
Report To: Environment & Regeneration Committee **Date:** 1 May 2014

Report By: Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources **Report No:** R325/14/AP/AG

Contact Officer: Alan Puckrin **Contact No:** 01475 712762

Subject: February 2014 Budget- Approved Projects

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise the Committee of the proposals for projects funded from free reserves approved as part of the February 2014 budget and not reported elsewhere.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 At its meeting on 20th February 2014 the Council agreed its budget for 2014/16. This included proposals for projects funded from free reserves. This report details proposals for projects which fall within the remit of this Committee which are not being reported separately.

2.2 These proposals are as follows

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Play Areas | £150,000 |
| • Toilet at Walled Garden, Gourock Park | £ 40,000 |
| • Roads Defects | £500,000 |

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the proposals for play areas as detailed in section 5.

3.2 It is recommended that the Committee note the proposals for the modular toilet at Gourock Park Walled Garden.

3.3 It is recommended that the Committee endorse the proposed key actions outlined in section 7 to improve the performance in the area of roads defects management and note that updates on progress will be reported twice yearly to Committee through the Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan.

3.4 It is recommended that the Committee grant delegated authority to the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services to adopt all or part of the proposals highlighted in section 7 of this report to deliver improvements in the overall performance in the management of roads defects and to ensure full spend of the additional funds earmarked for pothole defects, conventional patching and minor drainage works within the period 2014/16.

Alan Puckrin
Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 At its meeting on 20th February 2014 the Council agreed its budget for 2014/16. This included proposals for projects funded from free reserves. This report details proposals for projects which fall within the remit of this Committee which are not being reported separately.

5.0 PLAY AREAS

5.1 Background

Birkmyre Park, Port Glasgow: A project is due to commence on the site of the ex-bowling greens to landscape it and bring it back into public use, at present it is in a dilapidated condition. The project is funded from an earmarked reserves budget. During the public consultation exercise it became clear that a play area should be included in the project design, although no specific funds had been included in the original project estimate. The tender has been returned and is £31,000 over budget, the added play area element is the reason for the extra cost. The value of the play area element of the project is £50,000.

The play area strategy does not flag up a gap in play provision in this area, this is because the play area in Coronation Park is a large play area and is within half a mile of Birkmyre Park as the crow flies. Coronation Park is not a local play area that young children are expected to walk to on their own, especially given that the main trunk road and busy town centre roads would have to be negotiated and crossed in order to reach it. The play area in Birkmyre Avenue is also less than half a mile from Birkmyre Park and as such contributes to play provision within the half mile locale, but this coverage is in the main to the west of the park. Excluding Coronation Park play area for the reasons stated, then there is a gap in provision to the east of Birkmyre Park which the proposed new play area in the park would contribute to dealing with.

Battery Park, Greenock: Both play areas in the park are the most frequented in the district, but they are also now quite old. The park is one of two sites which the play area strategy records as being a destination play area – as opposed to a local or neighbourhood site. It is known that local and not so local nurseries and playgroups bring groups of children to Battery Park to play in the play areas; groups of children from as far afield as Glasgow visit the park.

Modern play area design is such that the majority of children with disabilities can use the district's new play areas. However, some disabled children have to use a wheelchair and at present none of the play units in play areas are specifically designed for children who have to use a wheelchair. There are some play units on the market designed specifically for use by children who use wheelchairs. The lack of wheelchair specific play equipment requires to be addressed as regards Battery Park.

Ashton Promenade, Gourock: There is a small play area on the promenade which houses only a single multi-play unit and as such is not recorded as a designated local play area because it does not meet the standard for the minimum number of play units. There is some limited scope for expansion on the site and there is a recorded gap of play provision in the west/southwest of Gourock, but no other available sites in the locale that could be used for a new play area. Five units is the number required to meet the minimum standard, but this particular site even when expanded sideways is probably not suited to more than three units in total.

5.2 Proposals

It is proposed to allocate £35,000 towards the cost of constructing a new play area in

Birkmyre Park, Port Glasgow. The sum includes £4,000 to provide replacement litter bins on the route to and from the new play area.

It is proposed to allocate £95,000 to renew play units in Battery Park, including the installation of play equipment that can be played on by children who use wheelchairs.

It is proposed to allocate £20,000 to expand the play area on Ashton Promenade.

6.0 GOUROCK PARK WALLED GARDEN TOILET

6.1 Background

Gourock Park is a well used facility, particularly the Walled Garden area and Pets Corner. The lack of toilet facilities has been commented on by park users and it is desirable to remedy this.

