

Trust and Charities Committee 30th May 2014

Title of paper:	Highfields Park: Heritage Lottery Fund, Parks For People Restoration and Improvement Project: Stage Two Application.	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	John Kelly - Corporate Director of Communities Hugh White - Director of Sport Culture and Parks	Wards affected: Wollaton East & Lenton Abbey. Arboretum, Dunkirk & Lenton, Radford & Park.
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Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)	Cllr David Trimble Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture 28 th April 2014	
Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:		
Cutting unemployment by a quarter		<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut crime and anti-social behaviour		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ensure more school leavers get a job, training or further education than any other City		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Your neighbourhood as clean as the City Centre		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Help keep your energy bills down		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good access to public transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham has a good mix of housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham is a good place to do business, invest and create jobs		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham offers a wide range of leisure activities, parks and sporting events		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support early intervention activities		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Deliver effective, value for money services to our citizens		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):

Further to receiving a Stage One Heritage and Big Lottery Parks For People Fund (HBLPPF) approval in July 2013, the Project Team have now worked up the detailed designs and have carried out additional consultation / consensus checks with park users and project partners such as the University of Nottingham, the Environment Agency (“the EA”) and the Highfields Park User Group.

This report seeks final sign off and approval of the Highfields Park Landscape Restoration Project including its Maintenance and Management Plan and Activity Plan and seeks the committee’s approval and endorsement to submit a detailed Stage Two project application to the HBLPPF in August 2014.

Recommendation(s):

1	That the Committee approves the Highfields Park Landscape Restoration Project including the Maintenance and Management Plan and Activity Plan and the Stage Two HBLPPF bid as detailed in sections 2.2 – 2.9 of this report.
2	That the Committee delegates authority to the Director of Sport, Culture and Parks to continue the preparation and submission of the Stage Two HBLPPF bid in August 2014 on behalf of the Highfields Leisure Trust.
3	That, subject to the receipt of a Stage Two pass from the HBLPPF, the Committee approves the delegation of authority to the Director of Sport, Culture and Parks to continue to develop working designs and to go out to tender and thereafter, subject to such tenders being within the available financial envelope, to enter into contracts relating to the delivery of the restoration works.

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are being sought in order to ensure that the restoration project can continue with full support of the Highfields Leisure Trust; and to ensure that all the appropriate Trust and Charity Commission related governance and delegated authorities are approved before the Stage Two bid is presented to Executive Board for final approval prior to submitting the bid to the Lottery in August this year.

2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

2.1 Highfields Park was laid out in the early 1920s as a public park on the initiative of Sir Jesse Boot, it opened partly in 1923 and the public was given its full use in 1926. The ownership was transferred to the City Council in 1923. It is one of the first man-made, large-scale public parks of the 20th century. By virtue of its value Highfields Park was included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and was given a Grade II listing (Ref GD 2771). Recognising the importance of this historic urban park, English Heritage has recently uplifted its status to Grade II*.

2.2 In the last two years a number of reports (as detailed in section 8) have already recognised the need and provided justification for this greatly needed restoration project. In July 2013 our first round project application received a Stage One pass from the HBLPPF. Included with this pass was a development grant of over £280,000 which represented 93% of the total £300,542 development costs. This funding represented a pivotal turning point in the park’s restoration journey and as a result the funding has been used to assemble a project team, commission detailed architectural and landscape design works, and to drive forward more detailed condition and topographical surveys including the lake restoration, tree works and the restoration of

listed / historic buildings and features within the park. Included within the development funding was an allocation for a new dedicated Park Ranger. This new post was successfully filled in January 2014 and since this time the new Ranger has started to work with the project partners and has already significantly improved the day to day engagement with park user and project partners.

