

RECOMMENDED that the provision of a supplementary capital budget of £1,800,000, to facilitate the progression of the Brookfield project, be recommended to the Council for approval.

Purpose

To seek agreement to a recommendation that the Council provides a supplementary capital budget of £1,800,000 to fund the next stage of the Brookfield project.

Background

At its meeting of 9 February 2022, Cabinet resolved that the business case for Brookfield Riverside and Garden Village be approved subject to the following conditions:

- (i) planning permission being granted
- (ii) the necessary land being acquired; and
- (iii) the business case being reviewed when actual construction costs are available following procurement.

The first of these conditions has been largely satisfied with resolutions to grant planning permissions for Brookfield Riverside, Brookfield Garden Village and Cheshunt Park Golf Course having been made by the Planning and Regulatory Committee on 20 June 2023. It has also been confirmed that these applications will not be subject to a call in by the Secretary of State.

A final business case now needs to be prepared and this report seeks to secure the budget for this work.

Introduction

The preparation of the business case requires the Council and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), to enter into a pre-contract service agreement (PCSA) with third-party contractor(s) to provide the necessary designs and costings for the construction of:

- the link road
- the relocation sites (including the Council's depot)
- the relocations access road
- site wide infrastructure including that part of the loop road (and possibly the northern spine road) required for the gypsy relocation site
- the overall site wide drainage and utilities design

The intention is for this to be let through two separate contracts. The first PCSA will be for the replacement facilities required by both councils on the relocations site and the relocations access road. This will be managed by HCC on behalf of both councils and will involve the letting of a contract with Morgan Sindall, via a national framework. There will also be contracts with project managers and cost consultants. The fees will be split between the Council and HCC proportionately.

The second PCSA will be for the remainder of the infrastructure and highways provision. This is to be managed by Sovereign Peveril Brookfield Ltd (SPBL) as allowed for in the Development Agreement (DA) with the councils contributing to the fees based on the share of costs outlined within the DA. A supplementary agreement to the DA will be required to amend the extent of the infrastructure plans as the DA only deals with highway infrastructure.

The current estimated price for the design work and establishing more accurate construction costs is £1,600,000. However it should be noted that the final tender price is still awaited and it will be subject to ratification by the Council's and HCC's advisors working on the project to ensure that the fees represent value for money.

It is estimated that the Council's proportion of the fees will be a maximum of £800,000. It is proposed that a budget is approved for this work to be funded from General Capital Receipts Reserve.

In addition to the budget of £800,000 for the design works the Council also needs to proceed with works to the Cheshunt Park Golf Centre and the Church Lane allotment site. The required works and their associated budget requirements are set out below.

Finally due to a proposal by Heritage England to register part of the site as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) where Ermine Street progresses through the site archaeological trenching and electro-magnetic surveying is being advised to enable the extent of any scheduling to be mitigated and also to de-risk the remainder of the Garden Village site in preparation for plot sales later on.

Golf Course Reconfiguration

The first stage of this is the detailed design and tendering of the first phase of works, namely the creation of new first and second holes and a new third tee (for the current first tee). The anticipated cost of these works is £250,000 and it is proposed that a budget is approved for this work to be funded from the Brookfield reserve. This will also include a full audit of the current drainage and irrigation systems to ensure they are adequate and any works required to bring them up to standard. The major construction works will be completed within this financial year subject to detail planning approval but continuing irrigation and planting will be required in future years which will be covered in future capital bids.

Under the Development Agreement for Brookfield Riverside, the costs of the golf course relocation can be reclaimed from Sovereign Peveril Brookfield Ltd, however, the Council needs to fund the works initially. When the repayment is received, it will be used to reimburse the Brookfield reserve.

Church Lane Allotment Site

At its meeting of 28 March, the Cabinet approved the provision of allotments at Church Lane, Wormley to facilitate the relocation of allotment holders from Halfhide Lane.

The remediation works have commenced, and it is proposed that a budget of £600,000 be approved to allow the new allotments to be prepared for occupation. It is proposed that this budget be funded from the Brookfield reserve.

Archaeological Trenching and electro-magnetic surveying

Heritage England have put forward a proposal to schedule a large area of the site as a SAM providing a buffer zone around the route of Ermine Street and the potential for settlements on the side of the road.

The current proposal is based on limited information gathered from desktop studies and the proposed trenching and electro-magnetic survey would provide clearer information on the potential for any remains and would seek to mitigate the area proposed for the SAM.

Eventually the whole of the Garden Village site would have to be subject to trenching covering between 1.5% to 3% of the site area in a trenching arrangement to provide the best coverage.

It is recommended, therefore, that at this stage to mitigate costs and disruption the whole site area is surveyed and a budget of £150,000 is required to facilitate this work, including contingencies and this sum will also be provided by HCC for their share of the commission.

The Councils have obtained four quotes for the works and the best fit in terms of quality and price has been selected.

Financial, Legal and Risk Management Implications

The budget being requested is £1.8 million. The following table summarises the four elements of this and how it is proposed each is funded.

Budget Element	£	Funding Source
Designs for the relocations and infrastructure	800,000	General Capital Receipts
Golf Course Reconfiguration	250,000	Brookfield Reserve
Church Lane Allotments	600,000	Brookfield Reserve
Archaeological trenching	150,000	Brookfield Reserve
Total Budget Requirement	1,800,000	

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation. All expenditure is at risk until such times as the business case has been proven and the development agreement with Sovereign Peveril Brookfield Ltd becomes unconditional.

Equalities Implications

There are no equalities impacts arising from the recommendation of this report.

Alternative Options Considered

The works outlined within the report are those, as a minimum, required to progress the overall Brookfield project. The alternative is not proceed with the project.

Contribution to the Council's Objectives and Environmental Sustainability Priorities

Achieving the development of Brookfield is a key corporate priority.

Conclusion

A supplementary budget of £1,800,000 is required to fund the work needed to produce the final business case and other initial enabling works.

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List of Background Papers:
None.