

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Your Fund Surrey Application – Limpfield Way Walk and Cycle Route CF110
Divisions Affected:	All / List divisions in Surrey impacted 1. Oxted Division – Cameron McIntosh
Key Decision:	No Note: This record relates to a decision which impacts solely on one division as set out above.
Reason Key:	N/A
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet/ Committee decision Cabinet 21st July 2020 Min Ref: 112/20 COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND [Item 10] Link

Summary

Award of funds following the Advisory Panel meeting held on 15th December 2021 to the following Your Fund Surrey application, as set out below:

- That **£44,000** is awarded from Your Fund Surrey to CF110 Limpfield Parish Council as a significant contribution toward the overall project cost, with the suggestion that the applicant undertake community fundraising to reach the final project total, as a demonstration of the wider community engagement and commitment to the project and its proposed benefits.
- That the funding is awarded in two tranche payments with an initial payment of **£26,000** and a second tranche payment of **£18,000**, contingent on the applicant confirming that they had raised the outstanding balance of **£4,343** prior to release of the second tranche payment.
- To request that the applicant as part of the evaluation plan considers mitigations for any possible negative environmental impacts arising from the project, including any opportunities for additional tree planting, with the support of the Greener Futures team.
- To approve an additional sum of **£5,509** to be held by SCC as contingency funding, for release only upon an evidenced request.

Details on the application for funding are set out in the Your Fund Surrey Delegated Decision Reports in Annex 1.

Decisions made

It was AGREED

Officer Recommendations in consultation with the Advisory Panel. It is recommended

that:

1. That £44,000 is award from Your Fund Surrey to CF110 Limpsfield Parish Council as a significant contribution toward the overall project cost, with the suggestion that the applicant undertake community fundraising to reach the final project total, as a demonstration of the wider community engagement and commitment to the project and its proposed benefits.
2. That the funding is awarded in two tranche payments with an initial payment of £26,000 and a second tranche payment of £18,000, contingent on the applicant confirming that they had raised the outstanding balance of £4,343 prior to release of the second tranche payment.
3. To request that the applicant as part of the evaluation plan considers mitigations for any possible negative environmental impacts arising from the project, include any opportunities for additional tree planting, with the support of the Greener Futures team.
4. To approve an additional sum of £5,509 to be held by SCC as contingency funding, for release only upon an evidenced request.

Reasons for Decisions:

These decisions are to enable expenditure from the Your Fund Surrey to be awarded to a project which have been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in Annex 1.

Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding, the project has been further considered by the Your Fund Advisory Panel.

Decisions taken by:	Marie Snelling - Executive Director of Customer and Communities
Decisions taken on:	20th December 2021
To be implemented on:	20th December 2021 (not subject to Call In)

Alternative options considered

N/A

Summary of any financial implications

This project that has been approved for funding and has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process.

Cabinet agreed in July 2020 the funding for these projects will be drawn from the £100m of capital funding allocated to Your Fund Surrey within the Capital Programme.

Cabinet agreed in July 2020 to establish a core team to manage the delivery of the fund and risks associated with it, funded from the Corporate Feasibility budget.

Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with Cllr Mark Nuti, Cabinet Member for Communities and following Your Fund Surrey Advisory panel review.

Background Documents

Exempt:

Annex 1 – Your Fund Surrey Decision Report CF110 Limpfield Way Walk and Cycle Route CF110

No



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Annex 1

Your Fund Surrey - Delegated Officer Decision Report

DATE: 16th December 2021

SUBJECT: YOUR FUND SURREY APPLICATION – Limpsfield Parish Council

PROJECT NAME: The Limpsfield Way walk and Family cycle route

CF REFERENCE: CF110

Purpose of the Report:

This report sets out the key information to the relevant decision maker on the Limpsfield Way walk and Family Cycle Route Your Fund Surrey Application for the consideration of the Your Fund Surrey (YFS) Advisory Panel.

This is to enable expenditure from the Your Fund Surrey to be awarded to projects which have been objectively scored and assessed to meet the criteria for Your Fund Surrey by Officers and further considered by the Your Fund Advisory Panel.

The vision of Your Fund Surrey (YFS) is to bring community-led and place-making projects to life, with a focus on wider community benefit that leaves a real legacy.

