

Cabinet

19 June 2023

Agenda item:

Wards: All

Civic Pride Programme (reserve fund allocations)

Lead officers:

Lucy Owen, Executive Director for Housing and Sustainable Development

Dan Jones, Executive Director for Environment, Civic Pride and Climate

Lead member:

Councillor Eleanor Stringer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Civic Pride

Contact officers:

Paul McGarry, Head of Future Merton

Sarah Xavier, Business and Economy Manager, Future Merton

Recommendations:

- A. That Cabinet agree the Civic Pride programme funding allocations.
- B. That Cabinet note that a proportion of the programme remains unallocated in order to respond to in-year ad-hoc projects.
- C. That Cabinet agree that any in-year funding requests are delegated for decision by the Executive Director, in discussion with the Cabinet Member.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report seeks cabinet's approval of the attached Civic Pride: High Streets, programme of activities recommended for the Civic Pride reserves fund for spend in 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26. The list of allocations in appendix 1.
- 1.2. On 21st March 2023, CMT reviewed the draft programme allocations and agreed funding for the Mitcham Town Centre Management and Mitcham Market workstreams as a key priority for Members.
- 1.3. On 16th May, CMT agreed the attached programme which has been refined in discussion with the Cabinet Member and Leader. The attached programme highlights in bold, which projects directly align with Cabinet priorities whilst the rest of the programme is supported subject to Cabinet approval.
- 1.4. Members have requested that the programme is not fully allocated to leave headroom for in-year bids and ad-hoc requested that may arise. (such as

community events or responding to changes in town centres) The programme provides a measure of contingency / unallocated reserves to respond to ad-hoc requests.

- 1.5. Cabinet are asked to agree that in-year funding requests are delegated for decision by the Executive Director in discussion with the Cabinet Member, commensurate to existing levels of financial authority.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. On 27th June 2022, Cabinet resolved to allocate £2m reserve towards Civic Pride activities as an emerging priority for the administration. Officers have developed an outline programme of projects with the Cabinet Member for Civic Pride and Leader of the Council; for delivery over the next three years.
- 2.2. All projects seek to build a greater sense of civic pride in Merton through a range of initiatives focussed on supporting high streets and the local economy, promoting community events and investing in the look-and-feel (beautification) of neighbourhoods and borough gateways, dovetailing with other CIL and Capital funded investments throughout the borough.
- 2.3. Appendix 1 sets out the draft £2m Civic Pride programme allocations. Priority projects are highlighted in bold; focussed on Mitcham town centre and Mitcham carnival that required immediate resource already approved by CMT.
- 2.4. Appendix 1 also sets out draft programmes for allocated Capital funding related to Civic Pride. These are:
- £3m Civic Pride Capital: Public Realm Enhancements
 - £1.5m Civic Pride Capital: Shopping Parade Enhancements
- 2.5. Similar to the Civic Pride reserves, these programmes have been developed in conjunction with Councillors and align with civic pride, CIL projects and broader regeneration ambitions. Costings for the capital projects have been reviewed due to current cost-price inflation. The refined programme is attached for cabinet to formalise the allocations.

Example Projects

- 2.6. To give a flavour of the types of projects that the Civic Pride programme will deliver to support our high streets and improve the look and feel of the borough; some recent examples are noted overleaf.

2.7. Leopold Road: New paving, trees, planters, shopfront de-cluttering.



2.8.

After



2.9.

Before

2.10. Colliers Wood High Street: Shopfront enhancements



2.11.

After



Before

2.12. Wimbledon Chase

2.13. Tree planting, re-paving, flowerbeds



2.14.

After



2.15.

Before

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. The council could continue with the current approach to high street regeneration which focuses on promoting development through the planning system, working with partners and driving forward enhancements via CIL funded shopfront improvements. This option does not provide direct business support, management of events or custodianship and promotion of our town centres at present.

3.2. This report sets out a co-ordinated programme of investment to improve the local environment for our local high streets which dovetail with existing CIL allocations.

4 TIMETABLE

- 4.1. The funding has already been agreed by Cabinet in June 2022. This report provides the detail of projects to be included in the programme. Delivery of projects will be undertaken on a rolling programme through to 2025/26.

5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The allocation of budgets for the £2m Civic Pride reserve, £3m Civic Pride Public Realm (Capital) and £1.5m Civic Pride Shopping Parade Enhancements (Capital) Have all been approved by Cabinet and Full Council as part of the budget setting process.
- 5.2. The individual projects within these allocations are draft, subject to approval by Cabinet.

6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None for the purpose of this report

7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. None for the purpose of this report

8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None in relation to this report

9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None in relation to this report

10 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- 10.1. Appendix 1
- Civic Pride (Reserves) proposals
 - Civic Pride Public Realm (Capital) proposals
 - Civic Pride Shopping Parade (Capital) proposals

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1. Cabinet Papers 27th June 2022: allocation of Civic Pride Reserves (item 7) <https://democracy.merton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MeetingId=4181>

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