



Urgent Executive Decision Taken by Corporate Director – Environment and Place

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Decision: Garden Town Government Grant Programme

Decision taker: Corporate Director Environment and Place

Decision Date: 31 March 2021

Is decision subject to Call-in? No. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed to waive call-in of this decision to enable the decision to be implemented with immediate effect as a condition of the funding is that it is spent within this financial year.

Deadline for Call-in: N/A

Is decision exempt? No

Is decision urgent? Yes.

Summary

The Council has entered into a Garden Town agreement with the Government. As part of this, the Council has received £2.9m funding for phase 1 of three capital schemes: Ploughley Road Junction; Banbury Road Roundabout; and, Pioneer Roundabout.

Phase 1 of the Garden Town programme is included within the 2020/21 capital programme. Access to phase 2 funding is dependent on completing specific milestones for each project.

The Government has determined that the Council has achieved the milestones for Ploughley Road Junction and Pioneer Road Roundabout and so have released the associated phase 2 funds on condition that they are spent by 31 March 2021. It was only very recently that the Government has indicated that the phase 2 funding must be spent within this financial year.

As the next meeting of Executive is 6 April 2021, it is necessary for an urgent decision to be taken to ensure the council receives the funding. In accordance with the Constitution, a report will be submitted to the 7 June 2021 Executive advising of the urgent action taken.

Decision

Resolved

- (1) That a decision be taken under urgency powers, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, in lieu of a recommendation to the Executive, to:
 - a. Accept £6.863m Grant Funding from the Government for Phase 2 of the Garden Town Schemes.
 - b. Include Phase 2 of the Garden Town Schemes in the 2020/21 Capital Programme

Reasons for Decision

Due to the urgency of the Government wanting the funding to be provided and spent in 2020/21 it is not possible to wait for the next Executive meeting for a decision to progress these proposals. The schemes already have tacit approval as phase 1 is included in the 2020/21 capital programme. Including the schemes in the 2020/21 capital programme will provide the necessary authority to spend the funding by 31 March 2021.

Alternative Options Considered

The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To wait until the next meeting of Executive to seek an express delegation to consider and agree the request. The timing precludes that approach as the Government has requested that the money be accepted and spent no later than 31 March 2021.

Option 2: Not to accept the grant. This would mean that the schemes would not be able to progress as there is no alternative funding currently available.

Consultation

The Chief Executive has been consulted and agreed that the matter is urgent and agreed that the Corporate Director Environment and Place to take urgent action to accept the funding.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Barry Wood, in relation to the taking of the urgent action.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been consulted and agreed that the key decision be taken without the required 28 days' notice being given. Due to the urgency of the decision, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed to waive call-in to enable the decision to be implemented with immediate effect.

Conflicts of Interest Declared and Dispensations Granted by Head of Paid Service

None

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive