
HERMITAGE PARK, HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND OFFER OF AWARD

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The park has been successful in its stage two funding application to HLF Parks for People for £2,333,247. This report asks Members to approve the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Terms of Grant for the grant awarded for the conservation, development and reconfiguration of the recreational facilities of Hermitage Park in Helensburgh, and to delegate authority for the Chief Executive of the Council to sign the aforementioned document. The approval by the Council of the HLF grant award offer and associated terms of grant is one of the items required for the permission to start the project. HLF require the terms to be signed off within one month of receipt of the letter of award, expected the first week in January 2016.
- 1.2 The Hermitage Park in Helensburgh is an important heritage asset and includes the town's 'A' Listed war memorial. The Hermitage Park project aims to create a sustainable park for residents and visitors to the area and a resource for the local community. It aims to deliver outcomes related to the economy, health and wellbeing, culture and heritage, and enjoys widespread local support.
- 1.3 The Hermitage Park stage two project cost is £3,110,996 and includes funding from a range of sources, including a council commitment of £280,000 agreed in February 2013. There is a current funding gap of circa £268,400 for which we are requesting the Council to underwrite. In order to mitigate against the Council having to actually find this money applications have been and are being submitted to a range of external funders to the value of £603k. All match funding needs to be in place or underwritten in order for the HLF permission to start to be granted and the project to begin on site in line with the project plan and associated timeline. Any significant delays in securing the permission to start would impact on the timeline and on costs.

2.0 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.

- 2.2 The Council accepts the principle of underwriting the current shortfall of £268,409, if required, to enable the project to progress to the next stage which is to secure the permission to start from HLF and to then begin the delivery of the capital project in line with the project plan and associated timeline. The Council further agrees that the mechanism to finance any shortfall is dealt with as part of the 2016/17 budget process.

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The park has been successful in its stage two funding application to HLF Parks for People for £2,333,247. This report asks Members to approve the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Terms of Grant for the grant awarded for the conservation, development and reconfiguration of the recreational facilities of Hermitage Park in Helensburgh, and to delegate authority for the Chief Executive of the Council to sign the aforementioned document. The approval by the Council of the HLF grant award offer and associated terms of grant is one of the items required for the permission to start the project. HLF require the terms to be signed off within one month of receipt of the letter of award, expected the first week in January 2016.
- 3.2 In addition, in order to begin work on the project this report asks members to also agree to underwrite the current funding gap of circa £268,400 which we have mitigated against by applying to external funders for £603K and should receive notification of the outcome of these various funding bids by 31 March 2016.
- 3.3 The Hermitage Park project aims to create a sustainable park for residents and visitors to the area and a resource for the local community. It aims to deliver outcomes related to the economy, health and wellbeing, culture and heritage, and enjoys widespread local support.
- 3.4 The Hermitage Park in Helensburgh is an important heritage asset and includes the town's 'A' Listed war memorial. The park is currently underused primarily due to its current state of disrepair, but has huge unrealised potential. The community and local groups have demonstrated how important it is through their commitment to the project and it is their determination and vision that led to the application to HLF. The project will conserve and interpret the heritage and encourage visitors to learn about it; reconfigure part of the recreational facilities and provide a dynamic hub through the development of a new pavilion and engage with people through working in partnership to 'Grow Our Park Together'.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

4.2 The Council accepts the principle of underwriting the current shortfall of £268,409, if required, to enable the project to progress to the next stage which is to secure the permission to start from HLF and to then begin the delivery of the capital project in line with the project plan and associated timeline. The Council further agrees that the mechanism to finance any shortfall is dealt with as part of the 2016/17 budget process.

5.0 DETAIL

5.1 HLF Parks for People is a two stage application process. The HLF first stage pass was achieved in January 2014. The second stage bid took the project to RIBA Work Stage three (D) and was submitted on 1st September 2015. The HLF Board met on the 15th December 2015 and awarded the Hermitage Park bid a second round pass. The table below illustrates the funding for the second stage of the project.

HLF STAGE TWO - Delivery Phase 2016 - 2021	Amount	Confirmation of funding
HLF	£2,333,247	confirmed
ABC (earmarked reserves)	£280,000	confirmed
War Memorial Trust	£60,000	confirmed
FoHPA	£20,000	confirmed
MOD Covenant (SPT/Sustrans or LEADER)	£268,409	MOD 1 st stage pass approved, 2 nd stage deadline 16 th January 2016, awarded March 2016.
Volunteers (in kind)	£129,340	confirmed
Total project	£3,110,996	

5.2 In order to begin work on the project the council must accept the terms of grant within one month of receiving the HLF offer letter expected the first week in January, and following on from this, receive permission to start from HLF. Permission to start requires the following documents;

- Evidence of the complete funding package being in place
- Planning permission and consents, which will include Listed Building Consent for the conservation works to the War Memorial
- Local Authority condition statement (Report and Minutes from Full Council meeting authorising acceptance of terms of grant).

