

Executive
22 April 2021

Title: Warwick Gates Community Centre Extension
Lead Officer: Chris Elliott, Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder: Judith Falp, John Cooke and Richard Hales
Public report / Confidential report: Public
Wards of the District directly affected: Myton and Heathcote, Whitnash, and Bishops Tachbrook

Contrary to the policy framework: No
 Contrary to the budgetary framework: No
 Key Decision: Yes
 Included within the Forward Plan: Yes (Ref. no: 1,216)
 Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No
 Consultation & Community Engagement: Yes
 Final Decision: Yes
 Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive	6th April 2021	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	6th April 2021	Philip Clarke
CMT	6th April 2021	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	6th April 2021	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	6th April 2021	Andrew Jones
Finance	6th April 2021	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	6th April 2021	Councillors Judith Falp, John Cooke and Richard Hales

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the drawdown of allocated Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £150,600 as a contribution toward the cost of the of an extension to the community centre at Warwick Gates. As the body undertaking the works is a voluntary organisation, it is proposed that the drawdown be managed on similar terms as RUCIS schemes and other large financial contributions made by the Council to community led works in addition to the usual agreement required by all agencies receiving CIL monies from the Council.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive agrees to the drawdown of the allocated CIL money of £150,600 as a contribution toward the cost of the extension to the Warwick Gates community centre subject to:
- i) the completion of the template agreement attached at Appendix A;
 - ii) the submission of a robust and satisfactory business plan;
 - iii) a satisfactory governance plan;
 - iv) the administrative processes for dispensing the Council contribution being similar to the ones deployed for RUCIS schemes and where the Council has made similarly large financial contributions to community led schemes, including for example, invoices being paid monthly in arrears.
- 2.2 That authority to agree 2.1 (ii) and (iii) above be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Health and Community Protection, Development Services and Finance portfolio holders.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

Recommendation 2.1

- 3.1 The Executive agreed at its meeting on 18th March 2021 the proposed CIL Schedule for 2021/22. This Schedule included the provision of £150,600 toward the cost of an extension to the community centre for the Warwick Gates area of the District. The proposed extension has been designed and has planning permission. The voluntary group leading the work has been out to tender to be clear about the proposed costs. Including this CIL contribution the community group now has all the funding necessary and committed to pay for the proposed works, except for £15,000 which has though been effectively promised on confirmation of the Council committing £150,600. The tender price however remains valid for a limited time only so the CIL award is therefore sought for drawdown to allow the works to proceed this September.
- 3.2 In all other cases the CIL Schedule proposes awarding funds to either the District Council or other public statutory bodies. In each case the template at Appendix A is required to be completed. That is also the case here. In addition, as this proposal involves the extension to the community centre at Warwick Gates and is the only case where the award is proposed to a community organisation, there are additional proposed requirements. In other cases, where the Council has been awarding significant funds to a community group it requires a robust business plan to be submitted and assessed to ensure that the capital funds will result in a facility that will be well run.
- 3.3 Therefore, it is proposed that the same requirement is required in this case and similarly that the Council has assurance over the governance arrangements in order to ensure that the funds are going to a facility that is run for and by the community, and will remain accessible to the community. Significant work has already gone into the evolution of a business plan and

the governance arrangements and the latest version is attached at Appendix B. Other administrative processes that are usually deployed where the Council makes significant contributions to community schemes including payment of invoices in arrears should also be deployed in this case.

Recommendation 2.2

- 3.4 In order to ensure the issues identified above are dealt with swiftly, it is proposed that authority to agree the business plan and the governance arrangements are delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Health and Community Protection, Development Services and Finance portfolio holders.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The information below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

4.1.1 External impacts of proposal(s)

People - Health, Homes, Communities – The proposals will all help to address a key Council aspiration of improving the health and well-being and supporting community cohesion of its communities by enhancing the capacity of a local community facility to cater better for local needs, especially given the scale of housing expansion.

Services - Green, Clean, Safe – None directly, though the energy standards of the scheme would now usually be required to meet the Council's low carbon standards. The extension is modest in size so the scope to achieve this is limited in this case.

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment – None directly.

4.1.2. Internal impacts of the proposal(s)

People - Effective Staff – No direct impacts at this stage.

Services - Maintain or Improve Services – No direct impacts at this stage but the proposal may enable more community based work to be carried out in this area.

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term – No direct impacts.

4.2 **Supporting Strategies**

The proposal is relevant in the context of the Local Plan which has allocated a significant amount of housing to this area which then generates a need to have community facilities to match the proposed and actual growth.

4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies**

None relevant.

4.4 **Impact Assessments**

Not applicable though an assessment of community need has been carried out by the community group leading the project.

5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1 There is no implication at this stage of this proposal upon the Council's General Fund budgetary framework as the sum proposed matches that proposed in the CIL Schedule agreed on 18th March 2021. However, when the Executive agreed the CIL Schedule at its meeting in March this year it agreed that in case CIL proceeds are not received as anticipated that the funds for the Kenilworth Leisure proposal should take priority over other schemes.

5.2 It is suggested however, that as this scheme only requires £150,600; it is required more imminently than the Kenilworth scheme; and, that it is highly unlikely that CIL receipts would fall by such a huge proportion as to compromise both schemes financially; it is proposed that the risk to the Council of agreeing to this drawdown is small but the risk to the project to of not agreeing to the drawdown is significant.

6. **Risks**

6.1 The risks associated with the scheme fall largely to the community group undertaking the works scheme and subsequently running the expanded facility. In addition to the issue highlighted in paragraph 5.2 above, there is the risk to the Council should there be an issue with the works being completed on time and within budget as there is often an expectation that the Council would rescue such a scheme especially as it is property which is owned by the Council. There may also be a reputational risk if things go awry. The mitigation for these risks is to ensure that there is a robust business plan and governance in place and this forms part of the recommendation to the Executive.

7. **Alternative Option(s) considered**

7.1 The Executive could decide not to agree to the drawdown but given it agreed to the proposal being in the Schedule in March 2021 this would appear contrary to its own intentions and so appear perverse.