

Update on Capital investment in Parks and Green Spaces

Sue Lutkenhouse, Environment & Leisure Projects Manager

On the 26 January 2012, Cabinet approved the allocation of £50m of resources to the 'Investing in Bristol's Future' package. This included the allocation of £3.5million capital stimulus for the improvement of Parks and Green spaces throughout the city. The capital is to be obtained through Prudential Borrowing and was subsequently approved at the Full Council budget meeting on 28 February 2012.

Over the last 5 years investment has taken place in a number of parks and Open Spaces, in particular in children's play due to government funding received from the DCFS (Department for Children, Schools and Families). This and other grants have led to the improvement of over 43 sites citywide.

On 4 July 2012, Cabinet agreed that £3.5 million be made available to invest into Parks and Green Spaces citywide. This investment will contribute towards meeting the policies and aspirations of the Parks and Green Space Strategy. As part of this funding stream we will see a further 24 additional Children's play areas being improved within our parks and green spaces. This allocation of the £3.5 million has been subject to a robust decision making process, ensuring that Neighbourhood input from local Councillors is combined with strategic priorities.

In total, 47 projects across all Neighbourhood Partnership areas were put forward to cabinet for approval. Some of these projects were funded wholly through the Capital Stimulus funding, while others were required to be match funded from the Neighbourhood Partnership devolved S106 funding. Through September and October reports are being taken to the Neighbourhood Committees to confirm their agreement to the match funding required.

Delivery:

So far, 43 of 47 projects have now been assigned project management resources, and meetings have been held with the project proposers, neighbourhood coordinators. Area Environment Officers are drawing up consultation programmes for individual projects, and initial consultations with stakeholders on early start projects are underway. An outline programme for delivery has been prepared, however this is subject to change as further investigation into site conditions, project requirements and consultation requirements are undertaken.

A number of Neighbourhood Partnerships are still to confirm assignment of match funding to their projects, but this should be completed by November.

We are using a range of delivery mechanisms including using in-house landscape design services, external consultants, in-house construction through our Landscape Team and design and build contractors depending on the needs and constraints of each site. Consultation on each site will normally be led by the Area Environment Officers, but again for some of the sites the local Neighbourhood Partnerships are supporting the process through their neighbourhood development officers. In all cases a consistent and robust consultation process is being put in place.

If you have any issues or just views on the projects set out in the programme, please contact the Area Environment Officer in the first instance, but also feel free to approach the project managers who will welcome your thoughts and concerns.

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