6.2 Proposals

It is proposed to erect a small modular toilet unit comprising one male toilet, one female toilet and one disabled toilet. This will be located on the existing hardstanding adjacent to the wall to Broomberry Drive.

7.0 ROADS DEFECTS

7.1 Background

The Roads Asset Management Strategy approved on 30 August 2012 acknowledged the need for further investment in the revenue budget for routine reactive and cyclic maintenance to run in tandem with the capital programme works. It was highlighted in the Roads Asset Management Strategy that spend on reactive maintenance would only fall once the condition of the network improved substantially.

Good routine maintenance of the network includes drainage work; including ditches and gullies clearing which if done on a planned basis will contribute to prolonging the life of a carriageway by keeping water out of the structure. Where roads are of evolved construction this is of particular importance as they are unlikely to incorporate designed drainage systems to remove ground and surface water from the highway structure.

With the lack of national benchmarking information available across all defect categories, Environmental & Commercial Services have adopted the guidance in Well Maintained Highways to set internal performance targets as set in the Environmental, Regeneration & Resources Directorate Improvement Plan (CDIP). At present there is only one national performance measure, where the percentage of Category 1 defects made safe with response times are measured within family groups.

The Council's current procedures for road safety inspections are broken down into three categories of defects with targeted response times to repair. The categories and response times listed below are based on guidance contained within the Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management "Well-Maintained Highways".

- Category 1 defects: Emergency defects should be corrected or made safe at the time of inspection where this is practicable; where this is not possible such defects should be repaired, or a temporary or permanent basis, within 48 hours. For example, a pothole with a depth of greater than 40mm on a Strategic Route.
- Category 2 defects: Repair within 5 working days. For example, a pothole with a depth of greater than 50mm on a Local Access Road.

- Category 3 defects: Repair within 28 days. For example, a pothole with a depth of less than 50mm on a Local Access Road.

7.2 Proposals

The list below is a summary of actions that is being considered by roads officers to make improvements in the overall performance in the management of roads defects.

- A minimum of three defect teams will operate at all times (weather permitting); this has the benefit of maintaining a presence in the each of the three operation areas (East, West and Central, refer map), with each team under the control of the local Area Roads Inspector.
- The additional funding will supplement the existing revenue allocation and will be targeted to defect repairs, especially potholes, with the emphasis on meeting the specified target time for repairs. Performance will be closely monitored and reported to senior management during this period.
- A review of staffing arrangements within the Roads Trading Organisation with a view to include the potential establishment of a two person drainage squad.
- In line with the above conduct a review of the use of internal labour v external contractors for all or part of defect repair management, with a view to determining the best value approach for Inverclyde Council.
- A review of the Roads maintenance hierarchy to determine the frequency and response times for pothole repairs.
- A review of pothole categorisation, repair type (temporary and permanent) and response times based on the above.
- Review of internal targets and improve Inverclyde's performance on the approved national indicator index.
- Development of an inspection manual to assist the roads inspectors determine how defects are to be assessed and determine appropriate response times.
- Preparation of an outline business case for the implementation of a dedicated electronic Roads Integrated Management System; the aim would be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of whole defect management from defect notification/identification through to implementation of a permanent repair. A Roads Integrated Management System would replace the existing management database which is beyond its useful life as noted above.
- Revise customer satisfaction survey and defect reporting mechanisms.
- Work in collaboration with other Authorities to share best practice in roads defect management.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
Earmarked Reserves	Play Areas	2014/16	150		
Earmarked	Gourock	2014/15	40		

Reserves	Park toilet				
Earmarked Reserves	Roads Defects	2014/16	500		

Revenue Costs

In respect of the roads defects proposals increased investment in roads defects should reduce the number of claims for damage caused by pot holes being received by the Council.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect From	Annual Net Impact	Virement From	Other Comments
Environmental & Commercial Services	Public conveniences	2014/15	5		Funded from the Revenue Impacts of Capital investment budget

9.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

- 9.1 In respect of the Roads Defects Proposals following a detailed review of staffing arrangements within the Roads Trading Organisation there may be an opportunity to recruit additional staff on a temporary basis to deliver traditional pot hole and patching works and the formation of a drainage ditching squad, with a specific reference to utilising modern apprentices or future jobs fund staff.
- 9.2 There are no Human Resources implications in respect of the Play Area or Gourrock Park proposals.

10.0 LEGAL

- 10.1 There are no legal implications in the report.

11.0 EQUALITIES

- 11.1 The provision of play equipment specifically designed for disabled children at Battery Park specifically addresses a lack of facilities for children in wheelchairs. The Gourrock Park toilet proposal includes a toilet for the disabled.

