

TITLE OF REPORT: REFURBISHMENT OF BANCROFT RECREATION GROUND, HITCHIN

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR JANE GRAY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 On the 28th January 2014 Cabinet approved delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Customer Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, for the final submission of the Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid for the refurbishments of Bancroft Recreation Ground. The bid was submitted in February 2014.
- 1.2 The HLF Board met on the 24th June 2014 to consider NHDC's Parks For People lottery bid. Unfortunately they decided to reject the Councils application.
- 1.3 Officers are arranging to meet with representatives from the HLF to discuss their decision in greater detail.
- 1.4 Based on the information we will receive from discussions with the HLF officers will consider a range of future options for Bancroft Recreation Ground and report back to a future meeting of Cabinet.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the decision of the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 2.2 That officers consider a range of future options for Bancroft Recreation Ground and report back to a future meeting of Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To allow time to prepare a report on future options following the HLF's decision not to award a lottery grant to refurbish Bancroft Recreation Ground.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None considered in this report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 5.1 An extensive programme of consultation and engagement has been undertaken during the development of this project.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report do not require a key decision and have not been identified in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 On the 25th September 2012 Cabinet approved the development of a Parks For People Lottery application for Bancroft Recreation Ground.
- 7.2 On the 28th January 2014 Cabinet approved delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Customer Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, for the final submission of the Stage 1 HLF bid for the refurbishments of Bancroft Recreation Ground. The bid was submitted in February 2014.
- 7.3 This project has been identified in the Priorities for the District 2014/15 as a key project to support the priority of Working with our Communities.

8. ISSUES

- 8.1 The HLF Board met on the 24th June 2014 to consider our application and unfortunately decided to reject the Councils application.
- 8.2 Officers are arranging to meet with representatives from the HLF to discuss their decision in greater detail.
- 8.3 Based on the information from HLF officers will report on a range of future options for Bancroft Recreation Ground and report back to a future meeting of Cabinet.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Under Cabinet's Terms of Reference as set out in section 5 of the Council's Constitution, Cabinet has responsibility for agreeing policies and strategies other than those reserved to Council and to approve those major service developments which also constitute Key Decisions.
- 9.2 The Council provides parks, recreation grounds and open spaces under its discretionary powers.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The total estimated project cost was £2,647,000 of which £2,247,000 was anticipated to be funded by the HLF. The Councils capital expenditure to date for the development of the stage 1 lottery bid is £43,300. The report to the December meeting of Cabinet will determine if the work undertaken to date is in effect aborted or if it will be used for a future scheme. If the work is aborted then the expenditure will need to be charged to the general fund.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Failure to attract lottery funding had been identified as a key risk to the delivery of the project on the Risk Register. The consideration of alternative options will enable future plans for the recreation ground to be determined.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1st October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5th April 2011. There is a General duty that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.

- 12.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in the relevant section in Paragraph 12 above.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no human resource implications contained within this report.

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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16. CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS

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