Recommendations:

Officer Recommendations in consultation with the Advisory Panel. It is recommended that:

1. That £44,000 is awarded from Your Fund Surrey to CF110 Limpsfield Parish Council as a significant contribution toward the overall project cost, with the suggestion that the applicant undertake community fundraising to reach the final project total, as a demonstration of the wider community engagement and commitment to the project and its proposed benefits.
2. That the funding is awarded in two tranche payments with an initial payment of £26,000 and a second tranche payment of £18000, contingent on the applicant confirming that they had raised the outstanding balance of £4,343 prior to release of the second tranche payment.
3. To request that the applicant as part of the evaluation plan considers mitigations for any possible negative environmental impacts arising from the project, including any opportunities for additional tree planting, with the support of the Greener Futures team.
4. To approve an additional sum of £5,509 to be held by SCC as contingency funding, for release only upon an evidenced request.

Reason for Recommendations

1. This application has been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in the body of this report. Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding

Executive Summary

2. This project intends to create safe and user-friendly walking and cycling routes that link the amenities between Limpsfield and Limpsfield Chart and provide an inclusive way to enjoy the local countryside and amenities. The need for better walking and cycling connections was identified during the Limpsfield Neighbourhood plan process in May 2018. Limpsfield Parish Council (PC) produced a Limpsfield Neighbourhood plan which has been adopted by Tandridge District Council. Several surveys were carried out to find out the main issues for local residents and Limpsfield PC developed policies and plans from those, the result of which is this project.
3. The project is to install information boards, waymark discs, hard copy maps, children's natural play materials, activities, and paths suitable for disabled access. The proposal includes National Trust (NT) land in Limpsfield common with NT permission. The Limpsfield way is a circular route of about 4.5 miles passing through Greensand NT woodland and open countryside, with views of the North Downs and Surrey Hills AONB. The route will be well signed with waymark discs and information boards explaining the local history, a map in both villages and online, and hard copy format. It will include children's natural play activities, designed in conjunction with partners the Friends of Limpsfield common, and suitable benches and resting points for walkers.
4. The project will promote local businesses such as the local clubs, cafe, village store and pubs through the information boards, maps and promotion of the routes and rest stops online. The family friendly cycle route will use permitted bridleways, quiet roads, and provide links to other cycle routes and the local railway stations. The applicant is working in partnership with a local cycle group. The project also has the support of SCC's footpaths team who will maintain the footpaths and bridleways.

Details

Description of project benefits

5. The project responds to a demonstrated community need in the Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan, for improved cycle and walking routes and play area.
6. The marked paths and cycle route will be accessible and open access for all residents. They will link village amenities and provide rest stops and seating, increasing the opportunity for meeting and reducing loneliness and isolation as well as increasing access for all to the countryside and the physical and mental health benefits that provides.
7. The project aims to reduce the number and frequency of car journeys for commuting by linking the safe and marked paths and cycle routes between the villages of Limpsfield and the Chart and their respective train stations. The play area is designed using natural materials to enhance the environment and the access paths will use local materials to blend with the environment.
8. The promotion of local businesses and rest stops along the routes will also encourage people to stay local and support local businesses. The promotion of the digital and hard copy routes and way marked discs will also provide information about the area and aims to increase the sense of belonging and ownership within the community.

9. Officers consider the project contributes towards the following areas of the SCC priorities 2021-2026:

Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit

- Limpsfield village and the Chart both have refreshment stops included on the routes. Promotion of local businesses and rest stops to encourage people to stay local and support local businesses

Tackling health inequality

- People will be encouraged to take advantage of the walk and cycle route. Accessible routes will encourage greater use by the elderly, disabled and pushchairs and for longer periods of the year. The applicant will advise the local GP practices of the new routes.

Enabling a greener future

- Managed paths protect the surrounding environment.
- Links between the villages will promote more sustainable travel and commuting reducing the numbers of cars and journeys.
- Natural materials used in the play area.

Empowering communities

- An accessible rest and play area with natural play equipment for children on the Limpsfield way path, encouraging more physical activity and meeting places.
- Develop the Limpsfield way walk and cycle routes to encourage greater physical activity, health, and wellbeing. Greater access for less able.
- Waymarking, information boards and online information about the surrounding area to promote a greater sense of belonging.

