



Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism

Cabinet – 16 July 2020

Welsh Government Transforming Towns Green Infrastructure Projects

Purpose:	To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No.7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals) - to commit and authorise the inclusion of the green infrastructure projects to the capital programme.
Policy Framework:	Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy, Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework, South West Wales Regional Plan for Regeneration.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) Cabinet approve the addition of the Welsh Government funded green infrastructure projects to the capital programme in 2020/21.
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Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Welsh Government Transforming Towns Green Infrastructure funding, and requests approval to add the green infrastructure projects to the capital programme in 2020-21.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 6th December 2019 Welsh Government issued a call for applications for a £5m pan Wales Green Infrastructure fund. This funding was intended to complement the existing WG Target Regeneration Investment (TRI) Programme and specifically focused on the provision of green spaces, green infrastructure and enhanced biodiversity.
- 2.2 The funding was available in 20/21 for capital works within the current TRI target areas: City Centre & Tawe Riverside Corridor and Morriston. The fund was open to local authorities and other partners, but (like the TRI programme) all bids had to be submitted through the local authority.
- 2.3 Two Council bids were submitted along with five other bids on behalf of local partners. The seven bids had a combined grant request of £1.124m. The External Funding Panel approved submission of these bids at its meeting on 4th March 2020.
- 2.4 Welsh Government received strong interest in the green infrastructure fund and the funding pot was oversubscribed. The bids were assessed by a Panel that included WG officers and external green infrastructure experts. In April 2020 the Council was notified that four Swansea funding bids, submitted on behalf of local partners, had been successful.

3. The Green Infrastructure Grant Funding

- 3.1 Welsh Government have awarded £784,804 capital grant funding for four green infrastructure schemes in Swansea City Centre. This funding is for a green roof, green walls on two commercial buildings and a pilot scheme for green roof bin shelters. All schemes will be delivered by partner organisations.
- 3.2 Welsh Government are requiring local authorities to administer all successful funding awards, as currently happens on the TRI programme. This function will be undertaken by the Economic Development & External Funding Team and a management fee has been included in each bid to cover the Council's costs for doing this. The Council will award grant funding to all four schemes in line with the grant applications that were submitted to WG.

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

- 4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has been completed for the 4 green infrastructure projects that will be delivered by partners, and is attached at appendix 2. This tool confirms that full EIAs are not required.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The financial implications are set out in Appendix A and show that £784,804 of capital costs would be added to the capital programme in 2020/21, which would be wholly funded by the Welsh Government grant. £30,000 match funding is required for one of the schemes but this will be provided by the relevant partner and there is no requirement for the authority to make capital match contributions to any of the schemes.
- 5.2 Officers will be appointed within the Economic Development & External Funding team to administer the successful funding bids, with costs met by the management fee built in to each grant. There will be no additional revenue funding implications.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council will need to comply with the terms and conditions attached to the WG Green Infrastructure grant funding.
- 6.2 The projects will be delivered and administered in partnership with external organisations and will be managed in-line with Service Level Agreements, adhering to the terms and conditions set-out in Grant Offer Letters and following City and County of Swansea policies. In the case of grant investment in private sector developments a legal charge will be placed on property or assets linked to the grant recipient to ensure recipient adheres to grant offer terms and conditions for the necessary period to ensure financial risk to the authority is mitigated.
- 6.3 These projects are fully compliant with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The projects align with the Council's obligation to act in a sustainable way and the examples of public and private sector investment demonstrate compliance with the 5 Ways of Working promoted by the Act and will make a significant contribution to the 7 well-being goals.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A	Financial implications
Appendix B	EIA