


Agenda Item No:	8	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 December 2025	
Report Title:	Pride In Place Impact Fund – project proposal	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 Fenland District Council has been awarded £1.5 million from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund to support capital funded initiatives across the district. Building on the previous report in November to accept this funding, this report proposes the project to receive this funding over the coming 16 months.
- 1.2 Following an initial discussion with elected Members, and a review of the Fenland Inspire! projects within the Council's Business Plan, the recommended use for the funding is to enhance open spaces facilities and play areas across the district in line with the Fenland Inspire! project aims.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Pride in Place Impact Fund is a government initiative aimed at enhancing local pride, improving public spaces, and supporting community-led regeneration.
- 2.2 As detailed in the last paper to November Cabinet, the first payment of £750,000 is expected to be received in November 2025 with the final payment of £750,000 being received in April 2026, following FDC's formal acceptance of the funding in November.
- 2.3 To facilitate project delivery in a timely manner – as stipulated by Government - it is necessary to add a part-time, fixed term member of staff to deliver this project, as current staffing capacity will not allow effective project delivery within the timeframe available.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the allocation of the £1.5 million Pride in Place Impact Fund allocation to the delivery of improved open spaces and play park enhancements across the district.
- 3.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Open Spaces and Inspire! Projects, to commence an assessment of open spaces facilities and play parks to identify, alongside local elected Members, sites for improved or new facilities and return to Cabinet with a report with recommendations on the specific projects to be undertaken.

- 3.3 That Cabinet notes the necessary recruitment of a part-time, fixed term contract Project Officer to ensure that the organisation has the capacity to deliver this work in a timely manner, within the tight timeframe and deadline of March 2027 stipulated by Government.

Wards Affected	All	
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/13NOV25/02	
Portfolio Holders	Cllr Chris Seaton	Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! projects
	Cllr Jan French	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Open Spaces
	Cllr Chris Boden	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Report Originators	Phil Hughes Matt Wright	Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Regeneration Programme Manager
Contact Officers	Phil Hughes Kevin Wilkins	Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Open Spaces Contract Manager
Background Papers	November 2025 Cabinet Report Pride in Place Impact Fund: prospectus	

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 The Pride in Place Impact Fund supports local authorities in delivering projects that improve public spaces, foster community pride, and stimulate local economic activity. The funding is for capital only works and cannot be used for initiatives requiring revenue funding.
- 1.2 The Pride in Place Impact Fund has three objectives:
- a. Community spaces: creating, extending, improving or refurbishing existing community facilities and enabling community organisations to take control or ownership of underused but valued local assets.
 - b. Public spaces: enhancing the physical environment in public spaces - examples of initiatives include new or improved green spaces or public squares, improved outdoor play, sports and leisure spaces, installing street furniture, public art or wayfinding.
 - c. High street and town centre revitalisation: making these areas more attractive and welcoming places where people congregate and which encourage economic activity. Examples of initiatives that could be funded are shop frontage improvements, adaptations that bring premises back into use, streetscape improvements, public art, trails and wayfinding, and creating or improving the infrastructure for regular markets.

- 1.3 It should also be noted that when deciding upon projects to deliver, Local Authorities should work in collaboration with the MP and other stakeholders to identify the interventions that will deliver the most benefit to local residents and breathe new life into the areas in which they live.
- 1.4 An initial Member idea for consideration by Cabinet is the development of new, and the enhancement and improvement of current, open space facilities and play areas to be the focus of this grant funding. Already identified as a Fenland Inspire! initiative within the Council's Business Plan, this project will deliver improvements in much used community facilities across many locations of the District.
- 1.5 It is anticipated that the main parks within the four market towns would see significant investment to improve their facilities, whilst a further number of approximately 10 open spaces across the District will also see investment to improve or develop the spaces, enhancing local community assets accordingly.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Allocation of the funding in this way aligns with the Council's corporate priorities and is detailed specifically in the Fenland Inspire! projects within the Business Plan.
- 2.2 It also specifically aligns with objective 2, detailed above in paragraph 4.2, of the Pride in Place Impact Fund guidance.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 If Cabinet approves the project to move forwards, following an assessment of the current open spaces, the Project Officer will consult with local elected Members regarding each space with potential options and projects.
- 3.2 Following that discussion the local community will be consulted to ensure that improvements are what the community would like to see in the spaces selected.
- 3.3 Additionally, as detailed in the Funding Prospectus, the local MP will be engaged in the plans to take forwards for each area selected.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Alternative projects were considered - specifically other projects within the Fenland Inspire! programme. However, due to the very tight prescribed time constraints imposed against this funding, only projects that are realistically deliverable in a short time frame are acceptable for consideration.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

Any procurement will be conducted with the Council's Procurement Team, likely using framework agreements that the Council already has access to ensure that all procurement regulations are complied with.

5.2 Financial Implications

- 5.3 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, agreed by Cabinet and Council in February, projects a financial shortfall for 2025/26 of £1.432m increasing year on year amounting to around £3.4m by 2027/28.
- 5.4 Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2025/26 and the MTFS, there remains a significant structural deficit which the Council will need to address.
- 5.5 Against this background of considerable pressure on the Council's budget, this particular project, including the necessary officer to deliver the project, is fully funded by the Government grant so will have no impact on the Council's financial situation and General Fund.

5.6 Equality Implications

- 5.7 Facilities added into open spaces will have an accessible element ensuring that all users are able to enjoy themselves in the Council's open spaces.