WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	**Executive Committee** **8th March 2017**	**Agenda Item No.** **11**

Title	St Mary's Lands Delivery Plan for 2017/18
For further information about this report please contact	Chris Elliott e-mail: chris.elliott@warwickdc.gov.uk Tel No 01926 456003
Wards of the District directly affected	Aylesford, Warwick
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Executive meeting 30th November 2016, min 65 Executive meeting 06th April 2016, min 132 Executive meeting 3rd September 2015, min 34 Full Council 19th November 2014, min 50 Executive meeting 1st October 2014, min 56 Executive meeting 16th April 2014, min 189 Executive meeting 11th September 2013, min 55 Executive meeting 19th June 2013, min 13 Executive meeting 12th December 2012, min 107
Background Papers	Report to Executive on 30th November 2016

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	**Date**	**Name**
Chief Executive	09/02/17	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	09/02/17	Rob Hoof, Tracy Darke, Rose Winship
CMT	09/02/17	Bill Hunt, Andy Jones
Section 151 Officer	09/02/17	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	09/02/17	Andy Jones
Finance	09/02/17	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	09/02/17	Cllr Noel Butler

Consultation & Community Engagement	
Extensive public consultation was undertaken in the development of the Delivery plan as was the St Mary's Lands Working Party which has as part of it representatives from the Racecourse, Golf Course, Racing Club Warwick, Corps of Drums, Hill Close Gardens, Town, District and County Councillors and from the Friends of St Mary's Lands. This report is about the implementation of the agreed Delivery Plan and therefore uses previous consultation feedback.	
Final Decision?	Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)	

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks funding to implement the 2017/18 element of the agreed Delivery Plan for St Mary's Lands in Warwick. This is another step toward making the area a Destination Park for the town of Warwick and indeed the District.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Executive having agreed at its meeting November 2016 to make the provisions set out below within the Delivery Plan for St Mary's Lands further agrees to fund the items listed below totalling £86,000 to be funded form the Community Projects Reserve, to be implemented in 2017/18.

1. An allocation of £18,000 to modify the existing toilets and provide a new disabled toilet and baby change facility within the Golf Centre building in return for a management agreement to provide public access to the toilets.
2. An allocation of £60,000 for complementing landscape and public realm improvements on public land, subject to the Jockey Club bringing forward proposals, at a cost in excess of £200,000, to replace its existing turnstile building at the entrance to St. Mary's Lands and undertaking their own programme of planting and building works.
3. An allocation of £8,000 to Racing Club Warwick to support modifications of toilet facilities at the club to provide public facilities for users of the proposed play area.

2.2 That authority is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Business Portfolio Holder to enter into appropriate Legal Agreements in relation to ensuring public access to WC facilities in relation to items 1 and 3 of recommendation 2.1 above.

2.3 That authority is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Business Portfolio Holder to seek any statutory or other consent, including changes to leases, in order to implement the set of recommendations above.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

3.1 At its meeting on 30th November 2016, the Executive agreed the Delivery Plan for the St Mary's Lands area of Warwick with the intention of being able to implement its vision of making it a destination park. It further agreed to fund £50,000 for 2016/17 and to consider works worth £196,000 and £60,000 in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 years as part of the respective years' budget processes.

3.2 For 2017/18 the specific recommendation was as follows:

That Executive notes that the following provisions within the Delivery Plan will be considered as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process an, where appropriate, recommendations will be included within the February 2017 report on the proposed 2017/18 General Fund Budget:

1. A potential match funding contribution (possibly as in kind) towards the cycleway improvements referred to in 2.7 above. The estimated costs of this project are £80,000 during 2017/18 and the allocation of funding is subject to receipt of a satisfactory safety audit by Sustran's technical engineers.

2. A potential allocation of £18,000 to modify the existing toilets and provide a new disabled toilet and baby change facility within the Golf Centre building in return for a management agreement to provide public access to the toilets.
3. A potential allocation of £110,000 to create an additional net 20 parking spaces at the Saltisford Brook car park, subject to consultation with residents of Bread and Meat Close, a satisfactory road safety audit of the proposals and further consideration of the emerging car parking strategy for Warwick.
4. A potential allocation of £60,000 for complementing landscape and public realm improvements, subject to the Jockey Club bringing forward proposals, at a cost in excess of £200,000, to replace its existing turnstile building at the entrance to St. Mary's Lands and undertaking their own programme of planting and building works.
5. A potential allocation of £8,000 to Racing Club Warwick to support modifications of toilet facilities at the club to provide public facilities for users of the proposed play area and the public.

