

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES**

**SUBJECT:** Levelling Up Parks Fund

**BRIEF STATEMENT OF SUBJECT MATTER:**

Introduction to LUF for Parks

The Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced a Levelling Up Parks fund in August 2022 and selected 85 authorities that would be recipients of the available monies. Redditch BC was one of those authorities and can claim £85,000, subject to being able to produce a convincing bid. The fund is targeted at key areas of deprivation that are also lacking in green space provision. To bid for the funds, the authority needs to develop a credible project that will enhance an existing green space, which includes using the green space strategy mapping work to identify suitable spaces, site visits to assess the space(s), developing a sketch master plan and identifying suitable costings.

The Proposal for spending LUF Parks monies in RBC

The project proposal for submission to central government is to be described as “Heart of the Park”. It is a play on words as the area of Arrow Valley Park with the lake is the geographical centre of the town and the project emphasis is a series of interventions, near the lake, that will benefit the physical hearts of all residents and particularly those in areas closest to the heart of the park. Attached is an initial sketch plan and this will be worked up in more detail to support the application.

Decision Sought

This decision form seeks support for the emerging Heart of the Park Proposal as described in this form and as illustrated on the attachment. In addition, a decision is sought, subject to approval of the bid, for the funding to be incorporated into the capital programme and the revenue budget for 22/23 and 23/24.

Further information on Tasks to be undertaken

Officers with consultants have not yet completed the proposal for submission to central government in early October. Following on from using GIS to plot the location of the Defra preferred Lower Social Output Area (LSOA), i.e. areas with limited access to open spaces and in an area of deprivation, measured as the top 20% most deprived nationally, to which the project must relate and be in close proximity to, the following is on-going:

- Fully develop proposals for a viable project to meet the grant criteria for capital works, revenue funding (for events, fees and maintenance) and tree planting.
- Produce a report showing plans and detailed designs.
- Produce text describing the project and the outcomes that will be delivered
- Produce a cost plan setting out project costs aligned with the grant criteria

**DECISION:**

**RESOLVED that:-**

- 1) **The Heart of the Park Proposal, as detailed in this urgent decision form and as illustrated in the attached document, be agreed and submitted to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities; and**

2) Subject to the approval of the bid by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, the £85,000 Levelling Up Parks Funding be incorporated into the capital programme and revenue budget for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

(Council / Executive decision)

**GROUNDS FOR URGENCY:**

From notification in August, the authority only has until 03 October 2022 to make the submission. Due to staff vacancies, consultants had to be procured to undertake the task of working up the proposals described above. Procurement timescales and report drafting timescales have made it difficult to present proposals for how LUF Parks monies could be spent whilst adhering to normal committee cycles

**DECISION APPROVED BY:**

(Deputy)  **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**INTERIM SECTION 151 OFFICER**  
(if financial implications)

.....  
(Signature) (Sue Hanley / Kevin Dicks - (D)CX)

.....  
(Signature) (Pete Carpenter)

Date: Month 2022

<b> PROPOSED ACTION SUPPORTED</b> <i>(amend as appropriate)</i>				
..... (Signature)	..... (Signature)	..... (Signature)	..... (Signature)	..... (Signature)
<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>
<b> MAYOR *</b>	<b> PF HOLDER</b>	<b> LEADER of the  LABOUR  Group</b>	<b> LEADER / LDR  CONSERVATIVE  Group</b>	<b> CHAIR  O&amp;S  Committee</b>
Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:

Notes:

\* In addition to the Executive decision above regarding the matter under consideration, the Mayor is signing to agree both that the Executive decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. This is to ensure that the call-in procedures as set out in Part 8 of the Constitution shall not apply where an Executive decision being taken is urgent.