

EXECUTIVE BOARD – 19TH FEBRUARY 2019

Subject:	Future Parks Accelerator Funding Bid
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Andy Vaughan, Corporate Director Commercial and Operations Department. Dave Halstead, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor David Trimble, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Localities
Report author and contact details:	Eddie Curry, Head of Public Realm. eddie.curry@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 0115 8764982
Subject to call-in:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Criteria for Key Decision:	
(a)	<input type="checkbox"/> Expenditure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income <input type="checkbox"/> Savings of £1,000,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision
and/or	
(b)	Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Type of expenditure:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital
Total value of the decision:	£1,036,000
Wards affected:	All
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Trimble, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Localities, 10 th January 2019
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:	
Strategic Regeneration and Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):	
<p>The Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) is a new national initiative to enable 5-8 places to develop ambitious solutions to secure and enhance the future of public parks and green spaces in the UK. Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and National Trust (NT) have teamed up to create the FPA as a joint venture, with £10million of resource to back the ambitions and plans of the selected places and help make them a reality.</p> <p>Over the next 2 years, the FPA will give vital headspace to do strategic thinking and development; with the offer of practical support and know-how from experts and parks sector peers. The FPA will be a catalyst to develop bold solutions, identify new income generating opportunities and adopt ways to improve community engagement and volunteering. The FPA will provide support and advice in order to bring forward options to improve governance arrangements and identified service re-designs that may be needed to improve commercial growth, improve citizen engagement and increase charitable donations within the service. As part of the FPA offer there will be a dedicated team from the HLF and National Trust to support applicants at every step. Local Authorities were invited to submit an expression of interest (EOI) in November 2018. 87 applications were received with only 11 applications shortlisted go through to stage 2. Nottingham's bid was successful and we have now submitted a full application on 18th January 2019. In order to support the bid, approval is required in advance of the HLF final</p>	

board decision in March 2019.
Exempt information: “None”
Recommendation(s):
1 Note submission of the Stage 2 bid (detailed in appendix 1) to the Future Parks Accelerator and subject to the bid being successful delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to agree and sign the grant funding agreement with Heritage Lottery Fund and National Trust.
2 Approve the allocation of staff resources, revenue match funding and establish an earmarked reserve as detailed in section 4
3 Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to enter into contracts and commission specialist advice and consultants that are required to deliver the programme.
4 Note the proposal to establish the new fixed contract posts related to the delivery of the programme as outlined in appendix 1 and approve the allocation of the Future Parks Accelerator funding to those posts.

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The recommendations are required in order to support the stage 2 application to the FPA. Essentially, if the bid is successful, the FPA will help Nottingham to undertake a 25 year strategy which will identify and provide new income generating opportunities, provide resources to complete an in-depth community engagement programme and help provide investment options for the long term planning and sustainable delivery of Nottingham’s Parks and Green Spaces.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 Nationally parks and green space services are facing huge challenges in sustaining investment and service standards. Bucking the national trend, the parks and green spaces in Nottingham have over the last 10 years seen significant levels of investment. This has led to their total transformation and improvement. As a result, Nottingham parks now hold more Green Flag Awards than any other Authority in the country whilst the parks team have also received national recognition as a leading parks and green space service.

The parks have become very popular and are well-used local facilities, and are popular visitor attractions. People come to play sport, engage with nature, attend, one of the city’s major events or simply to meet with friends and enjoy a walk in the park. The city’s parks provide essential “breathing space” and continue to make a major contribution to the health and well-being of our citizens and their quality of life in the city.

Many of our parks have received investments from both the Council and many external funding agencies such as the HLF, Sport England, Football Foundation, Wren, DCLG and many others. This funding has helped transform and restore parks infrastructure, replace over 83 play areas and has enabled the service to activate the parks and improve and sustain maintenance standards.

Whilst the investment to infrastructure and service improvement have been sustained to date, the challenge of the ongoing budget reductions places extreme pressure on front line services delivery. It is in this context and the likelihood of future continued budget reductions that action is needed to accelerate and identify new ways to generate more commercial income and new ways of working in order help sustain our investment programme and ensure that maintenance standards do not start to fail.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The options considered include:

Do Nothing – Not apply for the Funding

This option has been considered and rejected as it will not help the service manage the budget reduction pressures and will not help sustain service delivery moving forward.

Seek out other funding options

This option is unlikely given the availability of other funding for revenue projects. Funding for activities such as business and strategy development work is very limited it is considered unlikely that this option will be possible to enable the service to progress.

