

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

CIL POLICY AND PROJECT RECOMMENDATION



Report Reference C-23-33
Meeting Date 25th March 2024
Agenda Item 9
Prepared by Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in Cheshire East in 2019. The Town Council receives 25% of any CIL generated within Knutsford and adopted a policy, the CIL Framework, to guide how it would spend its neighbourhood share of CIL.

The Town Council currently holds £26,496.80 of CIL receipts. CIL must be spent within five years or it can be reclaimed by Cheshire East Council. The earliest expiring CIL is £1,638.75 in April 2025.

The CIL Projects Advisory Committee met on 13th March. The advisory committee produced two recommendations, one in respect of funding a project and a second in respect of a proposed amendment to the CIL Framework.

2.0 AMENDMENTS TO CIL FRAMEWORK

2.1 AMENDMENT OF CIL FUNDING PRIORITIES

The CIL Framework sets out four funding priorities, with examples of how these can be demonstrated by projects. The advisory committee resolved that the policy should be amended to include environmental considerations as part of the funding objectives of CIL.

Consequently, it is proposed to insert an additional line to the policy under the priority of “Mitigate detrimental effects of development” to state: “Provide long-term enhancement of the natural environment or contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions”.

2.2 AMENDMENT OF PROCESS

The purpose of the CIL Projects Advisory Committee is to provide community input into the allocation of CIL expenditure. As written, the CIL Projects Advisory Committee produces recommendations to the Finance Committee as to whether projects should be considered for CIL funding. The Finance Committee then produces recommendations to Full Council as to whether CIL should be released for an approved project.¹

Following the meeting, the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor discussed the process and it was agreed that it was unnecessarily convoluted. It was agreed that the policy should be

¹ The recommendations of section four have been brought to Full Council directly to enable the project to proceed without delay, should it be approved by Council, owing to earlier delays in the process whilst new advisory committee members were recruited.

amended to remove the Finance Committee from the process i.e. that the CIL Projects Advisory Committee make recommendations directly to Full Council and that Full Council reviews the CIL Projects List on receipt of CIL to determine if a project should be funded.

3.0 COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

The CIL Projects Advisory Committee resolved to appoint Cllr Coan as committee chairman. In accordance with Standing Order 62, the Town Mayor cannot be appointed as chairman/deputy of any committee without the express approval of Full Council. There were no other candidates put forward / wishing to be put forward at the meeting.

Council should consider giving the express approval for the Town Mayor to serve as CIL Projects Advisory Committee Chairman for the remainder of the 2023/24 term.

4.0 PROPOSED CIL PROJECT

4.1 PROJECT PROPOSAL

The Ladies Mile footpath upgrade project was initiated by the council's Environment and Transport Committee, following it being identified as a project during the neighbourhood planning process. The proposal is to create a 1.5m wide limestone dust path connecting the pavement on Ladies Mile to the pavement on Tabley Road. The path would be approximately 130m long and addresses a longstanding issue that this section of the path is currently unmade and extremely wet/muddy in the winter months which deters active travel.

The land on which the path would be made is part of the Knutsford Heath Common Land and the proposal has support from Tatton Estates.

An updated price is awaited and will be presented at the meeting. The quote received in summer 2023 was £9,575.

The full project proposal can be viewed here: [Ladies Mile Footpath Upgrade Proposal](#)²

4.2 RECOMMENDATION FROM CIL PROJECTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The CIL Projects Advisory Committee considered this application on 13th March. It was resolved to recommend that it be added to the CIL Projects List for funding at a value of £10,000 + 30% contingency i.e. that council authorise the use of up to £13,000 of CIL to deliver the project.

4.3 ALLOCATION OF CIL RECEIPTS

Under the council's Financial Regulations, CIL receipts are held in a dedicated reserve and Full Council must expressly approve any draw down of funds from the reserve.

Subject to Council giving its approval for the addition of the project to the council's CIL Projects List, Council is asked to consider authorising the use of the CIL reserve to fund the project in the 2024/25 financial year.

² www.knutsfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/2024-Ladies-Mile-Cycle-Path.pdf

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS / DECISIONS REQUIRED

- a) It is recommended that Council approves the insertion of a line for CIL funded projects to provide long term enhancement to the natural environment or contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions.
- b) Council should consider the suggested amendment of the CIL Framework to remove the Finance Committee from the process.
- c) Council should consider giving the express approval for the Town Mayor to serve as CIL Projects Advisory Committee Chairman for the remainder of the 2023/24 term.
- d) It is recommended that Council adds the Ladies Mile footpath creation project to the CIL Projects list.
- e) Council should consider authorising the allocation of funds from the CIL Reserve to deliver the project in the 2024/25 financial year.