

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO COUNCIL

22ND OCTOBER 2014

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

SUMMARY

The pattern of economic growth, impact of the National Planning Policy Framework and the infrastructure needs in general in the Borough are changing rapidly. Principle growth in population has always been around Ingleby Barwick and this continues apace with additional housing approvals and the provision of a free school by the government. Both Eaglescliffe and Yarm have seen a mix of allocated and unallocated housing sites come forward with approvals being granted in the context of NPPG. All of this activity places strain on the Borough's infrastructure in the broader sense and meeting the needs of the community, which is diverse in the ancient setting of Yarm compared to the new build of Ingleby and traditional layout of Thornaby, require careful planning of infrastructure needs going forward.

By infrastructure the report considers not only roads and transport links but also schools, leisure facilities, green spaces, parks and town centres. It is not only the growth that is driving the need to invest in infrastructure but also analysis of survey information and the observations of Elected Members have been brought together to support the investment proposal in this report.

As part of the Council's 2014-15 budget setting process, Council agreed the allocation of £5.590M to support future investments and regeneration related acquisitions, and also £300K to support feasibility work. There are significant new developments coming forward across the Borough. A detailed Infrastructure Strategy in response to such developments, which is particularly relevant to South of the Borough is in production.

The report also highlights other significant investment and activities planned in the South of the Borough.

Cabinet RESOLVED that:-

1. The recent investment in primary school capacity in the south of the borough and emerging trend of required primary school places in Ingleby Barwick be noted. Any future investment decisions will be subject to a further report to Cabinet following the review of Children and Young People Select Committee and their work into school organisation and admission arrangements.
2. The principle of developing a pedestrian link between Ingleby Barwick and Preston Park be approved and that £35k be allocated to develop a scheme to allow funding sources to be actively pursued. The funding for the feasibility work to be allocated from the investment fund.
3. The investment of £18.9m into Highway Infrastructure in the schemes outlined in paragraph 31 be noted.

RECOMMENDED to Council:-

4. The investment of £1.2M into Yarm town centre public realm and facilities be noted and the allocation from the investment fund of a further £150k alongside the £60k available to develop the library facilities in Yarm be supported.
5. The principle of the development of additional Leisure facilities in Ingleby Barwick be approved and that further feasibility work be undertaken to determine the most appropriate mix of facilities and location. The funding for this development work of £175K be approved from the feasibility element of the investment fund. In addition £3M from the investment fund be approved in principle towards the scheme, which will be used as the basis to pursue external funding with Sports England and Tees Active. The full costs of the scheme will be considered in the 2015/16 Medium Term Financial Plan.
6. The investment of £800k in additional car parking provision within Preston Park from the allocated investment fund be approved.

DETAIL

Trends/Pressures

1. Traditionally the focus of housing development in the South of the Borough has been in Ingleby Barwick. The housing developments at Ingleby Barwick were granted outline planning permission in 1978 by the Secretary of State and since then 7,800 dwellings have been built with about 700 to 800 houses still remaining to be built. Whilst the Ingleby Barwick development has proved to be commercially successful, with a high demand for the properties, this has put significant pressure on the local road network and on facilities generally in the Ingleby Barwick area. Whilst the Council has resisted further house building at Ingleby Barwick, further housing development is planned as planning permission for a free school and 350 dwellings has been granted at appeal. Two further applications for 1,100 dwellings, again refused by this Council's Planning Committee, have appeals pending. If allowed the additional building will add significantly to pressure on the local facilities and road network.
2. There is also significant residential development with planning permission at Allens West, Eaglescliffe for 845 dwellings and at Urray Nook for 145 dwellings. Neither development has commenced yet but both are expected to do so within 5 years and to add pressure to local facilities and infrastructure.
3. In addition, a number of planning permissions have been granted in the Yarm area. West and South West of Yarm, two permissions total 720 dwellings. These developments have yet to start producing dwellings but are expected to do so within five years. Also granted permission is a retirement village at Mount Leven, Yarm.

Investments in Yarm

4. In April 2014 Pay and Display parking was introduced into Yarm which included an hour free and a low tariff for the long stay parking to reduce the impacts on the low paid workers in the town. Early indications are very positive in terms of the visitor experience, the impact upon business and the availability of parking in the town. Furthermore detailed analysis is underway with a view to assessing the overall impact of this measure for the town. Additional long stay parking provision is under construction to the rear of Barclays Bank in Yarm and there is work ongoing to deliver additional long stay spaces within easy reach of the High Street which will enable a review of the opportunity for resident's car parking zones in those streets significantly affected by commuter parking.

