

APPENDIX F

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL BIDS

The bids outlined below are for only health & safety and key Southwark 2030 priorities that are essential to secure funding in-year to enable their delivery. They include both new bids as well as request for additional funding for existing projects where costs exceed current funding. The January round is expected to focus on other priorities and is expected to be funded on a “one in one out” basis as services reprioritise existing funding and projects.

Play investment programme (£3m)

This bid supports the S2030 goal – ‘a good start in life’. This new bid is seeking £3m funding to continue to support the council’s ambitious ‘Investment in Play Programme’ across the borough’s parks and open spaces. The funding will enable the delivery of a combination of new playgrounds and improvement projects over the next 2 years.

The council understands the role and importance of play for children. For many in Southwark, a playground may be their only access to play, green or open space. Playgrounds are important for the crucial early year’s development where children learn and develop a wide range of physical, social and emotional skills and abilities. They also help to keep young people active. Good-quality playgrounds give parents and guardians the confidence to allow children to play independently in a safe, purposely designed environment.

Since 2017 the council has invested over £16m in over 14 different parks playgrounds and has successfully delivered major refurbishments to these playgrounds. This does not include the capital invested in adventure playgrounds or estate playgrounds.

In current delivery and near completion, we have a further 2 parks playgrounds - Fredericks Playground and Nursery Row - and capital to fund a further three playground improvement schemes.

As these projects are in delivery or nearing completion stages, it is now time to identify the next wave of investment in order to continue to drive this key council priority. This next investment programme has been informed by the play audit undertaken in 2023. The funding will enable replacement/improvement of some older pieces of play equipment in locations such as Goose Green playground. It will also be used to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of many of our existing playgrounds where a high level geographical assessment has been undertaken to identify areas across the borough which could benefit from more inclusive play opportunities in existing play spaces, and to also create a flagship, wholly inclusive playground at Surrey Square Park, which was identified in the audit as a high priority for investment.

Tree Planting programme (£3m)

This bid supports the S2030 goal – ‘A Healthy Environment’. Southwark Council has a long-standing and ambitious commitment to plant more trees across the borough as part of its commitments related to environment and climate change. As a council we recognise the importance of trees in supporting the wellbeing of our residents, as well as the benefits they deliver in respect of climate change. This commitment was articulated in the Corporate Delivery Plan targets, which set out to plant 100,000 trees, with 10,000 planted by May 2022. This target has been successfully achieved.

A subsequent Corporate Delivery Plan target was set in 2022 which outlined the ambition to plant a further 20,000 trees by 2026, with a particular focus on planting where currently there is low canopy cover.

To achieve these targets, we have had capital investment of £5m since 2020.

This new bid is seeking approval for £3m capital investment to fund tree planting delivery between 2024 and 2026, to meet, and exceed, the Council’s Delivery Plan targets, and to support the drive towards Carbon Neutrality.

St Pauls Ground pitch refurbishment (£350k)

This bid supports the S2030 goal – ‘Staying Well’. St Pauls’ Sports Grounds is a council sports facility serving the north of the borough. The facility is managed on behalf of the council by Millwall Community Trust. The facilities comprise of one full size 3G Astro football pitch, spectator stand, changing rooms and club room with kitchen.

This request is for capital funding to replace the sports surface (3G artificial grass with rubber infill).

The ground has been open since 2017 for community football activity, including hosting training and fixtures for Fisher FC. A lifespan of an artificial pitch surface is about 7-10 years depending on the volume of use. In addition, the League requirement for Fisher FC specifies a higher technical performance from the artificial grass surface than regular play and play provision requires. The pitch has performed above expectation in meeting these technical League requirements, particularly when considering the high volume of use annually.

The pitch assessment this year (May 2024) has suggested that the age of the pitch and quality of material is likely to mean that the pitch won’t pass another inspection. In view of this, a bid for £350k is being submitted to enable replacement. This will ensure that football can continue to be played safely at the site, and also that the league requirements for Fisher FC are met.