Project Timeframes

10. The key project delivery dates are approximately 6 months, comprising of:

12 weeks for waymarked walking routes

- Paths and drainage works
- Develop maps and boards, erect and post online
- Install play area
- Broadcast waymarked routes

12 weeks for cycle route

- Develop route, directions etc
- Produce and erect waymarking

Management of the project

- 11.** Limpsfield Parish Council will be responsible for the guides and history for the Limpsfield Way walk and cycle routes and will maintain the play area. The Parish Council clerk will maintain the online route maps and directions. Local NT volunteers will assist in erecting the waymark posts.
- 12.** There is a cycling Steering Group including representatives of a local fitness company and local cyclists as well as PC representatives. This group will plan and inspect the cycle route, reporting any issues to the PC and onwards to SCC Footpaths team and/or NT.
- 13.** The NT local Ranger will provide advice and support on footpath maintenance and repair. Some of the members of the Friends of Limpsfield Common (FoLC) and the East Surrey ramblers will assist by walking and checking the routes. The SCC Countryside Access team have been consulted by the applicant and YFS. They have agreed the proposals.

14. To ensure sufficient resource to manage and deliver the project the applicant will deliver the Limpsfield Way Walk first and then the cycle route.

Project Lifespan

15. The materials for the play area will be created from natural round-wood durable timbers such as Sweet Chestnut, Larch, Large Oak, or Douglas Fir. Timbers will not be machined or milled meaning they will blend into the natural rural surroundings of Limpsfield Common. The timbers should be durable enough to last 15 years + before they require replacement. Depending on the material used and level of use of paths, the surface should remain in good condition for at least 10-15 years. Because the materials used are unbound there can be damage due to extreme weather or use, but this also means repairs are easier and less costly.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

16. YFS funding is requested for improvement to footpaths and bridleways, footpath discs, information boards, maps and online downloadable information, children and disabled people's activities, benches, and resting places.

17. The project costs are based on independently sourced quotations from NT approved suppliers.

18. The project has applied for £53,852 (including £5,509 contingency) which equates to 89% of the overall project costs. The remaining monies needed for the project have been raised from PC CIL allocation. It is recommended that £44,000 is award from Your Fund Surrey, this would leave £4000 of funding to be raised, with the suggestion that the applicant undertake community fundraising to reach the final project total.

Table 1. Financial summary

Amount applied for:	£53,852 (including £5,509 contingency)
Total project cost:	£60,602
Percentage of cost against total:	89%
Have other funding sources been secured?	Yes
Other funding:	£6,750 Limpsfield PC CIL Limpsfield PC have also committed to funding the insurance of the play area and maintenance for the first 5 years (c£5,000) NT have stated they would consider taking over the play area after this period, but if not, the PC would continue to manage.
Is there a commercial element to the project?	No
Amount suggested for funding:	£44,000 following Advisory Panel

Table 2. Project Cost breakdown and Grant Utilisation:

Activity	Total Cost	YFS Contribution
Create new, safer surfaces for cycles and walkers and improve drainage	£22,000	
Children's natural play area with disabled access	£24,600	
Oak posts and waymark discs for Limpsfield way walk	£1,300	
Information boards with printing, hard copy info and	£4,100	

downloadable maps		
Licence with NT for children's natural play area	£1,000	
Footpath posts and waymark discs for cycle way	£850	
Hard copies and downloadable maps for cycle routes	£200	
Cycle repair equipment at local venues for visiting cyclists to use	£500	
Children's natural play area inspected by independent professional company. Professional inspection by cyclist company. Limpsfield PC to carry out surveys at no cost to YFS	£543	
Sub total	£55,093	£44,000
Contingency	£5,509	£5,509*
Total	£60,602	

*To be held by SCC, for release only upon an evidenced request.

19. The table above covers the one-off development and implementation costs. Limpsfield PC have estimated their annual maintenance cost of £2,500.
20. As the applicant is a Parish Council that can issue a precept, there are no risks in relation to the applicant's going concern status or financial standing. The 2020/21 accounts show a reasonable cash balance which has improved over each of the last three years, demonstrating capacity to meet the revenue costs.
21. As with all applications, there is a risk that construction and purchase costs will increase between application and approval. This is mitigated by the 10% contingency (which will only be released if there is demonstrated need). The applicant has secured quotes that support their costing, and will ultimately be funded based on evidenced, actual spend, up to the amount awarded.

Assessment of the application against the criteria for the fund:

22. This application for funding has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process for the fund, which are publicly available on the County Council website.
23. The application has been subject to a rigorous two step application process involving assessment and scoring by Your Fund Surrey Officers, with input from the Expert hub, a group of specialist Officers providing insight for the eligibility of funding. The application has been assessed and scored independently by three Officers whose scores are then moderated. A summary of the Assessment Report comments against the funds five published scoring criteria are set out in Annex 2.