5. Phase One of the public realm works which involved the redesign and replacement of the street lighting in Yarm High Street was completed and well received by residents and visitors as it provides a uniform lighting level with improved colour rendition enabling the newly installed CCTV to operate effectively. Phase Two involved replacing a small area of cobbles around the Town Hall, which was in a particularly bad condition to be replaced with granite setts and Yorkshire stone. This provided a surface that is easier to walk on and provide accessibility for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Also included in these works was the cleaning of the War Memorial, installing an additional step and providing custom designed railings around the memorial, incorporating a “poppy”. Finally the two Pelican crossings in the High Street were upgraded to Puffin crossings to improve the safety of the crossing points particularly for those people who have difficulty in walking.
6. This represents a total investment in the town of over £1.2m (Car park £500k, Street lights £130k, Public realm £600k, Puffins £60k)
7. In addition, the review of Library Services, undertaken as part of the Asset Review, established the principle of a differentiated service model, with town centre branches benefitting from a wider range of services and longer opening hours than smaller branches. Cabinet recognised the need to improve town centre libraries. As part of the Review consultation in 2013, 76% supported the retention and improvement of Yarm Library.
8. At the conclusion of the Review, Thornaby Central Library had already been refurbished and was used as a pilot for the integrated services approach. Stockton, Billingham and Norton are now complete or well underway; Yarm has been the subject of provisional planning work.
9. Yarm Library enjoys a very prominent High Street location with high footfall. At the time of the Review evaluation of the 11 branches, Yarm attracted the 4th highest number of visits and had the third lowest cost per user (only Stockton Central and Thornaby are more cost effective).
10. The proposed Yarm Library improvement works are a combination of maintenance, improved IT facilities including the introduction of self-service technology, redecoration and replacement of fixtures and furniture. Funding has been made available to support this work. There is a need to address the access and appearance from the High Street and consider access issues. Funding is not currently available for this work.
11. A budget of £60k has already been set aside to cover the internal works. The full costs of possible external works are not yet known, however it is proposed that a budget of £150k be established to support this work.

Education Provision

12. As part of the Council’s obligations to school capacity and organisation the projections of future pupil numbers and the associated trends are continuously reviewed and reported to the Department for Education (Annual School Capacity on line return) which is consistent with the School Organisation Plan approved by Cabinet every 2 years (last approved Plan 2013). Economic growth and house building patterns are a common factor that influence geographical trends in pupil numbers. Within the borough as the population continues to grow so does children that reach school age. In recent years there has been an understandable growth in some areas of the borough that is higher than others, one example being Ingleby Barwick.
13. In the past two years there has been significant investment in both primary and secondary facilities across the borough, in particular housing trends in the south of the borough have made it necessary to plan for additional primary places in Eaglescliffe and Ingleby Barwick. Investment in the primary stock has resulted in increased capacity at Junction Farm, St

Francis of Assisi and Barley Fields Primary Schools totalling 90 additional places in each academic year in the future. The current predictions indicate that this additional capacity will meet need including approved housing developments.

14. The trends and pressures reflected in the continued housing growth in the south of the borough mean the provision of primary school places will need to be closely monitored to ensure adequate provision will remain in the years to come. As an example a further 1,100 houses may be granted planning approval by a government planning inspector in the near future. The outcome of such decisions will need to be considered carefully by the Council to ensure we are able to meet the needs of our young people whilst ensuring developers can meet their obligations to community facilities, including schools.
15. The Council's Children & Young Peoples Select Committee are beginning a review of the approach to school organisation and admission arrangements. A review of this process will commence borough wide in the municipal year of 2015-16 concluding in 2016-17. The work of the Select Committee will prioritise a review into the Ingleby Barwick primary admission zones and the secondary admission zones for south Stockton and Ingleby Barwick together with primary places for north/central Stockton and primary special school places. This review will report through to Cabinet in 2014 and make recommendations for admissions in September 2016.
16. If the growth in housing numbers and developments gaining planning approval continues as expected with the intervention of the government's planning inspectorate, it is likely that investment decisions will need to be considered to ensure primary and secondary school places remain sufficient in future years. If this is the case then Cabinet will be asked to consider school investment as part of a separate future report.

