which have come into the programme. In accordance with standard procedures, the details of these additional individual schemes are provided in this report. Agreement to include this update within NCC's MTFP and approve the expenditure for the financial year 2021/22 will ensure the substantial external FDGiA and Local Levy funding can be secured and these important measures to reduce flood risk are implemented.

Scheme Details

6.4 Otterburn Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme

- The scheme will significantly reduce flood risk to 2 properties and the highway. The outline business case is currently being developed; the preferred option will likely be improvements to the existing drainage network to increase capacity.
- The overall scheme budget is £58,094, to be funded by £38,094 Grant-in-Aid (GiA) and £20,000 Local Levy (LL).

6.5 Wark Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme

- The scheme will significantly reduce flood risk to 2 properties. The outline business case is currently being developed; the preferred option will likely be management of surface water flows by bunding and discharging to a nearby watercourse.
- The overall scheme budget is £71,333, to be funded by £41,333 GiA and £30,000 LL.

6.6 Red Row Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme

- The scheme will significantly reduce flood risk to 3 properties. The outline business case is currently being developed; the preferred option will likely be management of surface water flows by bunding and discharging to a nearby surface water drainage system.
- The overall scheme budget is £53,094, to be funded by £38,094 GiA and £15,000 LL.

6.7 Bingfield/A68 Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme

- The scheme will significantly reduce flood risk to 2 properties. The outline business case is currently being developed; the preferred option will likely be improvements to the culvert inlet by means of a new two stage trash screen to reduce the risk of blockages occurring and provide safe access for future maintenance.
- The overall scheme budget is £50,192, to be funded by £35,192 GiA and £15,000 LL.

6.8 Indicative Funding Profile

Scheme	Total Expenditure to Scheme Completion (£)	Year	Funding distribution:	
			NCC (£)	FDGiA (£)
Otterburn SW FAS	58,094	21/22	-	58,094
Wark SW FAS	71,333	21/22	-	71,333
Red Row SW FAS	53,094	21/22	-	53,094
Bingfield/A68 SW FAS	50,192	21/22	-	50,192
Totals	232,713			232,713

CSG Recommendation

- 6.9 The Group supported the amended budget allocations within the Council's 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Plan for these flood alleviation schemes fully funded by the Environment Agency and recommends Cabinet to approve the amendments and delivery of the schemes.

7. SUSTAINABLE WARMTH GRANT

- 7.1 The Group were requested to support a grant application to upgrade energy inefficient homes of low-income households in Northumberland from two centrally funded schemes.
- 7.2 The schemes are focused upon upgrading the worst insulated owner occupier and private rented homes with energy efficiency installations and low carbon heating. Upgrades on properties will follow a 'fabric first' approach and will

utilise a mixture of the following measures: external wall insulation, underfloor insulation, loft insulation, air source heat pumps and solar PV.

- 7.3 Northumberland County Council have requested HUG funding totalling £3,509,866 to deliver energy efficient measures to 225 homes that are off gas delivery in Northumberland. The Council has also requested LAD3 funding totalling £2,116,541 for delivery of energy efficient measures to 190 homes.
- 7.4 The scheme will be operated in the same way as the current LAD1 and LAD2 schemes delivered through a partnership with E.ON. Home owners apply for funding through the Council's Green Homes Grant webpage. Eligibility criteria are detailed on this webpage.
- 7.5 If, as anticipated the Grant application is successful, then applications will be processed from December 21 onwards and the scheme will run until March 23.

CSG Recommendation

- 7.6 The Group supported the proposal and recommends Cabinet to approve the grant application totalling £5,626,407 and subsequent delivery of the scheme once funding is obtained.

Implications

Policy	The capital programme is part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2021-24. The plan supports the Corporate Plan.
Finance and value for money	The report outlines proposed project allocations and amendments to the approved Capital programme. The financial implications of these proposals are outlined in the main body of the report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications.
Procurement	In line with all other capital expenditure, the additional spend will be subject to the Council's recognised procurement procedures.
Human Resources	Not applicable.
Property	The properties affected by the proposals are identified in the main body of the report.

Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable.
Risk Assessment	The risks associated with the proposals are regarded as acceptable but these risks will continue to be reviewed up to and during implementation of the proposals.
Crime & Disorder	There are no Crime and Disorder implications.
Customer Consideration	There are no Customer Considerations.
Carbon reduction	Carbon Reduction measures have been considered within each project.
Health & Wellbeing	There are no Health and Wellbeing implications.
Wards	All wards

Background Papers:

Medium Term Financial Plan 2021-24

Report sign off:

Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

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