4 FINANCE COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 This decision seeks approval to submit a bid for funding under the Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) initiative.

4.2 The expenditure to be incurred is as follows:

Expenditure details	£
Staff costs	391,268
Co-design stage	379,000
Transition stage	169,732
Sub-total	940,000
Council staff input	96,000
TOTAL COST	1,036,000

4.3 The expenditure will be funded as follows:

Funding Sources	£
FPA Grant	900,000
Parks revenue budget contribution in FYrs 2018 - 21	40,000
Council staff time (match funding)	96,000
Total resources	1,036,000

4.4 The Head of Service for Public Realm will need to re-align the spending commitments between financial years 2018/19 and 2020/21 to ensure the Council's revenue funding of £40,000 is affordable. Due to possible timing differences from when the project starts and commitments made for the project, an earmarked reserve will be established to hold the Council's contribution until the end of the project.

4.5 The Head of Service for Public Realm will need to put measures in place to ensure compliance to the FPA grant conditions so that the Council is able to

fully recover the costs to be resourced by grant funding. To aid internal and external monitoring, the project transactions will be held in dedicated codes.

- 4.6 This decision seeks approval to recruit to 4 full time equivalent and fixed term contract posts to support the project. Subject to a number of factors, it is possible the Council could incur employment exit costs as a result of this project, though it is not possible to quantify these costs until the posts are recruited to and other factors are known.

Maria Balchin – Senior Commercial Business Partner 17 January 2018

5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)

- 5.1 This report does not raise any significant legal issues. If the City Council's bid to the FPA is successful the City Council will be asked to sign a funding agreement with HLF and NT. That agreement is likely to contain clawback provisions and the City Council should ensure that it includes contract terms in its agreements with its consultants and providers which would enable it to recover any funding where the City Council is itself subject to clawback. All contracts for consultants and other providers should be awarded in accordance with the City Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules and any applicable requirements of the grant funding agreement with HLF/NT.

While establishment of new posts is a matter for the Corporate Director Recommendation 4 approves the allocation of the FPA funding for the posts. All appointments to posts should be made on merit in accordance with statutory requirements and in consultation with HR colleagues.

Andrew James, Senior Team Leader, Legal Service 15/01/2019

- 5.2 Procurement have no concerns with accepting this funding and is supportive of the aims of the project. Where any procurement becomes necessary it must be carried out in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules; Public Contracts Regulations where applicable; and any specific conditions imposed by the funding bodies. The Procurement Team will be available to advise and assist the client team to achieve this.

Jonathan Whitmarsh, Lead Procurement Officer 16/1/2019

6. STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISIONS RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE)

- 6.1 All property related activities and projects should be aligned to the Corporate Asset Management Plan objectives of 'well-managed asset portfolios that support the Council's plan by providing high quality services and facilities and places to live, work and do business'. Thus:

- Maximising the value and value-for-money of the Council's commercial assets for the benefit of citizens, local business and the community.
- Supporting the needs of the Council including operations and contribution to commercial income targets
- Ensuring that operational assets are suitable, sufficient, sustainable, legally compliant, properly maintained and accessible.

- 6.2 Nottingham's parks are major property assets and the 'Future Parks Accelerator Funding Bid' allows the Council to build on the successes of the past and to realise new initiatives and projects in accordance with the Corporate Asset Management Plan and in line with the adopted 'Breathing Space' strategy.
- 6.3 Robust asset management principles should be adhered to including the lifecycle planning of maintenance, partnership working and asset development; including acquisitions, disposals, repurposing, and tenant management.
- 6.4 Where Required, Property Services will also support the Parks and Open Spaces team, and the Future Parks Accelerator team in all Property related matters, including ownership details, general property advice, and new leases and licences to third parties as appropriate. Careful consideration will need to be given to each specific case and each considered on its own merits, having regard to the new strategy to be formulated.

Chris Read, Property Business Partner, and John West, Estates Surveyor, 17 January 2019.

7 SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The FPA project will enable the Public Realm and Heritage teams to explore new ways of working and supporting the local community to help sustain and improve service delivery.

8 REGARD TO THE NHS CONSTITUTION

- 8.1 A key factor in encouraging more people to be active is to have safe clean, well maintained and accessible parks and green spaces. This project will help to identify opportunities to develop and improve local parks and green space facilities and deliver a wide range of events and activities for people to engage in positive healthy lifestyle activities. The project will help deliver the Nottingham Health and Well-Being strategy action plan.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

- 9.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required because this project will provide opportunities for all the community and will help identify improvement projects that will improve access and facilities for all.

