

REPORT OF GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUND SCORING PANEL

The Growth and Infrastructure Fund Scoring Panel was reconvened by Finance & Assets Committee on 28 September 2023 to score applications for the unspent Growth and Infrastructure Funding against the criteria approved by the parent Committee and to make recommendations for approval of grant funding back to the meeting of the Committee on 25 January 2024.

The Panel met via Teams on 4 January 2024, when there were:

PRESENT

Cllr Alan Sharp (Chair)
Cllr Anna Bailey
Cllr Lorna Dupré
Cllr Martin Goodearl
Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Christine Whelan

OFFICERS

Sally Bonnett – Director Community (Lead Officer)
Tracy Couper – Democratic Services Manager
Jane Webb – Senior Democratic Services Officer

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received, but the Director Community reminded Members that Ward Members would not score applications relating to their District Ward and adjustments would be made to the total scoring to reflect any excluded Members. This would apply in the case of Cllr Trapp for the Lode application.

1. Growth & Infrastructure Fund Terms of Reference and Scoring Criteria

The Panel Members noted the Terms of Reference, Eligibility and Scoring Criteria.

The Director Community reminded Members that the criteria met the Cambridgeshire Horizons objectives for use of the funding and had been approved by F&A Committee as follows:

- Evidence that the project is necessary to support local growth
- The community benefits provided by the project
- Evidence of local resident and stakeholder involvement in and support for the project
- Alignment with the Council's infrastructure priorities
- Commitment to Net Zero Carbon and a green approach, demonstrating the

- highest possible quality standards in terms of design, materials, workmanship
- Deliverability
- The level of match funding that the project has secured

The Director Community explained that the process had been modelled upon the Local Highways Improvement (LHI) funding process used by the County Council.

Scoring of the applications would take place using the scoring spreadsheet circulated to Members of the Panel, which listed all of the 7 criteria. Members could score 0-5 points for each of the criteria. Individual Members would list their scores for each application and then the Director Community would add the scores together to produce a total score and ranking for each application.

The Director Community reported that a total of £1.13M was available to fund projects, if F&A Committee was requested to use all of the remaining allocation from Cambridgeshire Horizons.

Members then considered what to do in the event that the funding was over-subscribed and agreed that they should mirror the County LHI funding process and rank the applications from highest to lowest scoring projects allocating the funding until it ran out. This would help to ensure the deliverability of the higher-ranking projects.

2. Scoring of Applications

Members considered the 5 eligible applications for funding as follows:

- Lode PC - installation of solar panels on roof, low maintenance triple glazed windows, and LED lighting
- Soham Town Rangers Football Club – phase 2 of Community Club refurbishment comprising full heating system and electrical upgrade, refurbishment of upstairs office to create community space and remote worker offices
- Stretham and Wilburton CLT – creation of ‘The Link’ a new wellbeing community hub comprising GP premises, café and central services, 4 work units for meetings rooms and to support complementary medicine
- Wilburton PC – Multi Activity Games Area (MUGA) and tennis court
- Witchford PC – widen existing path to create cycleway from Witchford to A142 Lancaster Way Roundabout

The Director Community stated that a further 2 applications had failed to meet the gateway criteria.

The Director Community gave a summary of all of the applications and how they met the scoring criteria and questions/comments were raised by Members of the Panel as follows:

Lode PC – Councillor Dupré queried the definition of the phase ‘necessary’ to support local growth and how this may differ from simply being regarded a beneficial for a local community. The Director Community explained that this criterion placed an emphasis on how growth actually would be supported by the project and the 0-5 scoring gave a mechanism to rate this. Members queried the number of solar panels to be installed on the roof and whether this was likely to exceed the 14 maximum before being categorised as a ‘micro-user’. It was highlighted that 3 quotations from suppliers already had been obtained, so it was likely that this issue had been considered.

Soham Town Rangers – Members noted that a grant of £50,000 under the previous funding round had been granted to phase one of the project but works had yet to commence. This raised concerns with regard to deliverability.

Stretham & Wilburton CLT – Members noted the extensive letters of support for the new project. A CIL application also was to be submitted to F&A Committee on 25 January concurrent with this application and £340K of match funding had been committed by the Parish Council.

Wilburton PC – in response to a question by a Member, the Director Community confirmed that the Planning application was being progressed.

Witchford PC – Members noted that deliverability was dependent upon County Highways but a feasibility study had been completed by them and a significant contingency had been included for the project. Members commented on the considerable environmental benefits of encouraging cycling and walking from the village of Witchford which was close to Ely.

Members then were requested to put their scores onto the spreadsheet provided and E-mail them to the Director Community, who would calculate an overall score per application and a priority ranking. An adjournment would take place to enable her to do this. Members then would reconvene to make a final recommendation to F&A Committee based upon the outcome from the spreadsheet.

Members submitted their scoring spreadsheets to the Director Community and the meeting was adjourned at 18.58pm to enable her to undertake the total scoring and priority ranking for the 5 projects.

On reconvening at 19:40pm, The Director Community gave the outcome of the scoring/ranking spreadsheet for the 5 applications:

Stretham & Wilburton CLT
Witchford PC
Wilburton PC
Lode PC
Soham Town Rangers

Based upon the Local Highways Improvement (LHI) funding process, this would mean that the two highest projects, Stretham & Wilburton CLT and Witchford PC could be fully-funded and the remaining funding allocated to the Wilburton PC project. Therefore,

IT WAS RECOMMENDED:

That Finance and Assets Committee be requested to allocate all of the remaining allocation from Cambridgeshire Horizons amounting to £1.13M to Growth & Infrastructure Fund projects and grants be awarded as follows:

Stretham & Wilburton CLT - £700,000
Witchford PC - £423,107.60
Wilburton PC - £14,958.40