

Stourbridge Area Committee – 27th June 2011

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Heritage Lottery Grant for Mary Stevens Park

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Committee of the successful Heritage Lottery Fund first round bid and outline the programme for the development of the second round application.
2. To request the Committee to consider options to provide match funding for the Stage 2 HLF application.

Background

3. At its meeting on 3rd September 2008 this Committee supported the submission of a round one bid to Heritage Lottery Fund to improve and restore the heritage value of the whole park, but specifically to include the restoration of the main entrance gates.
4. Decision Sheet DUE/20/2009 (dated 8th April 2009) approved the submission of this bid. Unfortunately the application was unsuccessful due to the number of bids submitted, being greater than the available funding. However following detailed feedback from the HLF the bid was refined and re-submitted in August 2010 and subsequently approved on 20th December 2010. As a result HLF are offering a development grant of £116,100, 74% of the amount bid for, towards the development of all the detailed design and documentation necessary to submit a second round application by February 2013.

The key points which need to be addressed in this second round bid are the production of:

- An activity plan
 - A masterplan showing the proposed works
 - A conservation management plan
 - Detailed design to RIBA stage D
 - A detailed 10 year management plan
 - Job descriptions for new posts
 - A detailed cost plan, cash flow, income and spending forecasts
 - Confirmation of partnership funding
5. The round one application was based upon a masterplan developed with the key stakeholders for the park and was itself based upon the plans developed with the friends group as part of the Liveability project. Development of the second round bid would involve further consultation with the stakeholder group and the friends to refine this masterplan and develop the further information detailed above.
 6. In the round one submission the vision for the future of the park, as endorsed by the

stakeholders, was expressed as follows:

“Mary Stevens Park will emerge as a treasured Borough park, enjoyed by the community and all generations of Stourbridge and beyond, providing valuable well-being, recreational and sporting opportunities in an historic landscape setting”

The bid went on to explain that the main focus of the proposals, to be developed as second round application, is to tackle the underlying heritage infrastructural elements of the park which define its character and significance. Specifically this would include the following proposed areas of work:

- Restoration of Heath House gardens and formal terrace
- Repairs to boundary walls
- Extensive restoration of all entrance historic features
- Restoration of Heath Pool with improved features to encourage greater biodiversity
- Construction of a DDA complaint observation platform
- Refurbishment of existing historic bandstand
- Construction of traditionally inspired design for replacement pavilion for bowls and croquet clubs
- Resurfacing of Queens Drive from the main entrance down to the bandstand
- Extension to eastern car park for additional disabled parking
- Removal and re-profile area of tennis courts to create views to Heath Pool
- Restoration of the graffiti shelter for covered seating area in line with historic photographs

All of which would be explored in more depth as part of the creation of the Conservation Plan for the park.

- 7 Before the second round bid can start a Project Manager, on a 2year fixed term contract needs to be appointed. Once in post, the next stage is to write the brief for and procure a Design Team who will draw up the detailed bid. The Team will comprise of such specialists as Landscape Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Building Surveyors, Conservation Specialists, Archaeologists, Ecologists, Hydrologists and Access Advisors. It is anticipated that it will take a further 2- 3months to procure this team. After that it is proposed to aim for an August 2012 submission of the second round bid, but under the conditions of the round one grant the council has up until February 2013 to make the second round submission.
8. A key element of the second round bid is to provide confirmation of the partnership funding that the Council has, or is planning to secure. At this stage the estimated value of the second round bid is in the region of £2,671,180 with a requirement to provide match funding of approximately £624,000. The current sources for this are as follows:

<u>Remaining Liveability allocation</u>	£9,000
<u>Secured and predicted S106 contributions</u>	£140,000
<u>Dudley MBC Greenspaces maintenance budget</u>	£250,000
and	
<u>Local Environmental Trust bids (yet to be made)</u>	£100,000
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Sub-total	£499,000

9. This leaves a match funding shortfall of £125,000 which needs to be identified in

order for the project to be progressed and the second round bid to be submitted. Whilst every effort would be made during the development of the second round bid to secure additional external funding to address this shortfall, opportunities for such funding are limited and there is no guarantee of success. In addition further section 106 contributions may be identified before the bid is submitted, but their magnitude is unknown and cannot be guaranteed.