2.3 As part of our stage one pass the HBLPPF placed a number of special conditions on the project as follows

- The stage two bid needs to provide a sustainable solution to the lake and Tottle Brook silting problem.
- NCC to fully engage the Environment Agency to seek their full support for the lake / Tottle Brook silt proposals.
- To investigate opportunities to develop and support a social enterprise within the park.
- NCC to secure the commitment from Nottingham University to deliver their annual events programme funding contributions to the project.

The project team and our partners have managed to fully resolve all these special conditions and have identified a sustainable method of de-silting the Lake. The EA have been active project board members since day one. We have already identified and have trialled a social enterprise partnership with the Colwick Park Lifeguards to manage the boating concession and possibly the most significant change has been that the University of Nottingham are no longer just a partner, but will be co-signatories of our Stage Two bid. This is major step forward and now recognises the University's full support for the project. As a result we are now in a confident position and ready to drive forward with our final preparation of the bid ready to submit later this summer.

2.4 Heritage and Big Lottery Parks for People Fund (HBLPPF) Restoration Project

The project consists of a comprehensive programme of restoration works designed to fully restore the park, build upon its heritage and create a range of community facilities fit for the 21st century. The Stage Two bid includes key features that closely align with the strategic priorities of the HBLPPF - **Appendix 1 includes plans of the key restoration projects and the revised master plan.**

2.5 Public Consultation and Project Consensus Checks

During the 2014 Easter holidays, an extensive consultation exercise was undertaken at Highfields Park and online to ensure that the park restoration proposals meet people's expectations following the earlier consultation in 2012. A static display was present on the park during the Easter holidays and colleagues were present for several hours each day to explain the proposals to park users and encourage them to complete questionnaires. An Easter bunny hunt was also provided to engage young children and their parents.

150 questionnaires were completed in person and 70 more received online; at the current time, the results of this feedback is being evaluated and this will form a consensus check report and also feed heavily into the Activity Plan – one of the key questions in the consultation was about the sort of events and activities people would like to see on the park.

2.6 10 Year Maintenance and Management Plan (MMP).

The final version of this document will be completed prior to final presentation to the Executive Board. However the core structure and section headings are now set and will focus the site's future maintenance and management in line with both the Green

Flag and Green Heritage standards. The MMP will discuss how the site will be maintained to a consistent standard on both the Trust land and land directly managed by the University. **Appendix 2 provides the most recent version of the MMP.**

2.7 Activity Plan

The Activity Plan is one of the suite of documents that will be submitted to the Lottery alongside the restoration plans. It will assess who the current park users are, why they use it and what they do at the park. More importantly, we will investigate who doesn't use the park already, why not and what can be done to attract new audiences to the park. The action plan will include an ambitious list of potential events, activities and audience engagement techniques for the park, from which a select list will be funded by the Lottery bid and led by the Park Ranger, in partnership with the University of Nottingham and the Lakeside gallery and theatre. **Appendix 3 contains an outline of the targets that will form the structure of the Activity Plan.**

2.8 Training and Volunteer Plan

The Highfields Park project, will through a partnership with the Nottingham City Council Employment Hub and the LEP, generate opportunities for local small and large businesses, as well as individual employment opportunities during the construction stages, a range of new vacancies, apprenticeship, entrance trainee opportunities and work experience placements will be created .

2.9 Revised Restoration Project and Cost Plan

Item No	Project
1	Lake Rehabilitation and management
2	Refurbishment and repair of existing historic building features on the site. Inc the pavilions, ticket office and historic lighting columns.
3	Boundaries and gateways - including restoration of fencing, entrance gates and wall work within the site.
4	Hard surfacing and resurfacing - estimated costs for the repair of existing footpaths to be kept and the construction of new footpaths and a new disabled and parent & child car parks.
5	Furniture/signage
6	Vegetation and arboriculture work.
7	Staff costs: Park Ranger x 10 years.
8	Ranger events programme
9	New Head Gardener

Appendix 4 contains a full copy of the cost plan

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Without full endorsement and approval the project will not be able to proceed to the Stage Two bid and the park restoration and improvement will not take place.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

The total cost of the proposed scheme is estimated to be £3,894,533. Proposed funding sources are;

	£
Nottingham City Council	136,535
University of Nottingham	371,500
Wren funding	50,000
Veolia funding	50,000
In kind Contribution	29,000
Highfields Park Trust	400,000
Heritage Lottery	<u>2,857,498</u>
	<u>3,894,533</u>

The City council contribution will be funded from the existing Parks & Open Space revenue budget over a 5 year period. WREN and the Veolia grants have yet to be confirmed.