Leisure Facilities in Ingleby Barwick

17. Stockton's Open Space Recreation and Landscaping Supplementary Planning Document, approved by Cabinet in 2010, set out standards for provision of indoor and outdoor facilities, based on the Policy Planning Guidance 17 (PPG17) assessment. PPG17 shows that Ingleby Barwick does not meet the agreed quantity and proximity standards for leisure facilities and should therefore be a priority for improvement. The Sport and Active Leisure Strategy, approved by Cabinet in 2011, reflects this assessment and acknowledges below target levels of provision, setting out the objective of developing fit for purpose, quality accredited facilities that meet the needs of the community.
18. The quantity standard for swimming pools is a measure of area of water per 1000 people, within a 2km distance. The figure for the Borough at the time of the PPG assessment was 16.47m² per 1000 population, close to the North East England average of 16.67m² per 1000. Provision in Ingleby Barwick was 5.7m² per 1000, and by the 2014 update of the assessment the figure has fallen to 5.39m² per 1000 people. Thornaby Pool is the closest public pool to Ingleby Barwick.
19. The size and format of any new pool is to be determined, but to cater for formal swimming, school use, and general public use it should be based on a 25 meter multi-lane format, incorporating shallow and deeper water to allow for a range of abilities.
20. It is considered that facilities such as gym and fitness rooms allows the staffing and running costs of a swimming pool to be deferred over a larger programme and covered by more paying customers is likely to be an outcome from the detailed feasibility work.
21. A new leisure facility would also provide the opportunity to relocate and improve the library provision for Ingleby Barwick, moving out of the current space within All Saints School. This offers greater synergy between library and leisure activities, greater access for the public

during school hours, and potentially longer opening hours at the same or reduced costs due to staffing economies.

22. It is recommended that further detailed feasibility and site development is carried out that concludes with an affordable proposal and a further report is brought to Cabinet to seek approval for the final facility and funding requirements to be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2015/16.

Access to Key Borough wide Facilities

23. For residents from across the Borough and beyond, Preston Park is currently proving more popular than ever and now welcomes 600,000 visitors per year. The popularity of the park is increasing and the previous investment in the park has seen amongst other things improvements to the Grade II listed Preston Hall Museum that currently attracts around 200,000 visitors per year and the recently opened skate park, which after only a few weeks is proving to be more popular than ever anticipated.
24. The park's other attractions include Butterfly World, the new jetty with a range of water based adventures developing, river walks as well as the adventure play parks and also events which are regularly held at the park. These include some of the Council's events, such as the Summer Show and the Halloween Fright Night walk. The Hall is also becoming a popular wedding venue in the area with plans to expand possibly using a marquee so that catering and reception facilities can be accommodated for many guests.
25. The park is one of the major attractions in the Borough and car parking capacity in recent years has continued to become a problem with at times visitors being turned away. There is an increasing level of complaints being received from adjacent residents even with the introduction of stewarding to maximise car parking on both the southern and northern fields. Allowing parking in these areas is also weather dependent as the areas do not have suitable ground conditions for all weathers and following rain can leave these areas unusable. Schemes have been developed for both of these areas that sympathetically enhance the existing informal car parking areas. Adoption of a 'Heritage/National Trust' type car parking option would be appropriate to help formalise these areas and increase car parking capacity for the southern field that will provide 242 spaces. The northern overflow car park that is used during events also has significant drainage issues; the introduction of drainage improvements will facilitate a significant increase in usage of this area if implemented. Improvements could also include a secondary route to the traffic and a signal controlled exit to be used during large events.
26. It is proposed that improvements to the car parking provision including additional spaces within Preston Park are developed for summer 2015 establishing a budget of £800k, to be funded from the allocated investment fund. During the development and planning stages of this investment consultation and engagement will take place with key stakeholders which will include The Friends of Preston Park.
27. A new bridged crossing of the River Tees between Ingleby Barwick and Preston Park has been proposed for a number of years. The benefits of such a bridge, as well as the associated pedestrian routes, were identified in the feasibility for the Connect2 project in 2006 which aimed to provide bridge crossings of the River Tees and Leven to link Ingleby Barwick to Eaglescliffe and Yarm respectively. Unfortunately, due to lack of appropriate funding, the Connect2 project did not progress past the feasibility stage. However, in response to the demand for a shorter pedestrian and cycle route, and as part of the development of the Tees Heritage Park, a new footpath/cycleway was constructed in 2010 to link Ingleby Barwick to Preston Park. This route runs from The Rings area of Ingleby Barwick and over Jubilee Bridge before heading towards Preston Park.