Expert Hub Review

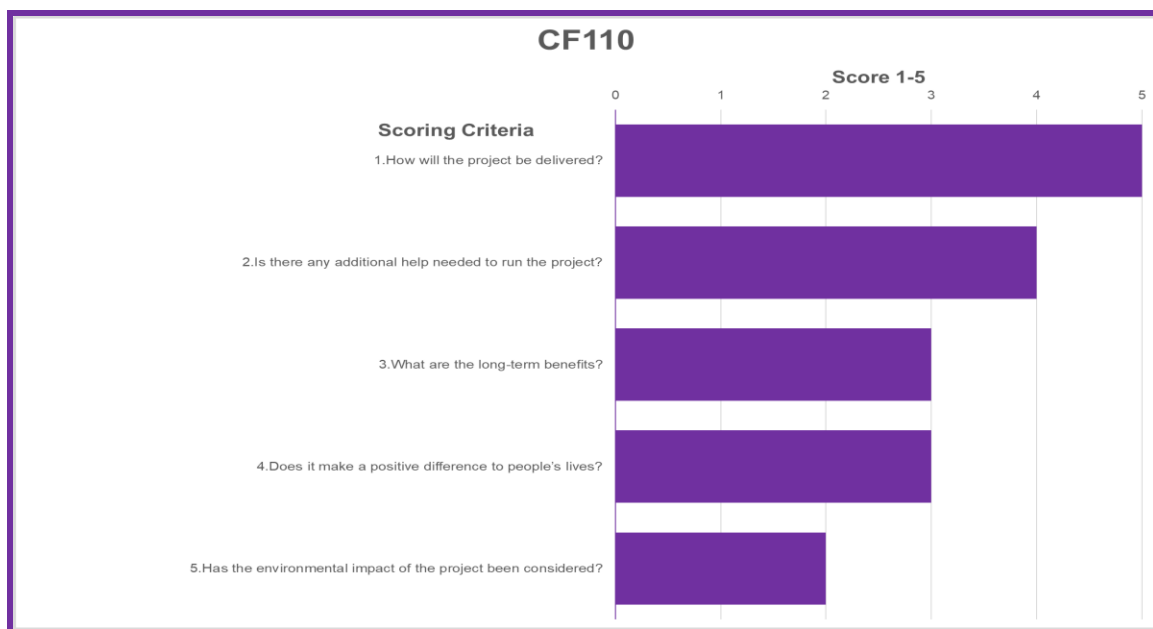
24. Highways - YFS have advised the applicant that: SCC plans to develop a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan for Tandridge over the next 6 – 9 months and would be glad to work with the promoters of this project through that initiative. Ahead of work starting on that in earnest, suggestions for walking and cycling improvements on the highway can be submitted here: [Have Your Say Today – Surrey LCWIP – Commonplace](#). Colleagues who will be looking at that work will be made aware that there is interest from Limpsfield Parish Council in making improvements that link with the footpath/bridleway improvements in the Your Fund Surrey bid to the railway stations, so that they can be brought into this piece of work when it commences.
25. SCC Countryside Access have advised that wherever the applicant proposes to carry the cycle route on the rights of way network, they would continue to maintain to the usual standard (i.e., they would not prioritise work on these paths just because they are part of a promoted route). They would not

accept any additional responsibility for extra signage etc given their statutory workload. They support any plans to increase access to the countryside and the rights of way network.

Score Breakdown

26. The application scored a total of 353 out of 500 when scored by Officers broken down as follows:

Figure 1. Assessment score breakdown



Advisory Panel Comments

- 27. The Advisory Panel functions in an advisory capacity and its role is intended to assist formal decision-making processes which sit outside the Panel. The role of the YFS Advisory Panel is to review shortlisted applications following the assessment and scoring of bids by Officers, and to advise and inform the final officer recommendations to the appropriate decision-maker on the proposed funding awards to be made.
- 28. In advance of the YFS Advisory Panel session, members of the Panel had sought clarification from Officers on a number of points concerning byelaws, impact on horse riders, fund eligibility, level of community support and National Trust involvement, to which responses were provided. One member of the Panel had spoken with the applicant in advance of the meeting, concerning the level of expense for the project and was satisfied with the response provided by the applicant, that costs related to the need to ensure access for people with buggies and disabilities.
- 29. Those YFS Advisory Panel present at the session on the 15th of December 2021, were able to reach a clear consensus in support of the project. The Panel were supportive of a recommendation to award a slightly reduced sum of £44,000, with the suggestion that the applicant could look toward raising a financial contribution from the wider community.
- 30. The panel were supportive of a separate sum of £5,509 to be held by SCC as contingency funding, for release should it be needed, recognising the difficulties of potential Covid related hold ups or in the sourcing of materials.

