

CABINET 16TH AUGUST 2018

Report of Head of Neighbourhood Services & Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces Lead Member: Councillor Deborah Taylor/ Cllr Leigh Harper Davies

Part A

ITEM 6 CHARNWOOD SITES SAFETY AND SECURITY

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for capital funding to improve safety and secured access at open spaces owned by the Borough Council.

Recommendation

That funding of up to £50k is identified in the Capital Programme to address works to improve access and safety at open spaces owned by the Council and that the Capital Plan be amended accordingly.

Reason

To ensure resources to support improvements for security, safety and access for Charnwood owned open spaces.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-20 made a commitment to provide services that develop communities and neighbourhoods so that everyone feels safe and secure, and to create opportunities for communities to live healthy, active and fulfilling lives.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

If approved, it is proposed that improvements at priority sites be implemented straight away. Further assessments will be made and sites will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to determine the need for improvements in other locations.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report:

Financial Implications

The proposed improvements will cost up to £50k. Sites have been prioritised on the basis of history and frequency of security issues.

This programme of works will be resourced from the Capital Plan Reserve. A capital appraisal will be undertaken by the Capital Programme Team prior to the Cabinet meeting and the results reported verbally.

Procurement will be undertaken through the use of a framework contract. The scheme will be added to the capital plan amendment report to Cabinet in September 2018. Due to the high priority nature of this part of the works it is requested that approval be given for these to commence as soon as possible.

The minor works framework contract will be used to procure the required improvements. This framework contract was contained within the Annual Procurement Plan approved by Cabinet on 16th March 2017.

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

| Risk Identified | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Management Actions Planned |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--|
| Works not resourced and completed | Unlikely | Low | Resource identified in the capital programme and programme of works identified with priority of high to low. |

Equality and Diversity

Whilst it is not considered that the recommendation within this report has any direct equality and diversity implications in itself, it may be that there are equality implications arising on a site specific basis, particularly if new security or access measures are installed which have not been in place previously. In such cases, officers will ensure that an Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken before any relevant works are commenced.

Background papers: Assessment table of sites identified.

Key Decision: Yes

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Part B

Reasons for Proposed Improvements

1. The Council owns a number of open space sites across the Borough that have limited infrastructure to prevent unauthorised access by vehicles. The lack of infrastructure has allowed access to the sites by unauthorised vehicles which presents a number of risks to the Council.
2. These sites have been assessed and prioritised on the basis of frequency of incident, risks to the public, and damage to property. A priority RAG (red, amber, green) ranking has been apportioned to each site that will determine the timescales in which the improvement works are to be completed.
3. This exercise has identified a small number of sites where it would be beneficial to carry out the improvement works at the earliest opportunity ie. within the next few weeks. Further work will be carried out on other sites, where the safety and security issues are a lower priority, up until March 2019.
4. Unauthorised vehicular access to open spaces takes a variety of different forms. The main reasons include joyriding, unauthorised encampments, social activities within vehicles, attempted thefts and break-ins at equipment stores.
5. The location of the sites identified through the initial risk assessment are predominantly in Loughborough (Nanpantan, Outwoods, Maxwell Drive, Bradgate Road). Once the capital funding has been approved, the improvements at these locations will be made at the earliest opportunity. Ongoing reviews and monitoring will determine where further improvements are required at other locations.
6. The risks presented by vehicles accessing the open spaces include physical risks to site users from cars/motorbikes, damage to the open space, disruption/threat to wildlife, nuisance (music from cars), engine noise, loud voices/shouting (mainly from gatherings in the evening or at night). The nuisance created can have a significant detrimental impact on residents living in properties in close proximity to these locations.
7. Some of the open spaces identified are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) or designated Local Nature Reserves. As these sites have special designations particular attention should be given to these sites to prevent unauthorised access.
8. The scope of the work will include the installation of knee rail fencing, boulders and improved gates/locks. The works will be progressed from August up until the end on March 2019 and will be reviewed by officers within the Cleansing and Open Spaces team during that time.
9. The works are not designed to prevent or limit access by legitimate users of the relevant sites, but rather to address the issues summarised in the paragraphs above. The improvements made will be fully compliant in line with equalities legislation.