



Environmental Budget – Update

For consideration by: Housing Scrutiny Commission

Date: 15 June 2021

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Report Author:

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines how the Environmental Budget will fund improvements on estates across the city in 2021/2022. This year 30 schemes have been agreed for the city and the overall cost will be approximately £751k:
- 12 schemes in the West area of the city, costing £272,300
 - 11 schemes in the East area of the city, costing £242,700
 - 7 in schemes the South area of the city, costing, £236,000
- 1.2 Ideas for improvements were sought from key stakeholders, which includes tenants, residents and local ward Cllrs. Housing staff have also highlighted improvements based on their local knowledge of issues on estates and key priorities for the service.

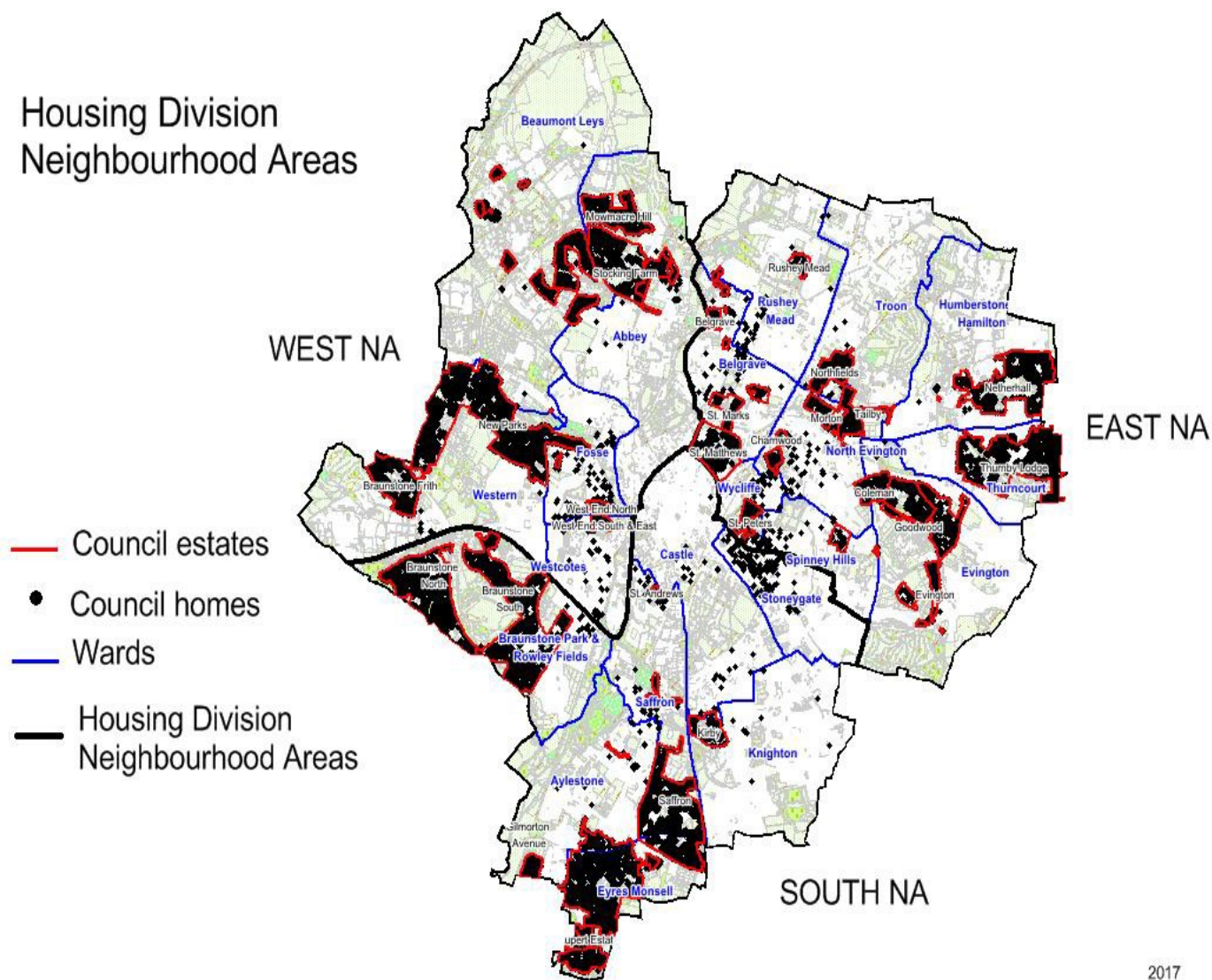
2. Background

- 2.1 The Environmental Budget has led to £9.1m being invested over the last 10 years in improving Council Housing estates. The budget has been used to improve parking, green areas, introduce measures to reduce anti-social behaviour and to generally make the environment safer and improve the quality of life for residents, making them places where people want to live.
- 2.2 Historically, housing staff have carried out local consultation and engagement exercises to identify what people like about their local area and what they would like to see improved.
- 2.3 Some of the initiatives have been highlighted on estate walkabouts, ward meetings or because of service requests. The process to involve and consult with key stakeholders has varied from area to area.
- 2.4 For this year's schemes, housing staff have mainly engaged with stakeholders through e-mail consultations, as many of the ward meetings and walkabouts have been cancelled due to the pandemic.

3. Schemes

- 3.1 The schemes cover the city's three district management housing areas, East, West and South:

Housing Division Neighbourhood Areas



3.2 In the West area of the city the following 12 schemes have been identified at a cost of £272,300:

- **Fosse ward:**
 - **Tudor Road, £14,100** to create a better parking area, install fencing and a gate. This was requested via a petition from local residents and Cllrs and is being rolled over from the previous year.
 - **Tudor Close, £8,800** to install fencing and gates to the car park to improve security. This was requested via a petition from local residents and Cllrs and is being rolled over from the previous year.

- **Western Ward:**
 - **Kerrial Gardens, £34,000** to carry out verge hardening. This idea was originally put forward by Cllr O'Donnell
 - **Forbes Close, £72,000** on 9 additional parking spaces. This improvement was identified by Cllr O'Donnell
 - **Dupont Gardens, £38,343** on security gates with intercom. The need for this was identified by Cllr O'Donnell