Consultation

Summary of Support

31. Have your say, which has had the Limpsfield Way featured on the Commonplace website, received 145 comments. There were two negative comments which stated it would be a better use of the money for road safety; and support the waymarked routes but not the play area.

32. Letters of support have been received from:

- Limpsfield in Bloom Coordinator (Sept 2021)
- Limpsfield Fitness - Personal Trainer/Cycling (Sept 2021)
- Limpsfield C/E School (Sept 2021)
- Limpsfield Community Orchard (Sept 2021)
- Hurst Green Tennis Club (Sept 2021)
- Cllr Claire Blackwell, Tandridge DC (Sept 2021)
- St Peter's Church Limpsfield (Sept 2021)
- Friends of Limpsfield Common (Sept 2021)
- Limpsfield PC (Sept 2021) – state funding >10% of project cost and set aside funds to maintain in future
- NT Area Ranger for Limpsfield Common (Sept 2021)
- Consultation on the Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan

33. The Divisional Councillor Cameron McIntosh has commented as follows:

I am fully supportive of this Bid for YFS, understanding that what is proposed will improve the connectivity of Limpsfield Chart and Limpsfield Highstreet/Oxted. At a time when as a County Council we are encouraging Active Travel, to walk and cycle more and consider other alternative modes of travel, this project seems well aligned to the vision we want to achieve across Surrey. Certain members of the Parish Council have worked incredibly hard on making this a reality, engaging with residents, local business and community organisations who will benefit from 'The Limpsfield Way.'

Risk Management and Implications:

34. This application for funding has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process. As part of this process the applicant has provided an overview of risks against the project. This is summarised below. Officers consider there to be adequate control measures in place.

Table 5. Summary Table of Risks and Key Mitigations

Risk description	RAG	Mitigation action/strategy
Delays to construction, supply chain issues and cost increases related to market conditions or COVID-19.		Carry out early site investigations to mitigate potential obstacles to construction, allowance made in contingency and arrange regular inspections from relevant specialists.
Difficulty agreeing cycle route with cycling group, residents, and SCC		Dialogue already commenced with SCC, ensure discussions with all relevant local groups.
An accident occurs on one of the waymarked routes.		Clear roles and responsibilities in the Management and Maintenance Plan
Improper materials used for the play area could result in injury for children or premature damage to the equipment.		Durable materials are to be identified and selected in collaboration with SCC to ensure they are sufficiently durable and frequent checks and site inspections are to be conducted by specialists.

35. The land is owned by NT, and they have been a key partner in development of the project. NT have confirmed that they will enter into a licence with the Parish Council should funding be awarded, to permit works on their land. NT have also confirmed that they will consider entering into a licence to take over maintenance of the play area after 5 years, if not the PC have confirmed that they will continue to maintain and insure.

Equalities and Diversity:

36. Your Fund is designed to provide investment in schemes that encourage community participation, reduce isolation, and develop the potential for social wellbeing and economic prosperity. As such it is anticipated that it will have a positive impact on a number of those who may rely on or gain support from within the local community and those within protected characteristics that may be more likely to experience social and economic exclusion.

37. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been produced for Your Fund Surrey and was circulated as an Annex to the Your Fund Surrey Cabinet Report 26th January 2021.

38. During the pandemic there has been a big increase in the numbers of people walking and cycling in the area. This project will address accessibility of access to the countryside for people of all ages and abilities, through provision of wider routes, kissing gates and no stiles, level routes and surfaces suitable in all weathers.

Legal Implications and Monitoring Officer

39. A Funding Agreement will be entered into with the applicant incorporating the performance measures that will be put in place to ensure the funding is used as intended, as well as outlining any support or additional conditions agreed as part of the funding award.

