

Meeting	Full Council
Date	27 th July 2026
Report Title	Application to the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund proposal
Agenda Reference	18
Author(s)	Cllr Leanne Stevenson & Cllr Nathan Bradley

Proposer: Cllr Leanne Stevenson

Seconder: Cllr Nathan Bradley

Recommendations:

- That Full Council approves the accompanying motion authorising the submission of an application for up to £35,000 from the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund during the current financial year.
- To support the submission of an application for up to £35,000 during the current financial year from the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund.
- To authorise officers, in consultation with the Tadpole Working Party, to prepare and submit the funding application on behalf of Haydon Wick Parish Council.
- To ensure the funding application reflects the Council's Community Led Action Plan, the objectives of the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund and the aspiration to bring Tadpole Field into renewed public use through biodiversity and community enhancement.
- To note that, should the funding application be successful, officers will develop a detailed project proposal in consultation with the Tadpole Working Party for consideration by Full Council before any funding is accepted or works commence.

Council notes:

- Swindon Borough Council has established the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund, with up to £35,000 available during the current financial year for eligible community projects that deliver environmental, biodiversity and community benefits.
- Haydon Wick Parish Council owns Tadpole Field, which presents an opportunity to secure external investment while enhancing a valued parish asset for the benefit of residents.
- Tadpole Field was acquired by Haydon Wick Parish Council to safeguard the land for community benefit and to bring it into positive public use. Securing external funding to enhance the site supports that long-term vision while protecting the Council's investment.
- Haydon Wick Parish Council's Community Led Action Plan 2026 to 2029 identifies biodiversity, community wellbeing, accessible green spaces and environmental improvement as strategic priorities.

Council believes:



- The Council should actively pursue external funding opportunities wherever possible to maximise investment in the parish and minimise the financial impact on local taxpayers.
- The Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund provides an opportunity to secure external investment that will create lasting environmental, educational and community benefits.
- A biodiversity and community enhancement project at Tadpole Field would bring a parish-owned asset into renewed public use, creating opportunities for recreation, education, volunteering, nature recovery and community engagement, while supporting the objectives of the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Full Council's approval to submit an application for up to £35,000 from the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund during the current financial year.

The report seeks approval to prepare and submit a funding application only. Any successful application will return to Full Council for approval before works commence.

Background

Swindon Borough Council has established the Chapel Farm Solar Community Fund to support projects that deliver environmental, biodiversity and wider community benefits.

Haydon Wick Parish Council owns Tadpole Field, which was acquired to safeguard the land for community benefit and to bring it into positive public use. This funding opportunity presents an opportunity to further that original vision while securing external investment for the parish.

The proposal also provides an opportunity to undertake enabling works to prepare land adjacent to the site for future community allotments, helping maximise the wider community benefit of the area.

The proposal supports the Council's Community Led Action Plan by improving biodiversity, encouraging healthier lifestyles, increasing community engagement and making greater use of parish-owned green space.

Outline Proposal

Subject to funding approval, the project could include:

1. Site preparation and groundworks.
2. Creation of a wildlife pond and wetland habitat.
3. Protection and enhancement of existing bluebell areas.
4. Native tree, shrub and wildflower planting.
5. Pollinator habitats.
6. Accessible walking routes.
7. Seating and quiet reflection areas.
8. Educational and interpretation boards.
9. Outdoor learning and community event space.
10. Nature-based play features.
11. Preparation of land for future community allotments.
12. Community volunteering and conservation activities.
13. The final scope will be informed by ecological advice, technical assessments and consultation with the Tadpole Working Party.



Indicative Budget

The current funding proposal has been developed around the maximum grant available during the current financial year.

Project Element & Indicative Cost	
Site preparation and groundworks	£4,000
Wildlife pond and habitat creation	£5,500
Native planting and biodiversity works	£4,500
Community shelter or outdoor learning space	£8,000
Accessible paths and walking route	£4,000
Educational signage and interpretation	£2,500
Benches and seating	£2,000
Nature play features	£2,500
Project design and ecological advice	£1,500
Community engagement and launch activities	£1,000
Total: £35,000	

These costs are indicative and will be refined as part of the detailed design process should funding be secured.

Benefits

The proposal will:

1. Bring Tadpole Field into renewed public use.
2. Protect and enhance existing natural habitats, including bluebell areas.
3. Increase biodiversity through habitat creation.
4. Create opportunities for volunteering and outdoor education.
5. Improve access to high-quality green space.
6. Support health and wellbeing through greater connection with nature.
7. Prepare adjacent land for future community allotments.
8. Secure up to £35,000 of external funding, reducing the financial impact on local taxpayers.
9. Governance

Should the funding application be successful, officers will work with the Tadpole Working Party to prepare detailed designs, ecological assessments and delivery proposals.

A further report will be presented to Full Council seeking approval before funding is accepted or works commence.