Dupont Gardens – The gates need upgrading. There is a need to upgrade these gates, they are old and rusty and to add intercom for additional security for tenants and residents living in the block

- **Abbey Ward:**
 - **£20,000** on painting internal areas in 5 of the blocks. This improvement was identified by housing staff
 - **Bridlespur Way, £10,817** to replace 10 bin doors. This improvement was identified by the housing office
 - **£3,600** on 18 metal plates in bin areas. This improvement was identified by the housing office

- **Beaumont Leys Ward:**
 - **£5,000** on clearing fly tipping in the area. This action was approved at a community ward meeting
 - **Bluegates, £2,642** on constructing a bin store
 - **Scalpay Close, £45,000** on 6 parking spaces
 - **Thornholme Close, £18,000** on 3 parking spaces

3.3 Consultation with ward Cllrs on these schemes took place using a variety of methods:

- The District Manager, Marie Murray, sent e-mails to Western, Westcotes and Fosse ward Cllrs outlining proposals for their areas and welcoming views. Cllr Russell responded to this consultation with a question about the Safer Streets Fund and how funding decisions were made.
- Team leaders e-mailed Abbey and Beaumont Leys ward Cllrs; the feedback received was supportive of proposals in these areas.
- Marie also attended a virtual meeting which was held with Abbey ward Cllrs to discuss the proposals for their area.

3.4 In the East Area of the city, the following 11 schemes have been identified, costing £242,700:

- **Belgrave Ward:**
 - **Donaldson Road, £5,000**, for flooding prevention work, identified by residents, Cllrs and highways during a patch walk
 - **St Marks, £3,200** on marking parking bays, this was identified by Cllrs and residents on Houseman Walk
 - **St Marks, £31,000** to extend fire safety stairwells. This improvement was proposed by the Police, Cllrs and resident to address concerns about ASB



We are raising the height of stairwells; this has been successful in other areas in reducing ASB.

- **Belgrave and Rushey Mead Wards:**
 - **St Marks, Belgrave and Rushey Mead, £15,000** to cut back, shrubs, trees and weed spraying for land not part of the ground maintenance contract. This improvement was identified by the local housing office
- **Evington Ward:**
 - **Ambassador Road, £14,000** on removing overgrown shrubs which obscure, footpaths and vehicles. This improvement was identified by Cllr Hunter on a patch walk in 2019.
 - **Rowlatts Hill, £10,000** on thinning out and trimming back trees, identified by Cllr Hunter on a patch walk in 2019
- **Thurncourt Ward:**
 - **Stornaway Road, £124,000** on parking spaces on the green and 2 laybys along the road. This was suggested by ward Cllrs and residents at a ward meeting.
 - **Thurncourt Road, £8,000** to address fly tipping and install bins in non-maintained ground. These improvements were identified by tenants affected by ASB in this area.

