



**Corporate Policy &
Resources Committee**

**Thursday, 29 September
2022**

Subject: Levelling Up Parks Fund

Report by:	Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Contact Officer:	Grant White Enterprising Communities Manager grant.white@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To seek approval to make a submission to the Levelling Up Parks Fund to deliver new and improved green space in Gainsborough.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the submission of a project proposal to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in line with the details set out in section 3.**
- 2. That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the expenditure of the Levelling Up Parks Fund and associated project resources as set out in section 4.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The Council will be required to contract with a design team and construction contractor to deliver the works. Contractors will be procured in line with procurement regulations and contracts will be issued with appropriate legal support.

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial :

FIN/87/23/CPR/JA

Funding of £85,000 is available to be spent by 5th April 2023.

The funding breakdown consists of:

1. Up to £47,500 capital for the creation of improvement to an existing park
2. Up to £18,500 revenue for project preparation, creation and maintenance
3. Up to £19,000 'tree uplift' for tree planting and related costs.

In addition, £15,000 of resources are required to cover Project Management to ensure the project is delivered and all stakeholders are comprehensively engaged. This will be provided as WLDC match funding and funded from the Business Planning Budget

(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref

Staffing : HR181-9-22

Having reviewed existing staff resource it is clear that there is no available resource to deliver this work in house. Land Property and Growth Board will oversee the project, with support from the Director Planning, Regeneration and Communities. The Change Management Team will provide light touch governance input.

The resource budget will be utilised to fund project management resource – estimated to be required at 1 day per week on average over a 30 week period (to allow for post project reporting). This additional resource will report to the Communities Manager.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

An equality impact assessment will be completed on the final project proposal to ensure that the needs of all members of our community are considered.

Data Protection Implications :

WLDC are required to agree to the terms of the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

The creation and enhancement of improved quality green spaces in an urban area will directly contribute towards the Council's Sustainability, Climate Change and Environment Strategy. The works will include planting of trees within an urban area.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

Creating a safe green space is a key consideration and primary aim of this work. Opportunities for natural surveillance together with formal surveillance will be considered as part of the scheme design.

Health Implications:

This fund offers the opportunity to improve access to quality green space in an urban area of Gainsborough which has been identified as lacking green space. The benefits to both physical and mental well-being of access to the outdoors and green space are significant.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

Levelling Up Parks Fund Prospectus - [Levelling Up Parks Fund: Prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Risk Assessment :

Not applicable

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

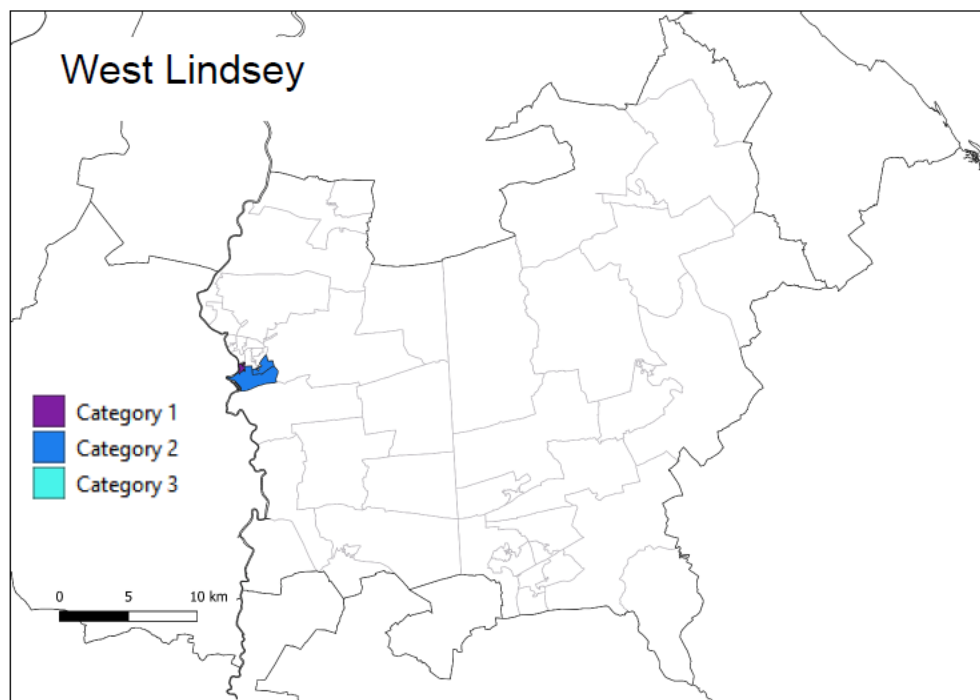
- 1.1 On 1st August 2022 the Government launched the Levelling Up Parks Fund as part of it's mission to level up people's pride in the places they love. The fund is designed to improve both the equality of access and quality of green space in over 100 neighbourhoods across the UK.
- 1.2 The fund has identified the 100+ places that are most in need of quality green space. This has been based upon an assessment of access to quality green space against the Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- 1.3 West Lindsey has been included on the list of eligible places. This fund is not competitive. Eligible places will receive a grant of £85,000 for the creation of a new or significantly refurbished urban green space.