3.3 The 2017/18 budget decision did not specifically allocate funding for the projects above but it did set up the Community Projects Reserve and this set of works was referred to as an example on what the Reserve may be used.

3.4 However, on further examination, item 3 of the list in paragraph 3.2 above is not likely to be able to be implemented in the next financial year (17/18) but would, if funded, come forward in the following year. This will allow sufficient time for design and consultation on the detailed scheme and confirmation of funding. In addition, allowing more time will allow the proposal to be considered in the context of a wider car parking strategy report for Warwick. Equally item 1 refers only to a match funding opportunity in kind which as yet there are no details.

3.5 The Jockey Club has now brought forward its proposals for improvements to the racecourse entrance at an estimated cost of over £200,000 which is relevant to item 4 of paragraph 3.2 above. This relates to its land held under a lease. Item 4 in paragraph 3.2 above relates to complementary measures on WDC land adjoining, which together will help create a much better overall entrance to St Mary's Lands.

3.6 It is proposed therefore that items 2, 4 and 5 of paragraph 3.2 are funded from the Community Project Reserve at a total cost of £86,000 and that item 3 (£110,000) is now considered as part of the budget process for 2018/19 or as part of a wider car park strategy report for Warwick. This will further enable the Council to demonstrate its commitment to fulfilling the vision for St Marys Lands.

3.7 In respect of the proposals to facilitate improvements to locally based WC facilities at Racing Club Warwick and the Golf Centre, a legal agreement will be needed to ensure that public access in ensured in return for the capital works. It is proposed that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Business Portfolio Holder be delegated authority to agree such agreements.

3.8 Similarly there may be statutory and other consents (including leases) which are needed to implement this set of recommendations and the same delegation as set out in the paragraph above is proposed.

4 POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

4.1.1 The FFF Programme is designed to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Warwick District and to that end amongst other things it contains a number of significant projects. St Mary's Lands is one of the Council's key projects in the FFF Programme. Therefore, this report should be seen as the way forward for implementing one of the Council's key projects.

4.1.2 The FFF Programme has 3 strands and the impact of this report's proposals in relation to each of them is as set out below:

Service

Maintain or Improve Services – the proposals may allow for the area overall to be enhanced and more specifically enabling the existing facilities and services to continue to be operated and indeed to be enhanced.

People

Engaged and Empowered Staff – the proposals will be helpful in engagement terms as they will involve a range of staff across the Council and to empowerment since they will be helping to deliver schemes of direct benefit to the local community.

Money

Achieve and Maintain a Sustainable Balanced Budget – the proposals may help the Council in addressing its financial revenue situation via making better use of its physical assets.

4.2 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

4.2.1 The Council has approved a Sustainable Community Strategy for Warwick District (SCS) which has Prosperity as one of its five key themes. Under this theme priorities relevant to St Mary's Lands are:

- Ensuring effective promotion of the district to attract growth;
- Making better use of public assets to increase financial rewards;
- Incentivising growth of existing businesses and attracting inward investment.

To do this the Council has committed itself, among other things, to:

- Using public land/assets to stimulate growth;
- Ensuring a co-ordinated approach to inward investment.

4.2.2 The proposals are especially important to this theme given the significant impact it has on Warwick town's local economy by virtue of the numbers of visitors it could attract each year.

4.2.3 The proposals are also relevant to the SCS in respect of its Health and Well Being theme since many of the organisations' activities encourage people to participate in sporting and cultural activities, especially for younger and older people. Moreover, the SCS seeks to aid those areas of social and economic deprivation in the District to improve them to the level of the District overall.

The Forbes Estate is part of one such area of deprivation. This is also likely to aid the Council's Safer Communities work.

4.2.4 Part of St Mary's Lands is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and all of it is part of a Conservation Area. There is also a significant Listed Building (the grandstand). Hill Close Gardens immediately abut St. Mary's Lands and is a popular visitor attraction. The Gardens are Listed Grade II* on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens, making the gardens of more than local significance. Consequently, the area is important to the Council's SCS agenda relating to promoting Sustainability. No impacts are likely in respect of the SCS's Housing theme.