Other Implications:

40. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No direct implications
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children & adults	No direct implications
Environmental sustainability	Managed paths will protect the surrounding environment. Links between the villages will promote more sustainable travel and commuting reducing the numbers of cars and journeys. Natural materials will be used in the play area.
Public Health	The project has a positive impact on wider health determinants with specific reference to residents being encouraged to take advantage of the walk and cycle route. The accessible routes will encourage greater use by the elderly, less able, families and pushchairs and for longer periods of the year. The applicant will advise the local GP practices of the new routes

What Happens Next:

- Following Delegated Officer approval of the funding a notice of the records of decisions taken under delegated power, will be published within 3 days of the decision being made. A note of this decision will be included in the YFS Decision Tracker and the next Cabinet report containing an update on Your Fund Surrey.
 - Officers will prepare the relevant schedules and funding agreements to enable payment of funds and monitoring and evaluation of the project against its outcomes.
 - The YFS Team officers will then issue a provisional offer of funding to the applicant, including a copy of the draft Funding Agreement incorporating any additional conditions.
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Consulted:

Division County Councillor

Countryside Access, Highways, Corporate Finance – Surrey County Council

Annexes:

Annex 1: Summary Scoring Comments

Sources/background papers:

Your Fund Surrey Governance Document

Annex 1: Summary of Scoring Comments

Criteria 1 - How will the project be delivered?

This project has scored well under this criterion as it is a one-off cost and straightforward in terms of the works required and the associated timescales and costs, with no commercial element to the project. The organisation being a PC is assurance of management and maintenance. Specialists will carry out checks on play area. Footpath and bridleway maintenance is the responsibility of SCC. The NT have confirmed they will enter a licence agreement for the works on their land should funding be made available. NT have tentatively agreed to manage the play area after 5 years, otherwise it will continue to be covered by the PC. NT approved contractors identified and evidence of contractors having undertaken site assessments. Evidence of inspection regimes and plans for management and allocation of responsibility. Evidence of suitable roles and responsibilities identified.

Criteria 2 - Is there any additional help needed to run, the project?

140 volunteer hours are included in the bid. Partnered with SCC Countryside Access and NT. The PC have set aside funds for maintenance of the play area, seats and waymarked discs and volunteers will carry out checks. The PC will add the cost of insurance of the play area to its general insurance policy. Ongoing management will be supported by existing volunteers. PC are supplying a proportional amount of funding.

Criteria 3 - What are the long-term benefits?

There is a clear need for improvements to paths and cycleways from surveys undertaken during the Neighbourhood plan. There are other similar play areas in very close proximity – forest school close to school, trim trail and Ridlands Grove 1 mile away.

The applicant has referenced contact from disabled residents and school with special needs and cycling group re development and benefits of the project.

Engagement strong at organisational level (NT, SCC) but little evidence of wider community support e.g., no local fundraising undertaken.

I see a case here for improved access to green space, including by disabled persons, and a safe place to play for children. Links to Forest School are positive as is consideration for those with additional mobility needs. Evidence of discussion in the community e.g., through surveys, local planning work, support from stakeholders.

Criteria 4 - Does it make a positive difference to people's lives?

This project would have positive benefits to people's lives given the survey responses from the Neighbourhood Plan, as follows:

- Benches at either end of the fields, a weather station, a notice board of wildlife news.
- It is important to keep community areas indoor (e.g., Church Halls) and outdoor (green spaces) where people can meet and not feel isolated in their homes.
- Greater need for SAFE footpaths and better green spaces for communal play.
- This area is not great for families with young children to go for safe walks due to the traffic levels and speeds.

- There were comments specifically suggesting more sport and exercise provision, and older residents were mentioned as being under-provided for in this regard.
- Specific recommendation 10 of survey - To work with a play advisor to look at the existing children's play areas and the type of equipment required to cover a range of age groups.
- There is also a large amount of support (45%) for improving cycling and walking routes. Survey demonstrates parking and traffic issues in Limpsfield yet paths and play area could create additional parking need. Aims to promote travel to area by train and commuting by walking and cycling through promotion of safer and marked routes away from busy main roads.

Good degree of collaboration with NT, a key partner in this. Consideration has been given to families and children, older people, and disabled people's needs. No mention of deprivation in a broader sense.

Criteria 5 - Has the environmental impact of the project been considered?

Play area will use natural materials. The timbers for the play area should be durable enough to last 15 years before requiring replacement and will not be dug into the ground. Information boards will be oak weathered and planed posts, FSC certificated, likely to last in the ground for 15 years. Playground equipment appears to have been sensitively sourced, limited info on other construction considerations. Supports local living, walking, and cycling.