10 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN WRITING THIS REPORT (NOT INCLUDING PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS OR CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION)

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of the FPA stage two application.

11 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THIS REPORT

11.1 <https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/hlf-and-national-trust-join-forces-improve-parks>

Appendix 1 Summary of the FPA Stage 2 Bid

The Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) is a new national initiative to enable 5-8 places to develop ambitious solutions to secure and enhance the future of public parks and green spaces in the UK.

Both the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and National Trust (NT) have teamed up to create the FPA as a joint venture, with £10million of resource to back the ambitions and plans of the selected places and help make them a reality.

Over the next 2 years the FPA fund will give NCC vital headspace to do strategic thinking and development and offer practical support and know-how from experts and peers. It will be a creative catalyst to develop bold solutions. As part of the offer there will be a dedicated team to support applicants at every step.

NCC have submitted a bid totalling £1,036k.

The bid is focussed on investigating options that will ensure the future delivery of its parks and heritage services. It will take into consideration that, as custodians for the City's parks and heritage, it needs to find solutions which both ensure its assets are preserved for continued public enjoyment, educational learning and increased health & wellbeing opportunities, and are also protected from deterioration and declining standards of maintenance. In order to do this successfully, we currently feels it needs to focus on the specific areas outlined below.

NCC understands that there are numerous commercial income opportunities and efficiencies that can be made across the service within the existing operating model. By having 3 areas of direct focus it can take a **total place management approach** to the future of its parks & heritage services and look at ways of future proofing and growing its business areas whilst providing citizen led service provision focussing on capacity building and health & well-being. Through the development of a 25 year strategy it will provide a comprehensive insight into the transformational changes that need to be taken to ensure a robust future for our parks and heritage.

- The **commercial arm** of the business focussing on commercialisation / revenue streams – managing and operating current in-house services and developing external maintenance contracts such as with Nottingham City Homes NHS Trust and Nottingham Schools. This area will also look at partnerships to grow commercial activity within the City, County, and Derbyshire etc. to grow the business. Key to developing this sector will be the completion of a capital development plan which will also gauge the City's green space natural capital.
- **Volunteer and community investment programme**, focussing on developing skills and qualities amongst the wider community, to help with learning, self-esteem and health & well-being especially amongst our deprived communities. It will also engage our citizens to help co-design and shape the future of our offer, thus bringing added value to the services. This engagement will be critical in strategically developing the services and ensuring there is a strong community voice in decision making.
- **Charitable arm** to concentrate on inward investment by focussing on gaining access to a range of funding such as grant aid, enterprise investments, philanthropy, endowments, crowd funding, sponsorship,

gift aid etc. This will help support the development of a future capital investment strategy, which will investigate social entrepreneur options.

The project funding will be used to commission a broad range of strategies and commercial business development consultant advice and specialist survey information as follows:-

The total project costs are:- **£1,036K**

A. The expenditure will be used to develop

- A New 25 year Green Space Strategy.
- This includes a full audit and quality assessment of all existing parks and green spaces, allotments, sports facilities, cemeteries and amenity spaces.
- Production of a Natural Capital Account plan for Nottingham
- An intensive period of public consultation, workshops and strategy development working groups and community engagement forums
- Production of a capital investment plan for all Nottingham's parks
- Business plans for a range of key commercial development opportunities
- Feasibility plans including site investigations, audience and visitor audits and full competitor analysis including marketing plans
- Procurement options for visitor attraction development opportunities
- Investment funding strategy including expertise in securing social finance, sponsorship, charitable giving and other external investment grants and funding.
- Procurement of Specialist tax, charitable and vat advice
- Procurement of a volunteer / engagement strategy
- Procurement of governance and operating models to help drive commercial trading activities.
- Procurement of specialist legal advice regarding commercial trading opportunities and trading restriction's e.g. existing covenants, Inclosure act etc.
- Production of a comprehensive marketing and communication's plan
- A delivery action plan for the strategy with funding for delivery identified
- Procurement of specialist charitable foundation advice
- Procurement of Specialist architectural services
- Project Management to deliver the FPA programme.

The project will also establish a project management team including the establishment of the following fixed term contract posts

- Project Manager grade J - 2yr FTC
- Project officers x 2 grade H - 2yr FTC
- Snr Administration officer x 2 grade E - 2yr FTC

Next Steps

The project bid was submitted on the 18th January 2019. The final decision board and announcement will be made in March with project starting in Late May / June 2019.