2. Eligible Places Criteria

- 2.1 The government have utilised a data set known as Lower Super Output areas (LSOAs) to determine eligibility. All places in the UK are split into LSOAs – which are small areas with a population of between 1000 and 1500 people.
- 2.2 To be eligible for this fund a local council area must contain LSOAs that are in the top 2 deciles of the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation and have less than 5% of their area near an accessible green space; and
 - i) are among the 300 most deprived neighbourhoods in England (Category 1)
 - ii) have less than 5% 'green cover' (Category 2)
 - iii) have more than 5% 'green cover' (Category 3)
- 2.3 The following three LSOA's in Gainsborough were identified by government as being in the priority category.

LSOA code	2011 Green cover percentage	Category	Description
E01026383	1.01	1	River Trent to Sandsfield Lane – inc Trent Street to Stanley Street
E01026382	0.02	2	River Trent – Carr Lane – Thorndike Way inc Sandfield Rd open space up Foxby Lane
E01026375	0.12	2	Middlefield Lane inc Park Springs to Somerby Way

2.4 The map below was provided by government and shows the LSOAs.



2.5 Whilst local councils do not have to use the fund to improve parks and green spaces in the LSOAs identified, it is strongly recommended that the identified neighbourhoods are prioritised.

3. Project Proposal

3.1 Given the clearly identified priority area within Gainsborough, a strategic review of existing evidence that incorporates open space, green space and play provision has been undertaken. This has included the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted Local Plan. Across this evidence base, there are undoubtedly a number of sites that have been identified as in need of improvement.

3.2 At this present time the site that stands out as one which provides an opportunity for improvement within the time frames required and is located within the priority neighbourhoods themselves is Scouts Hill, Sandsfield Lane.

APPENDIX 1 – Scout’s Hill Site Plan

3.3 In summer 2022, Benjamin Adlard Primary School secured funds from The Mercers’ Company and invested in a series of community engagement sessions looking at improving their own green spaces. The study concluded that the opportunity for improving access to green space for pupils of the school and the wider community actually lays in considering the sites in and around the school land in a strategic and planned manner.

- 3.4 Land in the ownership of WLDC at Scouts Hill was previously a children's play area and football pitch. The site was subject to vandalism and in recent years all assets such as play equipment and changing rooms were removed from the site.
- 3.5 In utilising the opportunity of the Levelling Up Parks Fund there is potential to return some of this space into use as a valuable green space for the community.
- 3.6 Details of the types of works that can be achieved within the funding envelope are still being developed. It is likely this could include improved natural walking routes, creation of level grassed open space and enhanced lighting and CCTV. Tree planting is a key element of the funding and would need to be designed as part of this work.
- 3.7 Further work with all key stakeholders is needed to inform a final proposal. This would build on the work already completed by the school and broaden the reach to ensure that all Ward Members and other third sector and community stakeholders are engaged.
- 3.8 Where funding criteria allows, officers will also explore the opportunities to enhance and improve green pocket spaces located in the identified LSOAs. Examples of this would include smaller patches of green space located at the end of terrace streets. This type of green space improvement will have a direct impact on households that do not have access to gardens or nearby park spaces.
- 3.9 Officers are joining national workshop sessions being delivered by Groundwork and Fields in Trust who are providing advice, guidance and support to Local Authorities accessing this funding. The series of workshops begin in late September 2022 and are designed to support councils with their final proposals.

4. Resources

- 4.1 DLUHC will make £85,000 of funding available to WLDC through a Section 31 grant.

This funding is broken down as follows:

1. Up to £47,500 capital for the creation of improvement to an existing park
 2. Up to £18,500 revenue for project preparation, creation and maintenance
 3. Up to £19,000 'tree uplift' for tree planting and related costs.
- 4.2 In addition to the funding, Keep Britain Tidy are in place to undertake a site visit and assessment, which is designed to support Council's to

develop their final proposals. This will also be supplemented by workshops and capacity building to be run by DLHUC.

- 4.3 The project will be governed through the Council's Project Office, with Land Property and Growth Board having operational oversight feeding into Portfolio Board.
- 4.4 Additional Project Management capacity will be required to deliver this project in line with the governments time frames. An initial estimate of 30 days of time between October and May (to allow for project snagging and evaluation) has been made. It is estimated this may cost up to £500 per day so an allowance of £15,000 is suggested. This is to be funded from the Business Planning Budget

5. Timescales

- 5.1 The Levelling Up Parks Fund has been designed to be a flexible fund that provides local authorities with autonomy over site selection and project proposals.
- 5.2 Council's were asked to 'Opt In' to receive the funds by 2nd September and West Lindsey's 'Opt In' submission was made by the deadline.
- 5.3 Council's are now required to submit a project proposal form to the Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities by 3rd October 2022. It is envisaged that this would swiftly be followed by the issue of a Memorandum of Understanding to be agreed asap with grant monies to be paid via Section 31 agreement.
- 5.4 All spend must be completed within this financial year – end date 5th April 2023.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the submission of a project proposal to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in line with the details set out in section 3.
- 6.2 That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the expenditure of the Levelling Up Parks Fund and associated project resources as set out in section 4.