Considering the significant improvement in the facilities that will be generated by the investment of Trust and Council funding together with the contribution from the Heritage Lottery, it is suggested that this is good value for money, especially when compared to the low rates of interest that investment of balances currently receive.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 Legal Implications

The proposals set out in the report raise no significant legal issues but regard will need to be had the terms and conditions attached to the individual funding sources.

The tender process for the restoration works should specify the type of contract to be entered into and also set out any special clauses required by the Council. The Corporate Procurement team will be able to provide detailed advice on the tender process.

5.2 Risk and Opportunity Management

The main risk at this point is if the Heritage Lottery Bid is not successful. In order to reduce this risk a realistic project proposal has been designed and all fees and charges accounted for. In addition £400,000 of the match funding has already been secured and the remaining funding bids are both realistic and achievable.

5.3 Performance Management

If the Stage Two submission is successful, workload planning will ensure that the preparation of the Stage Two bid is delivered by a cross departmental project team and therefore will not impact negatively on the rest of the Parks & Open Spaces Service.

5.4 Communications

There will be several key stages through the project to link to a communications plan:

- Ongoing public consultation on the project make-up and to demonstrate support and need for the project - following the Stage Two bid.
- Result of the Stage Two bid.

- Construction on site will include a detailed communication plan to cover all the key stages of the build phase and help to inform park users re localised closures during press the build phase e.g. the lake de-silting.

5.5 Crime and Disorder Act Implication

The project will help to improve the security of buildings and to improve the visual appearance of the park. In addition the increased site based staff presence and increased park user will all help to provide a friendly reassurance and remove any low level fear of crime and disorder.

5.6 Health and Wellbeing Implications

The project will help to improve the general facilities within the park, including paths and seating along with general aesthetic improvements. These improvements will encourage more people to participate in low level physical activity. The project with the support of the Park Ranger will target current non users and encourage people who are not currently active to participate in activities such as a walk around the park or a wide range of out door healthy lifestyle activities and events.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An EIA has been updated and is attached in **Appendix 5**.

This project has the potential to provide a number of opportunities to promote equality, for example, by making facilities more accessible; through diverse representation on the project steering group; by promoting the participation and involvement of service users and the wider community in the development of the park; and through the consideration of equality issues in the design and delivery stages of the project.

7. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

8. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

- 8.1 Highfields Park: Heritage and Big Lottery Fund, Parks For People Restoration and Improvement Project: Stage One Application. Executive Board 17th July 2012.
- 8.2 Highfields Park: Heritage and Big Lottery Fund, Parks For People Restoration and Improvement Project: Stage One Application. Trust and Charities Committee 1st June 2012.
- 8.3 Highfields Park: Trust Release of Dowry Funds Trust and Charities Committee report 24th February 2012.
- 8.4 Highfields Park: Lottery Bid Expression of Interest and Delegated Authorities for Highfields Park and Harvey Hadden Stadium Trust and Charities Committee report 6th August 2011
- 8.5 Heritage Lottery Fund Parks for People introduction and help notes, 2010.
- 8.6 Highfields Park Master plan and Conservation Management Plan, FPCR, 2009.

Appendix 1 contains plans of the key restoration projects and the revised master plan.

Appendix 2 contains the most recent version of the MMP.

Appendix 3 contains the outline structure that will form the Activity Plan.

Appendix 4 Full Cost Plan

Appendix 5 contains an updated EIA .