- **Evington/Thurncourt and North Evington Wards:**
 - **£10,000** on grounds maintenance and weed spraying on paths. This improvement was identified by Cllr Hunter
- **North Evington Ward:**
 - **Morton, £12,500** on block painting. This is an ongoing project to improve blocks identified by the housing office
- **For all wards in the East Area**
 - **£10,000** for removal of shrubs and hedges to improve visibility and make the areas safer for residents. Police and residents highlighted the improvements.

3.5 Consultation in the East involved a range of methods, estate walkabouts, meetings, letters and emails to residents and local ward Cllrs. Positive responses were received from Cllrs and residents attending a meeting in Belgrave ward. Positive responses have also been received from residents and ward Cllrs on the Stornaway Road parking scheme.

3.6 In the South area of the City the following 7 schemes have been identified costing £236,000:

- **In all wards for the South Area:**
 - **£131,000** on a trees and shrubs team to carry out works to tidy the estates and cutback trees not in the current maintenance contract. This improvement was identified by District Manager Nick Griffiths.
- **Aylestone Ward**
 - **Gilmorton, £15,000** on converting bin store areas into bike storage. This improvement was identified by the local housing office and Cllr Clarke
 - **Glenhills Boulevard, £15,000** on provision of large recycling bin stores, this improvement was identified by local tenants



To improve fire safety, bin stores will be provided

- **Saffron Ward:**
 - **St Andrews, £10,000** on yellow lines and road signage to alleviate parking issues. These improvements were identified by residents and key stakeholders. A further solution is being explored to enable resident parking.
- **Braunstone and Rowley Fields Ward:**
 - **Braunstone, £50,000** for Narborough Road fencing. This is a City Mayor priority
 - **Blackmore Drive, £5,000** on gating off internal drying areas for fire safety, identified by housing office
 - **Blackmore Drive, £10,000** on thinning out trees in school area which back onto council properties, identified by the housing office

3.7 Consultation was actioned by Team Leaders who e-mailed Cllrs with the proposals. The District Manager, Nick Griffiths, e-mailed Aylestone Ward Cllrs about schemes in their areas. Cllr Halford, Cllr Kitterick and Cllr Pickering suggested additional areas for the trees and shrubs team to address, and these proposals have now been factored in. Cllr Cutkelvin has been involved in stakeholders' meetings to identify a solution for the parking issues on St Andrews.

4. Consultation Process

4.1 Proposals for schemes have come from a variety of sources, including tenants, residents, Cllrs, housing staff and other stakeholders, such as the Police.

4.2. A range of consultation methods have been used to develop and approve these proposals, including, where possible, patch walks and community meetings, though engagement this year has been mainly on-line through e-mails. Face to face consultation has been limited this year because of the pandemic.

4.3 To adopt a more consistent approach in future, the following process is proposed:

- **April to June** – Team leaders analyse service and observational data on improvements required for their District. District Managers to identify work required to meet strategic service priorities, e.g. Fire Safety, Climate Emergency
- **May to July** – Team leaders and housing officers to carry out consultation with local tenants, the Tenants' and Leaseholder's Forum, Cllrs and local stakeholders on ideas for proposals
- **September to October 21-** District Managers to formulate proposals for each district
- **November** - Consultation meetings held with all ward Cllrs. These will be face to face or online meetings and will consider all the proposals for each District. Other channels for feedback will be offered, such as Teams or E-mail
- **December** – Head of Service to bring an update report with consultation feedback to Lead Member Briefing
- **January** – Report back to Housing Scrutiny Commission

4.4 The benefits of this approach are that all ward Cllrs will be able to see the final proposals for their area and it will provide a further opportunity for stakeholders to input into a more transparent decision-making process.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The total cost of the schemes identified within this report is £751k. The HRA Capital Programme for 2021/22 includes £750k for Communal and Environmental work, plus an additional amount for schemes included in the report but which were originally budgeted for within the 2020/21 programme. The schemes are not anticipated to have a significant impact on revenue costs for the Council.

Stuart McAvoy – Principal Accountant

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Jeremy Rainbow – Principal Lawyer (Litigation) x. 374135

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Implications

A number of schemes identified within this report may have carbon emission-related impacts, although these are anticipated to be relatively minor. Impacts should be addressed through applying the council's sustainable procurement guidance, including for materials and paints, as appropriate and avoiding the loss of trees in work on green spaces, or ensuring they are replaced in line with the council's Trees Strategy.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report outlines how the environmental budget will fund improvements on estates across the City in 2021/2022.

There are no direct equality implications arising from the report, however works that improve security for residents and visitors should lead to positive impacts for people from across all protected characteristics. It is important that any consultation/engagement is accessible.

Surinder Singh, Equalities Officer, Ext 37 4148