5.3 Subject to the Council approving the Terms of the Grant offer all the documents above are on track except for the completed funding package. In order to provide evidence of a complete funding package,

HLF are able to accept the council underwriting the current funding shortfall of circa £268,400(as illustrated in the above table). We are mitigating against the Council having to actually find this sum of funding by applying for £603K from other external grant funding sources. These sources include a) £253K from MOD Covenant, for which we have a stage two pass, b) SPT for £175K and c) Sustrans for £175K or higher for which we have had an initial positive meeting (not yet submitted). In addition, when the LEADER fund opens, we will consider submitting a bid and have had positive talks with regard to this. We aim to have the funding package complete by 31st March 2016 based on current funders' deadlines.

- 5.4 In order to progress the project it is proposed that the Council agree to underwrite the current funding gap of circa £268,409 as described above. This would allow the project to secure its permission to start from HLF and to then begin the delivery of the second stage works as per our proposed timeline submitted to HLF as part of our stage two application.
- 5.5 The HLF stage one terms and condition of grant were approved by full council in January 2014. The final draft Masterplan and the Management and Maintenance Plan were approved in principle by the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 11th August 2015 and the Policy and Resources Committee on 20th August 2015. The HLF development is overseen by a steering group chaired by the council and in partnership with the community, in particular Friends of Hermitage Park Association.
- 5.6 The HLF second stage works will include the following;
- Park Manager post for five years
 - Development of proposed capital elements, which includes the A Listed war, memorial and gardens, hermitage wishing well, mill archaeological remains, pavilion, redesign of recreational elements, drainage, paths, bridges and interpretation,
 - Improvements to the natural heritage,
 - Opportunities for reducing carbon emissions, guided by the Hermitage Park Environmental Assessment,
 - Activities with visitors and volunteers, skills and training etc, as set out within the Activity Plan.
- 5.7 The draft timeline for the second stage works is as follows:
- Permission to start signed off - February 2016
 - Appoint HLF Delivery Officer/Park Manager - March 2016
 - Appointment of Design Team – March/April 2016
 - Commission stage – April/September 2016
 - Contract start - Sept 2016
 - Activity Plan start - December 2016
 - Interpretation plan - October 2016 to February 2018
 - Marketing plan - September 2016 to September 2018
 - Project completes (revenue/interpretation/training) – 2020/2021

- 5.8 The project meets the following objectives of the Single Outcome Agreement;
- A diverse and thriving economy
 - Infrastructure that supports sustainable growth
 - Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all
 - Children and young people have the best possible start
 - People live in safer and stronger communities.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The Hermitage Park project has been awarded a HLF grant that will release circa £2,831,000 of funding and support for a Council investment of £280,000. The funding award and demonstrable community support provides an opportunity to create a sustainable park for residents and visitors alike and fits well with strategies for the area. Whilst there remains a funding gap of £268,409, we have taken steps to mitigate against the Council having to find this sum of funding, with over £603,000 of funding applications in place, one of which has received favourable feedback and has progressed into the final funding stage.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 7.1 | Policy | This projects supports delivery of the SOA in particular outcome 6, that we live in safer, stronger communities and the Local Development Plan and Economic Development Plan, Local Biodiversity Action Plan. |
| 7.2 | Financial | £20,000 has been previously allocated within the budget process for the development works in 2014/2015. A further £280,000 has been allocated from ear marked reserves for potentially 2015/16 onwards depending on HLF approval of the stage two delivery phase. Should the project fail to receive funding from MOD Covenant, SPT and Sustrans or LEADER there is potentially an additional cost to the Council of £268,409. |
| 7.3 | Legal | Bound by HLF terms of grant attached. |
| 7.4 | HR | New staff post funded by HLF for years 1-5. Thereafter the duties will be undertaken within the existing staffing budget. |
| 7.5 | Equalities | The proposed improvements increase accessibility of the park to those with mobility |

needs and visitors with pushchairs.

- 7.6 Risk
- If the Council does not accept HLF terms and conditions over £2million of HLF funding will be lost to the Park and the area, the project will not be viable without this funding and the deteriorating condition of the park, a key council asset, will continue and it may well require significant investment from the Council in the near future. The project has been designed to ensure that the on-going maintenance costs of the park in the future are reduced and are sustainable.
- Given the timing of the external funding bids that are currently being progressed, earliest expected decision dates of 31 March, there would be a delay in the permission to start being given and a resulting impact on the delivery timeline and the potential for increased costs as a result. It is for this reason that the Council is being asked to underwrite the short fall in the short term pending the successful outcome of the external bids
- 7.7 Customer Services None.

8.0 APPENDICES

- 8.1 HLF Signed Award Letter
- 8.2 PfP Terms of Grant

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