4.3 Local Plan

4.3.1 The Council has also agreed a strategy statement "The future and sustainable prosperity for Warwick District" which amongst other things seeks to:

- Support the growth of the local economy; and
- Maintain and promote thriving town centres.

4.3.2 The Council has determined that a spatial masterplan should be developed for St Mary's Lands via public consultation as it recognised that it is an essential community amenity that needs to receive the necessary investment to enable its attractions and operations to prosper.

4.3.3 The Local Plan - Publication Draft has a specific proposed policy for St Mary's Lands as follows:

"3.142 The Council will therefore work with the operators of the Racecourse to bring forward a Masterplan for the area which;

- *ensures the ongoing vitality and viability of the Racecourse;*
- *protects and enhances the significance of the Listed Building and Conservation Area and their setting;*
- *retains the land for public recreation;*
- *protects and enhances biodiversity within the Racecourse as well as links to the open countryside and other areas; and*
- *restricts uses to those associated with visitor accommodation, recreation, leisure and horse racing"*

This requirement picks up the non-Local Plan overall strategy for St Mary's Lands adopted in 1998 and the regeneration master plan agreed in 2004 which have both been reviewed as part of this work.

4.4 The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy

4.4.1 The Strategy highlights the need to support community football pyramid teams such as RCWFC with adjustments to facility provision where required. This is underpinned by a priority across the district to retain the number of grass pitches, improve the quality of these pitches, and provide more mini and junior pitches to meet demand now and in the future.

4.3 **Impact Assessments** – The proposals for allowing access to two sets of WC facilities in the St Mary's Lands area will facilitate easier access by all part so the community but especially the elderly, disabled and those with young children. Likewise the improvements to the public area around the access to the racecourse will enable better physical access to all.

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 The Community Projects Reserve currently has £868,000 available notwithstanding that a number of other reports on this agenda seek to draw from it. None of these works involve ongoing revenue costs for the Council.

6. Risks

6.1 The Delivery Plan reported in November 2016 had a summarised list of risks which were as follows:

Risks	Mitigations
1. Insufficient funding to deliver the proposals leading to a loss of momentum	1. The master plan is a 10-year strategy and can be phased over a number of years. The delivery plan identifies the most likely areas for external funding and can be expanded if any project moves forward. Mitigation is to provide business planning and funding support to under-pin the proposals to support individual organisations' self-funding or fund raising for their element of the master plan.
2. Loss of stakeholder support leading to potential project delays, cancellations and abortive time and costs.	2. The Working Party has continued to cooperate as a group in a highly constructive manner. Opportunities for joint working and collaboration at the operational level are beginning to develop. Continuing to facilitate the group and good communication is the key mitigation proposal.
3. Loss of community support due to emphasis on the hotel development	3. The potential hotel development is the least supported element of the master plan. The mitigation proposed is to undertake a viability assessment so an informed position can be agreed before the final master plan is signed off.
4. Planning, Highways or other statutory authorities do not support the master plan recommendations	4. The Delivery Plan has outlined the consents and approvals required and will develop dialogue with these organisations if the project moves forward.
5. Environmental impact and loss of biodiversity conflicting with other	5. Requirement to consider the environmental of the scheme,

interests.	including a range of protected species surveys to inform each project where relevant.

6.2 Of the above items, item 3 is not relevant. In respect of items 1 and 2 above, agreeing the funding as proposed will prove a significant mitigation as it will demonstrate continued commitment. In addition, the proposed legal agreements will secure partner support or they will not otherwise be implemented. Items 4 and 5 above will be managed as the specific works design progresses.

6.3 In the case of the investment in WC provision there is a risk that should either of those enterprises close, and not re open for any reason then the public access to the WC facilities could be lost. However, clearly as the freeholder of the land and property, there would be some opportunity to reopen the facilities but this would then be at the Council's ongoing cost.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The Executive could decide not to pursue any one or all of these proposals. However, given that the Executive had agreed the overall vision and the Delivery Plan, it is considered such a step would therefore not in step with its own declared policy decisions.