

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

DATE OF MEETING: 8 NOVEMBER 2022

TITLE OF REPORT: FLEET POND GREEN CORRIDOR AND MITIGATION WORKS UPDATE

Report of: Executive Director - Community

Cabinet Portfolio: Environment

Key Decision: Yes

Confidentiality: Non Exempt

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update Committee on expenditure and work completed to date on delivery of the Fleet Pond Green Corridor and Fleet Pond Mitigation Works for the Hartland Park Development.
2. To obtain approval for additions/amendment to the programme budget.

RECOMMENDATION

That Overview and Scrutiny committee consider and comment on the following recommendations prior to their submission to Cabinet for approval.

That Cabinet notes the programme structure chart and budget allocations at Appendix A and approves the following amendments/additions to the programme budget:

- Inclusion of a £65k budget and release of earmarked reserves to deliver the Green Grid Ancillary Works.
- Increase of budget allocation from £150k- £255k and release of earmarked reserves to deliver A3013 Cove Road Crossing.
- Inclusion of a £178k budget and release of earmarked reserves to provide professional and marketing fees for the Fleet Pond Mitigation works.
- Inclusion of a £10k budget and release of earmarked reserves for Green Grid/digital and Interpretation.
- Inclusion of a £125k budget and release of earmarked reserves to deliver the Fleet Pond Mitigation Works Strategy.
- Earmarking of a £843k budget to fund implementation of the Fleet Pond Mitigation Works Strategy once this has been approved and funds become available.

BACKGROUND

3. In August 2019 Cabinet approved acceptance of a £1.4m grant from the Enterprise M3 LEP towards the delivery of the Fleet Pond Green Corridor project.
4. In January 2020 Cabinet approved funding to commission the detailed design and supervision of the Fleet Pond Green Grid Corridor (FPGC) Project, procure consultants to undertake a feasibility study to develop a 2030 Fleet Pond Vision and make recommendations on suitable mitigations for the Hartland Park Village and the FPGC, and to release funding to employ staff to work on the project.
5. In January 2021 Cabinet approved the release of funding to deliver the FPGC.

6. Works associated with delivery of the first stage of the FPGC between Fleet Railway Station and the Hartland Park Development were completed in July 2022. In addition, the feasibility study for the Hartland Park Mitigation works at Fleet Pond has also now been completed. As a consequence, officers are now in position to be able to provide members with an update on expenditure incurred to date and an updated forecast of the future expenditure required to complete both the FPGC and mitigation works.

MAIN ISSUES

7. The FPGC works completed to date include the upgrading and widening of the existing footpath/cycle path from the railway station through the Fleet Pond site towards the Hartland Park Development as well as the upgrading and improvement of the existing car park and access road to Fleet Pond. These works, which were completed under budget and within programme, represent the first phase of the FPGC link between the railway station and the Hartland Park Development. Hart is working in partnership with both Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Berkeley St Edward (BSE) on delivery of the future phases which include:
 - Improvements to Old Cove Road between Fleet Pond and Bramshot Lane (Funding identified in programme budget, HCC are currently undertaking design elements for this phase).
 - Provision of a cycle/pedestrian crossing of Bramshot Lane (to be constructed by BSE using sections 106 funds secured by HCC).
 - Links within the Hartland Park Development from its junction with Bramshot Lane (to be funded and constructed by BSE).
8. The Feasibility Study for the Mitigation Works which was also completed under budget and within programme, identified a set of priorities and opportunities for the environmental improvement of Fleet Pond.
9. This report seeks approval for the following amendments/additions to the programme budget:

Inclusion of a £65k budget for Green Grid Ancillary Works

This budget is required to fund improvements to Old Cove Road between the Fleet Pond access Road and Bramshot Lane. This work includes the provision of two cattle grid cycle bypasses and fencing and surfacing improvements.

Increase of budget allocation for A3013 Cove Road Crossing from £150k - £255k

Whilst not part of the link to the Hartland Park development, the provision of this crossing was identified in the works to be funded from the LEP grant and its provision will provide improved cycle/pedestrian access between Fleet Station and Bramshot Farm Country Park, and onwards. The estimated cost identified in the grant application was £150k. The estimate for the crossing has now increased to £255k and is being further considered as part of the preliminary design for the crossing, which it is scheduled to be completed by end of December 2022. The works are planned to be implemented in the 2023/24 financial year.