Youth and Play service health and safety and facilities improvements (£680k)

This bid supports the S2030 goal – ‘a good start in life’. The proposed bid will enable the service to undertake health and safety and capital improvements to youth and adventure play facilities to ensure that they are fit for purpose, maximise income generation opportunities and use, and are safe and accessible for children, young people and staff. The service currently has a capital programme for two youth sites:

Brandon Youth Centre and New Venture Youth Centre. The former is a large refurbishment and accessibility project that will create lift access and new internal spaces so that multiple activities can take place with different groups of young people at the same time within the larger footprint of the current space, which is currently one large room with a small kitchen area. The latter is to create a music studio space from cupboard and office space for the young people.

This bid will provide additional funding to the existing youth capital programme, to make the following programme affordable:

- Upgrades and replacements of equipment not covered by the main Corporate Facilities Management contracts.
- Accessibility improvements, such as installing ramps, lifts and accessible toilets
- Security improvements, such as installing CCTV, locks and fences
- Modifications to building layouts to maximise use of space, increase income generating capacity and provide suitable and safe space for a menu of activities in accordance with the Youth Work Curriculum and Play Types that our buildings cannot currently deliver to due to their design.

Rebuild of perimeter wall of Dawes Street depot (markets and street trading) (£100k)

Dawes Street depot is a storage facility for placement of market stalls and used via market traders, barrow staff and council officers. This capital bid is required to rebuild two sections of the perimeter wall of the depot, (a school and residential properties back onto the wall) on the basis of health and safety grounds.

The wall has been inspected by a structural engineer who has identified defects including cracking and settlement plus six number buttresses supporting the wall have fractured giving the wall a loss of stability.

The structural engineer produced a specification for the works which have been costed by the council's term contractor. The total cost of the works is £100,000.

Rebuilding of Cox's Walk footbridge (£900k)

This bid seeks additional funding to enable bridge repairs and ramp construction. Due to the challenges of the site, and the need to protect the environment, the cost of the project has increased. The capital budget currently available is £800k – this bid seeks gap funding of £900k.

The works are complicated with the refurbishment of the 170-year-old bridge within a forest. The challenges of the construction in the protection of the trees, protection of the ecology and the access for materials and plant.

The scope of the works has increased due to the configuration of the bridge and the environment. There has been an increase in the scope of the works to cover the following:

- Design and implementation of additional surfacing to the footpath for the protection of trees for movement of plant.
- Design and implementation of additional works to the support beams to the deck of the bridge
- The complete demolition, design and reconstruction of the bridge abutments
- The design and replacement of the waterproofing of the deck
- The reconstruction of the intermediate piers

There has also been a significant increase in the cost of the works and the overall duration of the works. The steel beams required major work to strengthen and on excavation the condition of the abutments has been found to be beyond repair. The reconstruction of the abutments has a greater input of manual labour operation rather than machine operations. This approach has ensured the protection of trees and vegetation. The works are critical to the safety and working of the bridge.

Canada Water Library Roof Replacement (£1.7m)

This proposal is to permanently resolve the identified issue with the roof and parapet construction at Canada Water Library. The roof defects were discovered as part of the repairs to the timber wall cladding system caused by the failure of the roof system to keep water out of the building. This was after two external metal cladding panels became detached from the walling due to the timber construction rotting away due to leaks coming from the parapets on the roof.

The redesign has been developed via a feasibility study, which has informed this bid. The design is to replace the mineral felt roof with a high-performance metal upstand roof. This will be covering the existing timber parapet construction, which is vulnerable to water leaks, which in turn raises the risk of this damaging and rotting the timber wall construction of the library building.

A cost consultant was part of the design team for the feasibility study for the new roof covering and they have reviewed the design and costed the proposals based on market rates at the time. They have also factored in for inflation and that this is a unique project with logistical challenges. The design team are recommending a two-stage design & build process, with the advantage of developing the contractors design further with a Pre-construction Services Agreement stage (PCSA). This should ensure that the design is deliverable and confirm the costs for the works stage (second tender).