28. Due to the continued growth of Ingleby Barwick, and the desire for a more 'direct' route to recently improved Preston Park and the wider Eaglescliffe area, the feasibility work for a bridge crossing would be required to progress the option to a stage that it could be delivered, should funding become available. Previous considerations to a bridge crossing to Preston Park have met with technical difficulties. Further work as part of the feasibility on location and the use of different technologies for ground improvements and bridge design may now provide the opportunity for a more efficient solution to be developed.
29. Therefore it is proposed that feasibility and concept design for a new river crossing between Ingleby Barwick and Preston Park is developed to allow funding opportunities to be pursued. The development work of £35k can be funded from the allocated investment fund.

Highway Infrastructure

30. Extensive traffic modelling work had identified a number of strategic improvements required to ensure our highway infrastructure could meet the increase in vehicular movements resulting from such large scale developments. Achieving these improvements has been managed through the planning obligations process and Local Council/Government investment.
31. Anticipated progress and funding for the agreed schemes is summarised in the table below detailing more than £18m investment in the South of the Borough over the next two years.

Scheme	Estimated Cost	Funding	Completion	Notes
A19/A174 Parkway I/C including partial dualling of Parkway Extension	£7.8m	Highways Agency Pinch Point	Dec 2014	Work commenced 19 May 2014
A174 Avro Anson Roundabout	£1.5m	UK Land	Dec 2014	Slipped from June 2014 completion due to redesign.
A174/A1044 Thornaby Road Congestion Relief scheme	£3.3m	DfT Local Pinch Point	Spring 2015	Work commenced 4 Aug 2014
Quarry Farm Roundabout	£1.1m	Persimmon	Winter 2014/15	SBC/LTP funding for Pedestrian crossings
Myton Way/Ingleby Way dualling	£4.3m	Persimmon LGF grant/loan	Spring 2016	£106 contributions to repay LGF loan
A66 Teesside Park Reprofiting	£0.9m	LGF grant	Sept 2016	Safeguarding over 1000 jobs
TOTAL	£18.9m			

32. In addition to creating this new capacity, having a highway network that is well maintained will contribute towards effective movement of traffic on the network.
33. Cabinet considered the report at its meeting on 9th October 2014 and a copy of the relevant minute extract is attached to the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

34. The feasibility work in respect of the river crossing at Preston Park and the leisure facility for the South of the Borough estimated at £35,000 and £175,000 respectively will be funded from the £300,000 earmarked for such studies as part of the 2014/15 budget report.
35. The additional investment of £150,000 in Yarm Library and the improvements to car parking at Preston Park will be funded from the £5,590,000 earmarked for infrastructure as part of the 2014/15 budget report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

36. The planned investment on key infrastructure identified in this report will be subject to legal procedures on a project by project basis and these will be identified as individual elements are considered in any final funding decisions.

RISK ASSESSMENT

37. Infrastructure investment is categorised as low risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Regeneration and Transport

38. The development and enhancement of key road infrastructure plays a key role in supporting growth in the economy and housing provision.

Children and Young People

39. Investment in education, leisure and green space facilities is key to ensuring the borough's children and young people have the very best opportunities.

Healthier Communities and Adults

40. Additional leisure provision and access to key facilities such as Preston Park enable communities to maximise their opportunities for sport and recreation.

Environment and Housing

41. In recognising the growth in housing through private sector investment and affordable provision it is essential that key facilities are provided through developer obligations and the Council's community leadership to ensure a sustainable environment is provided for our residents.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

42. This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment because final investment decisions will be subject to further consideration by Cabinet where more detailed specifics will be included.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

43. The consultation process with Ward Members in the south of the borough will commence as the component parts of the investment strategy begin in their own right.

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Education related?

Yes

Background Papers

February 2014 Council's Medium Term Financial Plan report to Cabinet and Council

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

All

Property

N/A