



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday 5th February 2024

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. **Meeting Date:** Monday 8th January 2024

Agenda Item: 8. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Gloucester Urban Greening Project

Request(s):

- 1) For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive further details around the issues experienced with the contractor (3.1 in the report).
- 2) To provide further information to Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members around how water quality in Gloucester is measured and who is responsible. (3.4 and 3.6 in the report)
- 3) To provide further clarification about how social value considerations are calculated/quantified by the Council.
- 4) To provide an update on any ongoing work at Plock Court nature reserve and the wetland extension.

Update(s):

- 1) The issues related to a contract to construct a wetland in Barnwood Park. The City Council were concerned that waste management at the site had not happened correctly or as per the specification. The contractor was unable to provide any evidence (which they should have had) to support that they had followed the correct procedures. As a result, the contract was terminated and the new contracts for outstanding works were drawn up with other contractors. This led to project delays.
- 2) No direct measurements are taken and the ERDF makes no provision for measuring water quality or urban cooling. It would be very difficult to take measurements that could then be directly related back to the works carried out. However, the reported benefits are delivered by virtue of the fact that the

interventions have delivered and evidence suggests that these interventions lead to specific benefits.

For example, in respect of water quality:

' ... SuDS components provide water quality improvements by reducing sediment and contaminants from runoff either through settlement or biological breakdown of pollutants. This can improve the quality of downstream water bodies such as streams, rivers, lakes, bathing or shellfish waters.

Furthermore, where SuDS reduce flows entering combined sewers, this can lead to reduced combined sewer overflow discharges (controlled discharge of surface water runoff and sewage), again improving the quality of the receiving water body. Such water quality improvements (or prevention of deterioration) can lead to a number of benefits including aesthetic, health (e.g. reduced risk of infection from bathing) or enhanced recreation and opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity'

(CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association) - the nationally recognised leading, independent and not-for-profit body on SuDS)

Regarding urban cooling:

'Urban green and blue infrastructure, including urban forests and street trees, permeable surfaces, and green roofs offer potential to mitigate climate change directly through sequestering and storing carbon, and indirectly by inducing a cooling effect that reduces energy demand and reducing energy use for water treatment.'

(IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change))

- 3) The Council's Social Value Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) have been circulated to Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members, which provide further information about how social value activity is calculated.
- 4) Separate to the ERDF project, external funding has been obtained to extend the Plock Court wetland. Part 1 of the consultation process (conducting questionnaires on site with users of the space) has been undertaken. Part 2 of the consultation (inviting users of the space to comment via site information boards) is due to take place shortly. Construction is due to take place in the summer of 2024.

Local Councillors have been involved in preliminary discussions and will continue to be involved throughout. Partners include the LLFA (County Council) and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