12.0 REPOPULATION

- 12.1 The improvement of the roads infrastructure in Inverclyde will contribute to the Council's repopulation agenda. The provision of a toilet at Gourrock park walled Garden and improvements to Play Areas contribute to making Inverclyde a more attractive place to live.

13.0 CONSULTATION

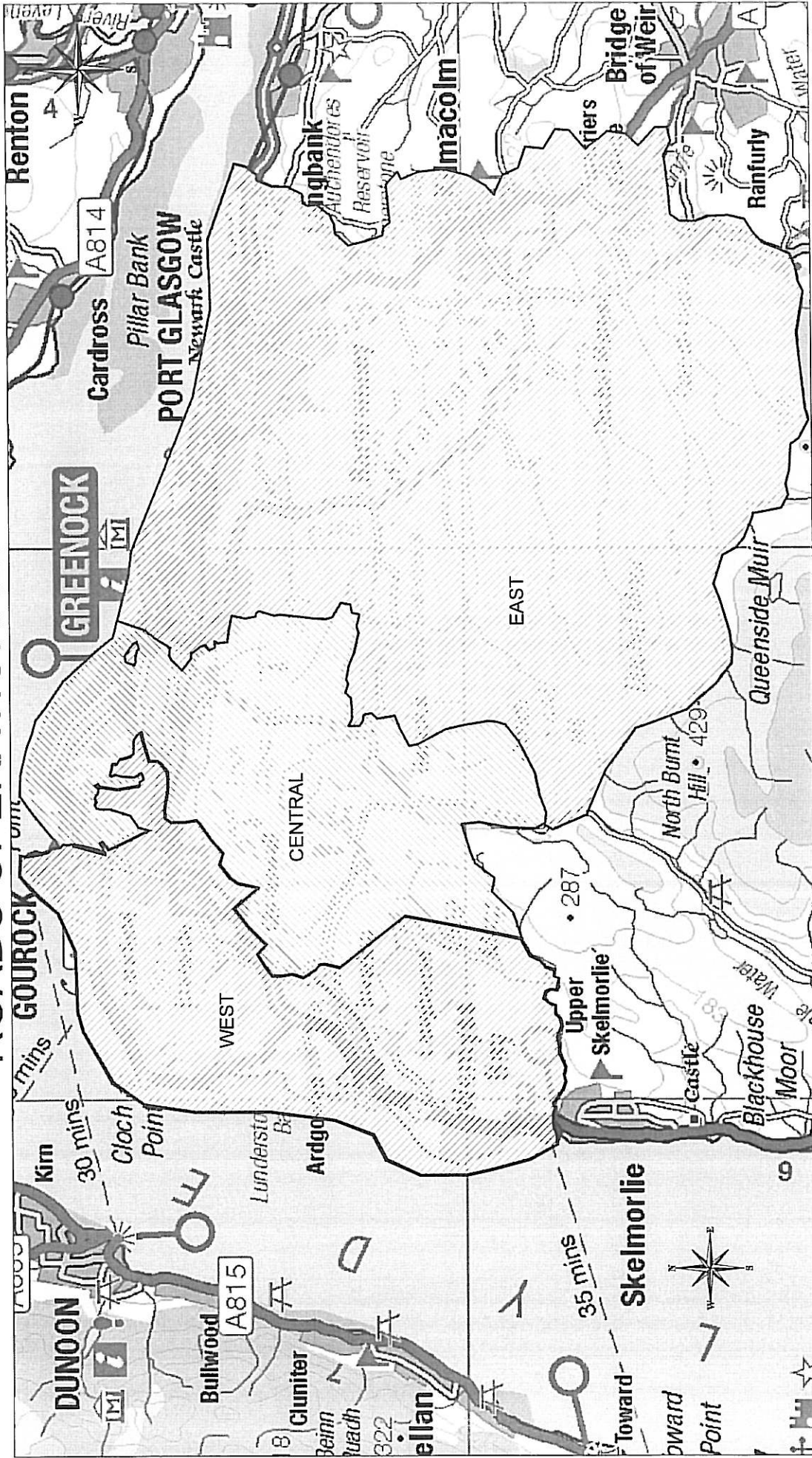
- 13.1 The Head of Finance has been consulted and is in agreement with the recommendations.

- 13.2 The Head of Legal and Property Services has been consulted and is in agreement with the recommendations.
- 13.3 The Acting Head of Organisational Development, HR and Communications has been consulted and is in agreement with the recommendations.

14.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 None

ROADS OPERATIONAL AREAS



Inverclyde
council

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