



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
Ext: 7655
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**To: COUNCILLOR MARTIN GODDARD
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

**COUNCILLOR EDDIE LAVERY
CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICE**

c.c. All Members of the Residents' Services Select Committee
c.c. Dragana Knezevic, Place
c.c. Perry Scott, Corporate Director of Place

Date: 9 September 2022

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT (June 2022)

DEPARTMENT: Resident Services

SERVICE AREA / PROGRAMME: Environmental & Recreational Initiatives: Creation of Wildlife Corridor at Spider Park

Dear Cabinet Members

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such, the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Monday 19 September 2022** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied, and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Anisha Teji
Democratic Services Officer

Title of Report: Environmental & Recreational Initiatives: Creation of Wildlife Corridor at Spider Park

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed Date.....
Cabinet Member for Finance / Cabinet Member for Residents' Services

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT (June 2022)

DEPARTMENT: Resident Services

SERVICE AREA / PROGRAMME: Environmental & Recreational Initiatives: Creation of Wildlife Corridor at Spider Park

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Martin Goddard Councillor Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Finance Cabinet Member for Residents' Services
Officer Contact(s)	Dragana Knezevic, Place
Papers with report	Appendix A, with capital release requests for approval
Summary	To seek release of £41k funds towards the creation of a wildlife corridor in Spider Park.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of <i>Our Natural Environment and Strong financial management</i> .
Financial Cost	This report seeks the release of £41k for the creation of wildlife corridor at Spider Park, inclusive of £36k grant from the GLA Rewild London Fund.
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services
Relevant Ward(s)	South Ruislip

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services approve the capital release request of £41k budget comprising £36k Rewild London Fund grant and £5k revenue contribution for the creation of a wildlife corridor at Spider Park (Appendix A).

PLEASE NOTE: Appendix A is attached to the decision request form so that the Cabinet Member can indicate for each scheme whether project approval is granted and return it to Democratic Services for publication.

Reasons for recommendation

The project will transform over 2 hectares of monotonous, amenity grassland into a species rich hay meadow, providing multiple benefits, not only for overall biodiversity, but for aesthetic value and public enjoyment. Chosen areas of grassland will be left to grow on a hay cut regime, with hay removed from site in late summer.

In addition, 8,000 tree whips will be planted to create woodland copses which would provide an additional new habitat for wildlife to thrive, transforming this site into a tranquil place.

The project will include coppicing and pollarding mature crack willows, which will allow more light to penetrate riverbanks, whilst woodchip will be used for mulching new trees.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet Members may agree to fund the scheme and / or suggest alternative projects to which funds could be allocated within the terms of the relevant legal agreements.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This report is seeking the allocation of funding for Spider Park wildlife corridor. The table below outlines the project plan and timescales.

Project plan			
Milestone	Actions	Due Date	Comments
Environment agency consent	Contractors to apply for the consent	Apr2022	EA consent needed for application of Glyphosate herbicide on water. This has now been received
Creation of wildflower meadows	Contractors	Jul -Oct 2022	
Himalayan balsam removal	Volunteers and LBH officer	Jul 2022	
Creation of swales	Contractors	Sep 2022	
Glyphosate treatment of invasive non-native species in the pond	Contractors	Jul- Aug 2022	
Planting wetland plants	Greenspaces team working with volunteers and social enterprise	Sep 2022	Organise volunteering days
Tree planting	TCV charity	Oct 2022- Mar 2023	Charity, LBH officers working with volunteers
Installation of bird/bat boxes	Contractors and volunteers	Mar 2023	

The works will be undertaken by:

- Complete Weed control - Council contracted supplier
- Red Squirrel - Council contracted supplier
- JSA - Council contracted supplier
- The Forward Trust - Council contracted supplier
- The Conservation Trust (TCV) - Community volunteering charity, worked with LBH on several projects

The table below provides a breakdown of the costs:

Cost Plan

Description	Amount
Plants	£17,000
Tree planting (TCV)	£6,650
Willow Pollarding	£7,000
Ground preparation	£3,000
Eradicating Phragmites and planting wetland plants, creation of scrapes	£3,500
Bird/bat boxes and monitoring equipment	£350
Contingency	£3,000
Total	£40,500

Financial Implications

(Spider Park Wildlife Corridor Budget £41k, Previously Released Nil, Capital Release Requested £41k) – Appendix A

In April 2022, Cabinet accepted £36k grant funding from the Rewild London Fund for the creation of a wildlife corridor at Spider Park. Match funding of £5k is required to supplement the grant funding and this is proposed to come from a revenue contribution from the Green Spaces budget.

The report seeks the release of £41k for the creation of the wildlife corridor at Spider Park, to be funded from £36k Rewild London Fund grant funding and £5k revenue contribution. The release request includes some quotations from the green spaces term contractors and the remainder are based on estimates, where quotations will be sought at a later date.

The project will be reported as part of the Environmental and Recreation Initiatives Programme once capital release is approved.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The Council and its partners are committed to making the Borough a cleaner, greener and safer environment. Feel PROUD aims to make residents aware of how they can join forces with the Council and have their say on improving the area they live in and boosting their pride in being a Hillingdon resident.

Improving existing habitats in this narrow Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) section and creating a buffer zone with new habitats in the adjacent fields will increase the wildlife value of the site and benefit the whole corridor. The project will create a more varied and positive use of the land, increasing the site's overall biodiversity and ecological resilience, whilst retaining a peaceful place for people to relax and enjoy.

This project is consistent with Hillingdon's Strategic Climate Change Action Plan:

"Responding to the climate emergency is not just about reducing or removing carbon emissions. It is about recognising a much wider threat across all aspects of our environment. We are responsible for large sections of open areas and waterways that are an extremely important for wildlife and amenity for residents. We can find better ways to use green and open space to support flora and fauna, manage flooding, integrate trees and planting schemes into urban environments and re-establish wildlife corridors."

C7 Carbon offsetting

C7.4 Understand and increase current carbon sequestration through increased planting and changes to green space management.

C7.5 Increase the number of trees, particularly in urban areas to complement objectives to improve air quality and promote urban wildlife.

C7.6 To exploit opportunities to increase carbon sequestration to maximise opportunities for biodiversity and flood risk management.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance concurs with the financial implications set out above, noting that this project is largely funded from external grant of £36k that has recently been awarded from the Rewild London Fund administered by the GLA.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the Council is responsible for carrying out its function pursuant to Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Thus, there are no legal impediments to the capital release being authorised, although any contract that is entered into must comply with the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

There are no Infrastructure / Asset Management implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Capital Release Protocol

The release of all capital funds, and certain revenue funds, held by the Council is to be made by a formal democratic decision. No expenditure can be placed or committed by officers until this formal approval is given by Democratic Services. Release of funds must be for identified projects only and strictly not for the general release of funds for projects to be identified at a later date. No

block releases of capital or funding will be allowed, except if authorised by the Leader of the Council in advance to Corporate Finance. The release of funds will only be made if previous Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Member agreement has been given to the project and only if there is an approved budget.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

CAPITAL RELEASE APPENDIX A

Creation of Wildlife Corridor at Spider Park

Location (Ward)	Project / Expenditure Title	Information	Funds Release Sought £000's	Approve	Hold	More Information Required
South Ruislip	Spider Park wildlife corridor		41			
Total seeking release			41			
Previously released			0			
Budget			41			
Remaining budget			0			