10. HLF will undertake a formal review of the project part way through, when the outline costs have been developed (RIBA stage C) following this review they would normally sanction continuation with the bid. But if at this stage it is felt that the proposals have been revised significantly or costs have changed, such as in the event that the match funding provided by the Council is significantly lower, and they no longer feel that the project represents value for money, they would refer the project to the Board for re-evaluation and could reject the second round application at that point.
11. The Area Committee last considered this matter at its meeting on 17 November 2008. After considerable discussion of the matter of the HLF bid, the listed gates and other ironwork at the park a suggestion was made in an effort to ensure that progress with the restoration of the gates could be guaranteed in the event that the HLF bid was unsuccessful.
12. The Area Committee resolved to provide funding from both the Area Committee's Capital Allocation budget and from interest earned on the capital of the Ernest Stevens trust for the next five municipal years.
13. The Committee identified a figure of £10,000 per annum from its Capital Allocation budget for the five year period, but also stated that this commitment would be reviewed annually.
14. So far as the Ernest Stevens Trust was concerned no specific figure was identified per annum and there was a further stipulation which stated that if in the interim period other applications were received for trust funding which the Committee considered to be of exceptional need then a grant could be considered and made and as a consequence a smaller sum allocated towards the cost of the repair of the gates.
15. As outlined above if the Council is to pursue the Stage 2 HLF bid, (inclusive of the restoration of the gates and fencing) there has to be a minimum of £624,000 partnership funding identified. Of that amount £499,000 has been secured/identified from other sources leaving a balance of £125,000 to be found.
16. The Area Committees previous commitment to funding elements of this project from both the Capital Allocations budget and the Ernest Stevens Trust was on the proviso that the HLF bid was unsuccessful and specifically it was to ensure the gates and ironwork were restored within a certain timeframe. The opportunity to undertake this work within a similar timeframe is now potentially available through the Stage 2 HLF application alongside a significant number of additional improvements and renovations of the park.
17. This report attempts to clarify matters for the purposes of submitting the HLF Stage 2 bid by confirming that the funding commitments made by the Area

Committee to the restoration of the gates and ironwork, in the event of a failed HLF bid, would also be required for the project to proceed with a potentially successful Stage 2 HLF bid as it is needed to form part of the partnership funding requirement.

18. Consequently the Area Committee is asked to consider what levels of funding, if any, it can provide from both the Area Committees Capital Allocations budget and the interest earned from the Ernest Stevens Trust Fund to contribute towards the £125,000 shortfall in partnership funding for the Stage 2 HLF application.

Finance

19. The development grant awarded is £116,100 which is approx 74% towards a bid of £156,100 therefore the Council is required to contribute £40,000. It is proposed to utilise part of the Liveability match funding allocation for this site to cover this cost. The forecast total cost and funding of the main scheme will be detailed as part of the stage 2 development work and will be reported through to the Capital Programme in due course should the bid be successful. As detailed above, current estimates indicate a match funding requirement of £624,000 leaving a minimum shortfall of £125,000 to be found from other sources.

Law

20. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, authorises the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions

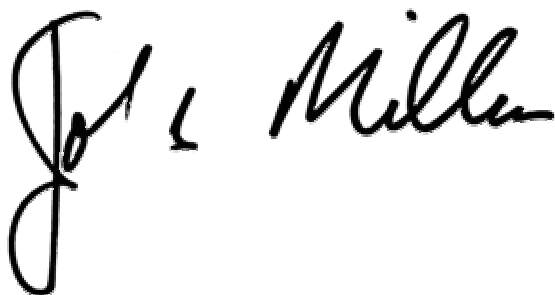
Equality Impact

21. The proposals contained within this report are in full accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities policies and should in no way have any impact on different racial groups, disabled people, both genders and/or other relevant groups.
22. Mary Stevens Park have been audited by Access in Dudley and their recommendations for improving access would be incorporated wherever possible within the detailed design for the second round bid. In addition the overarching principles set out in the Greenspaces Design Guidelines would be used to ensure improve access for people with different abilities.

Recommendation

23. That the Area Committee notes the details of the first round award and outline programme for the second round application and receives periodic update reports.

24 That the Area Committee considers the funding requirements of the Stage 2 HLF application and identifies what level of support can be provided from the resources available to the Area Committee.



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