

Policy & Resources Committee Meeting – 5th October 2022**Agenda Item 10.1****Community Infrastructure Levy****WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - CIL REQUEST**

A remote meeting was held on 20th September 2022 by Wokingham Borough Council in relation to a co-funding bid for a refurbishment project of the lakeside at California County Park, Finchampstead.

WBC has already invested £3m into California Country Park, upgrading parking, installing new bike storage, upgrading the café facilities and the play area, the Lakeside project is the final part. WBC consider the park to be a major park in the Wokingham Borough, alongside Dinton Pastures, and more residents from outside Finchampstead visit the park than Finchampstead residents.

The project consists of a new information point, installation of various new pathways, upgrading of existing paths, picnic area with seating, wildflower areas, flowered lawn, screening of kiosk, various planting schemes and the installation of a boardwalk with a viewing point.

There is no overall timeframe for the project at this point and the project will depend on the funding secured. It is anticipated that the project will take about a year to plan, and work would start September 2023. Some aspects of the project are optional, based on if full funding was secured, so some aspects would be dropped if there was not enough funding.

The overall amount being requested for the project from other Town/Parish Councils is based on their proximity to California Country Park and the amount of CIL available to the individual town/parish:

Finchampstead PC	250,000	43.5%
WBC	100,000	17.4%
Woodley TC	50,000	8.7%
Wokingham Without	25,000	5%
Arborfield	25,000	5%
Barkham	25,000	5%
Charvil	25,000	5%
Shinfield	25,000	5%
Twyford	10,000	2%
Winnersh	10,000	2%
Earley	5,000	1%

Visitor figures have been gathered based on actual bookings taken for the paddling pool in 2020, 2021 and 2022 using full postcode, however the figures are not indicative, as they do not show the number of visits from people just visiting the park, but who did not use the paddling pool.

The map shown as part of the presentation implied that most visitors to the park are from Woodley, Earley, Winnersh, Twyford and Wokingham Without and that there are a low number of visitors from Arborfield.

Woodley TC have indicated that they will not be contributing and Shinfield PC suggested that, with the amount of development they have in their parish, their CIL will be spent on infrastructure for their area. The general concerns raised by other attendees were that the data showing visitors from outside Finchampstead visiting the park highlights a possible lack of facilities across the borough and that it was encouraging people to use their cars more to visit facilities that were not walking distance etc.