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**HERMITAGE PARK, HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND OFFER OF AWARD**

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**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report asks Members to approve the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Terms of Grant for the grant awarded for the development of Hermitage Park in Helensburgh, and to delegate authority for the Chief Executive of the council to sign this aforementioned document. This is for the stage one award of funding from HLF and allows us to begin the necessary work for our stage two application.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The council agrees to the HLF Terms of Grant and delegates authority to the Chief Executive to intimate agreement to the terms to HLF.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The draft stage one application to HLF was approved by the council in principle on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2012.
- 3.2 The budget for match funding the HLF grant was approved as part of the 2013/14 budget process and was as follows; £20,000 from the council towards the development budget of £189,700, and £280,000 towards the delivery budget spread over five years and totalling £2,537,500 (the remainder of this is made up of £1,917,500 from HLF, £260,000 from other funders and £80,000 volunteer contribution in-kind).
- 3.3 Following a number of Area Committee and Business Day reports, and an unsuccessful bid which was submitted in February 2013, the HLF Board met on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and the Hermitage Park bid was awarded a first round pass and development grant.
- 3.4 The development phase is necessary to provide funding for a wide ranging consultation on Hermitage Park, and detailed plans, drawings and costs for the completion of the stage two application.

Proposed works to Hermitage Park include;

3.3.1 Restoration of historic fabric including walled memorial garden,

pond and gates, old mill remains, Hermitage Well and the Millig Burn paths, bridges and walls,

3.3.2 Restoration/reinterpretation of historic planting, including open up lines of site to improve safety of visitors,

3.3.3 Celebration of heritage through interpretation and community involvement – and upgrading of the paths and drainage to increase access to the Park,

3.3.4 Reconsideration of the recreational elements which include the children's play park, bowling green, tennis courts, putting green and recreational pavilion, shelter and toilets.

- 3.5 These works will meet the wider social needs of the community, allowing for traditional leisure needs, whilst encouraging use of the Park as a location for education and learning. The vision includes a greater heritage and environmental aspect to the Park, interpreting the heritage and exploring the potential of community gardens, sensory gardens, increasing the habitat for wildlife, birds, etc and minimising future maintenance requirements.
- 3.6 From an economic perspective, skills and training opportunities will be developed for both council staff and the Friends of Hermitage Park Association (FoHPA) and other volunteers, designed to improve the maintenance of the Park. The application also aims to explore opportunities for income streams for maintenance through the redevelopment of the Pavilion and recreational areas which may include a café and improved offer aiming to increase visitor numbers.
- 3.7 There is also a need to increase/improve car parking and hard standing areas in and around the Park to serve the needs of users, and to consider how this can benefit the Victoria Halls, given its heritage importance and proximity to the Park. It is thought that a closer link between the Victoria Halls and the Park would help the sustainability of both venues.
- 3.8 Consultation with groups using the Park has taken place and the application has been driven by (FoHPA). FoHPA also carried out a survey of users of Hermitage Park. Further consultation on Helensburgh's resident's vision will be carried out as part of the stage 2 HLF bid. The project is truly a 'ground up' development with Argyll and Bute Council supporting and enabling.

#### **4. DETAIL**

- 4.1 The HLF Parks for People is a two stage application process. The first stage includes a development phase to take the project to RIBA Work Stage D for the second stage application, for which an outline of proposed activities and costs was provided at stage one. The proposed final costs in stage two should not differ greatly from those we proposed in stage one.
- 4.2 The draft timeline for the application is as follows:

- 4.2.1 Final stage one application submitted – Completed
- 4.2.2 Notification of development award – Completed
- 4.2.3 Development phase - appoint development officer and consultants– April 2014
- 4.2.4 Second stage application prepared – February 2015
- 4.2.5 Notification of second stage – June 2015
- 4.2.6 Works commence on the ground – March 2016
- 4.2.7 Project completes (revenue/interpretation/training) – 2019/2020

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The HLF award contributes to the ground up development and sustainability of Hermitage Park, and provides an opportunity for heritage and environmental improvements. The project has approval in principle from the council. The council is therefore invited to agree to the terms and conditions of grant and delegate authority to sign this to the Chief Executive, in order to begin the stage one development of the Park.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy – None.
- 6.2 Financial – Council match funding of £300,000 for the period of the project was approved at the February 2013 council meeting.
- 6.3 Personnel – One new member of staff will be appointed within Development and Infrastructure Services. Time commitment from Amenity Services and Projects and Renewables staff which will be met within existing resources.
- 6.4 Equal Opportunities – None but the proposed improvements increases accessibility of the Park to those with mobility problems and visitors with pushchairs.
- 6.5 Legal – As per the HLF terms of grant attached.

## **Attachments**

- 1. HLF Terms of Grant

For further information, please contact: Tom Murphy, Streetscene Manager (01436 658908) or Arlene Cullum (01436 658727).

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Executive Director  
23rd January 2014