Inclusion of a £178k budget for professional marketing fees for the Fleet Pond Mitigation works.

This will fund project management for the development of visitor engagement and management of the mitigation works, including the production of the digital and commercial strategies for the project.

Inclusion of a £10k budget for maintenance of Green Grid/digital and Interpretation materials.

This will fund interpretative and digital material such as licence for an app or signage upgrade over the expected 10-year programme.

Inclusion of a £125k budget and release of funds to deliver the Fleet Pond Mitigation Works Strategy.

The costed strategy will be commissioned in 2023/24.

Earmarking of a £843k budget to fund implementation of the Fleet Pond Mitigation Works Strategy once this has been approved.

This provides an outline budget which will fund the primary mitigation works, the final cost of which will be subject to development of a costed strategy which will be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or The Hart Vision 2040

10. Delivery of the FPGC and Hartland Park Mitigation Works will contribute towards the delivery of the following aspirations identified in The Hart Vision 2040 and Corporate Plan 2017-2022:
 - Ensures work, education, health and other facilities are easily reachable through effective walking, cycling or road and rail transport links.
 - Creation of green corridors between all settlements to encourage sustainable healthy transport and provide cycles for hire to enable movement.
 - Reducing the impact of climate change by building in sustainability to any new developments, encouraging re-wilding and using new technologies to mitigate the impact of climate change.
 - Providing accessible green spaces, countryside, leisure and cultural facilities and opportunities including managing six existing and new Country Parks at Hawley Meadows, Edenbrook, Bramshot Farm, Watery Lane, North East Hook, and at Hawley Park Farm.
 - Introducing schemes to deliver biodiversity mitigation resulting from new development (such as a biodiversity off setting scheme).
 - Positively managing our Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Fleet Pond, Hazeley Heath and Odiham).
 - Supporting the transition to a low carbon future, making efficient use of resources, increasing levels of recycling, encouraging an increase in journeys made by cycling, walking and public transport, and encouraging the use of renewable resources.

Service Plan

- Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan? Yes
- Is the proposal being funded from current budgets? Yes
- Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal?
Yes

Legal and Constitutional Issues

11. The report raises no particular legal or constitutional issues.

Financial and Resource Implications

12. The works identified in this report are being funded through a combination of:

Source of funding	Level of funding
Ring fenced District Council held section 106 contributions (subject to the approval of this reports recommendations).	£172.5k
Ring fenced Hartland Park section 106 contributions. (the use of this funding has previously been approved).	£2m (£1m received to date. The remaining funding will be received as further phases of the development proceed but in the meantime forward funding is available for surplus S106 funds held by the Council.
EM3 LEP Grant (the use of this funding has previously been approved).	£1.4m
Ring fenced District Council held section 106 contributions (the use of this funding has previously been approved).	£186k
Ring fenced County Council held section 106 contributions.	£40k
Natural England Grant Funding	£126k
Personal 3 rd party grant.	£5k (funding yet received)

13. Whilst this report seeks approval for the earmarking of reserves for the entire programme budget, individual projects within the programme will not be committed until the necessary funding for the project has been secured.

Risk Management

14. Risk assessments for individual projects within the FPGC and Hartland Park Mitigation works programme have been completed and are reviewed on a regular basis, copies of which can be made available on request. The most significant risk identified is containment of expenditure within approved budgets. This risk has been mitigated through the inclusion of contingency sums within the budget, close monitoring of expenditure, and the provision of update reports, as necessary, to the council's Project Board and Cabinet.

EQUALITIES

15. No equality implications associated with implementation of this reports proposed recommendations have been identified. Equality impact assessments will be carried out for individual projects within this programme as required.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

16. Delivery of the FPGC will promote increased use of cycling and walking and the Hartland Park Mitigation works will contribute towards the offsetting against the impacts of climate change.

ACTION

17. Subject to this reports recommendations being approved individual projects within the FPGC and Hartland Park Mitigation works programme will be progressed, with further update reports being brought to Cabinet as required.

Contact Details: Adam Green – Countryside Manger / email:
adam.green@hart.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of Green Corridor and Mitigation Works programme expenditure

Background Papers:

- Feasibility study to develop a 2030 Fleet Pond Vision and suitable mitigations for the Hartland Park Village and the FPGC.
- Green Corridor and Mitigation Works programme budget monitoring spreadsheet