

**Report to CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE**

## **The Local Improvement Fund – Considering Revised LIF Proposals**

**Portfolio Holder:**

Councillor Arooj Shah, Council Leader

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**16 April 2024**

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### **Reason for Decision**

The Local Improvement Fund (LIF) in 2023/24 includes £400,000 allocated as “capital grants” for projects of £10,000 or more to improve Oldham’s neighborhoods for the benefit of residents.

Following the LIF Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, four applicants were asked to submit revised proposals before funding was released. This paper outlines these revised proposals.

### **Recommendation**

Review the revised proposals and agree which should receive LIF Funding.

## Considering Revised LIF Proposals

### 1 Background

- 1.1 In 2023/24 the Local Improvement Fund (LIF) has again been divided into two, with £400,000 distributed as capital grants and £100,000 as “fast grants” of between £500 and £3,500. This paper focuses on the administration of the £400,000 capital grants.
- 1.2 The deadline for expressions of interest to the capital fund was 20th October 2023. In total 32 proposals were received. After scoring of the initial proposals by the Advisory Panel, 19 of the expressions of interest were invited to submit full applications. The deadline for receiving full applications was Friday 26th January 2024. In total 19 full applications for the capital fund were received.
- 1.3 On the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, the LIF Cabinet Sub-Committee met to agree which of the 19 full applications should receive LIF funding, totalling no more than £400k. In total, £381,758.41 was allocated, funding 16 projects, leaving a reserve of £18,241.59. However, four projects were asked to submit revised proposals, reflecting the funding allocated by the Cabinet Sub-Committee. These projects are:
- **Wendlebury Green Playground (High Crompton):** To provide improved play equipment at the small park at Wendlebury Green. The project was provisionally allocated £25,000 by the Cabinet Sub-Committee and asked to submit a revised proposal, reflecting this allocation.
  - **Micro Wood, Granby Street Wetlands (Chadderton South):** To improve and transform this area of green space in our neighbourhood with natural solutions to improve the environment, manage flood and drought risks, create a mosaic of habitats for nature and improve access to quality green space supporting the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors. The project was provisionally allocated £23,000 by the Cabinet Sub-Committee and asked to submit a revised proposal, reflecting this allocation.
  - **Whitehall Lane Park Refreshment (St James):** To refresh the Whitehall Lane Park playing area, ensuring that good quality play equipment is available to residents in the Moorside area. The project was provisionally allocated £15,000 by the Cabinet Sub-Committee and asked to submit a revised proposal, reflecting this allocation.
  - **Arundel Park Multi Games Area (Waterhead):** To create a multi-game space in the heavily built-up area of Clarksfield, with a significant population under 18. The project was provisionally allocated £26,000 by the Cabinet Sub-Committee and asked to submit a revised proposal, reflecting this allocation.

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1.4 To date, two of the projects have submitted revised proposals: Micro Wood, Granby Street Wetlands (Chadderton South) and Arundel Park Multi Games Area (Waterhead). Wendlebury Green Playground (High Crompton) and Whitehall Lane Park Refreshment (St James) are outstanding and will be brought to a future LIF Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting for approval.

1.5 The LIF Cabinet Sub-Committee are asked to review the final applications for Micro Wood, Granby Street Wetlands (Chadderton South) and Arundel Park Multi Games Area (Waterhead), allocating funding if they demonstrate they meet the required criteria.

## **2 Options/Alternatives**

2.1 Do Nothing – This is not a preferable option as the funding needs to be allocated in this financial year.

2.2 Review the revised proposals and agree which should receive LIF Funding – The purpose of the LIF is to support district priorities, allocating funding to projects that demonstrate they meet the required scoring criteria.

## **3 Recommended Option**

3.1 Review the revised proposals and agree which should receive LIF Funding.

## **4 Financial Implications**

4.1 The Capital Programme includes £0.400m to support the Local Improvement Fund for Districts as outlined in this report. Colleagues are reminded that expenditure on all approved schemes must meet the statutory definition of expenditure for capital purposes.

## **5 Legal Services Comments**

5.1 Following the consideration of recommendations from the Local Improvement Fund Advisory Panel, the purpose of the Local Improvement Fund Sub-Committee is to allocate funding from the Local Improvement Fund to projects across the borough which promote and pursue the aims and objectives of the individual District Priorities.

5.2 The Sub-Committee is a constituted meeting of the Council and is subject to the Council's procedure rules, Cabinet procedure rules and the access to information procedure rules, as set out in the Council's Constitution, unless stated otherwise in the terms of reference. (Colin Brittain, Assistant Borough Solicitor).

## **6 Co-operative Agenda**

6.1 As a co-operative council, we are committed to reforming public services and encouraging innovation, leading to better outcomes and delivery. The Local Improvement Fund will ensure that Districts are best able to meet the needs of

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both elected members and the residents they represent. (Jonathan Downs – Corporate Policy Lead).

**7 Human Resources Comments**

7.1 None

**8 Risk Assessments**

8.1 None

**9 IT Implications**

9.1 None

**10 Property Implications**

10.1 None

**11 Procurement Implications**

11.1 None

**12 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

12.1 None

**13 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

13.1 None

**14 Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

14.1 No

**15 Key Decision**

15.1 No

**16 Key Decision Reference**

16.1 N/A

**17 Background Papers**

17.1 Establishing a Local Improvement Fund for Districts – 24.06.2019

17.2 The Local Improvement Fund 2022/23 – 14.11.2022

17.3 CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE (LIF) Minutes – 19.02.2024

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18     **Appendices**

18.1   Appendix 1 - Micro Wood, Granby Street Wetlands (Chadderton South) revised application and supporting finance document.

18.2   Appendix 2 - Arundel Park Multi Games Area (Waterhead) revised application.