

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No. 8
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TITLE OF REPORT: BANCROFT GARDENS - PARKS FOR PEOPLE LOTTERY APPLICATION – UPDATE INFORMATION NOTE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This Information Report provides the Area Committee with an update on work to develop a scheme for the refurbishment of Bancroft Gardens in accordance with Cabinet's agreement to proceed with the scheme based on the indicative master plan attached as Appendix B.
- 1.2 The Project is managed by a Project Board comprising the Portfolio Holders for Leisure and Environment together with the Chairman of Hitchin Area Committee since November 2010.
- 1.3 The aims of the Project illustrated by the Master Plan are:
 - To improve a key town centre park as part of NHDC's commitment to town centres and green issues
 - To reduce the amount of hard landscaping in the park
 - To rejuvenate the Bancroft Gardens
 - To provide more facilities for young people
 - To overcome health and safety issues of parking at the park entrance
- 1.4 This Information Note specifically provides the Area Committee with an update on the appointment of a landscape architect to develop the Stage 1 Lottery Application submission and user and non-user surveys carried out to help inform the development of the scheme.

2 CONTRACT FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

- 2.1 Of the eight companies that were invited to tender for these works, seven submitted a tender. These were evaluated with a ratio of 60 per cent for price and 40 per cent for quality. At the time of writing this report six companies have passed the quality evaluation and the financial evaluation is still being undertaken. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.
- 2.2 The lead consultants first task will be to develop the Stage One Lottery application for submission in February 2014. Subject to a successful outcome they will develop the Stage Two Lottery application and project manage the construction works on site. Listed below is a project plan detailing the key stages and progress to date.

Task	Completion date	Phases
Develop brief for Landscape Architect	03/05/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Prepare Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ)	03/05/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Prepare ITT	03/05/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Project Board sign off	13/05/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Submit OJEU Notice with PQQ	15/05/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Closing Date for Receipt of PQQs	15/06/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Issue ITT	19/07/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Closing date for return of tenders	05/09/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Project Board sign off	10/10/13 <i>(completed)</i>	
Landscape Architect appoint sub consultants	22/11/13	
Completion of stage 1 bid	31/01/14	
Project Board sign off	04/02/14	
Submit Stage 1 Lottery Bid	14/02/14	
HLF decision on Stage 1 application	June 2014	
Start to develop Stage 2 lottery bid	July 2014	
Submit Stage 2 lottery bid	Feb 2015	
HLF decision on Stage 2 application	June 2015	
Tender for main construction contractor	July 2015	
Award construction tender	Oct 2015	
Commence works on site	Jan 2016	
Complete construction works	Dec 2016	
Deliver community action plans	Jan 2017 - on	Post Construction

3. SURVEYS

- 3.1 In order to assist the appointed architect the questionnaire attached to this report (Appendix A) was developed and face to face surveys were undertaken at the following locations to try to capture a snap shot of the views of the local community. It should be stressed that the nature of this public engagement is necessarily flexible and will be a continuing feature of the Project as the scheme progresses. Nonetheless, the information derived from the survey work is important in developing an understanding of the sometimes competing needs of current and potential future users of the park, its functionality and cost effectiveness in capital and revenue terms.

Location	Date
Bancroft Gardens	AM Thurs 29 th August 2013
Bancroft Gardens	PM Fri 30 th August 2013
Bancroft Gardens (Picnic in Park event)	PM Sun 1 st Sept 2013
Bancroft Gardens	PM Tues 3 rd Sept 2013
Detached Youth work	Wed 4 th Sept 2013
Bancroft Gardens	AM Fri 6 th Sept 2013
Purwell Youth Club	Tues 10 th Sept 2013
Hitchin Councillor Surgery	Sat 5 th Oct 2013
Wilshere Dacre School	TBC

- 3.2 In addition to the face to face surveys, a survey was placed on the Council's website in order to reach a greater number of residents. This was a very slightly amended version which incorporated feedback regarding two questions. The web version combined the two possible responses of 'improved lighting' and 'better feeling of safety (e.g. CCTV, more lighting)' into one, namely 'better feeling of safety (e.g. CCTV, more lighting)'. It also separated tennis players into those using the public or the club courts. These additions will be reported distinctly and it will be made clear where necessary whether they are responses from the paper versions only or online only.
- 3.3 As with many surveys of this type it is inevitable that the views expressed may not be wholly representative as a result of the largely self selecting sample and because of organised attempts to give prominence to a particular issue or set of issues.
- 3.4 The results of the survey will help to develop the scheme by being used in conjunction with professional advice, Heritage Lottery Fund requirements, other survey data/opinion research and the existing master plan previously agreed by Cabinet.
- 3.5 The survey was split five different age groups from those under 12 years of age up to those over 70 years of age. In total 438 surveys were completed. Currently we are lacking responses from the under 12 year age group with only 2 being received from this age group. Groundwork Hertfordshire are looking at ways to capture the views of this age group.
- 3.6 Once the survey is complete Project Officers will consider feedback from the surveys alongside other opinion research data and these will be considered in due course by Project Board and the results published thereafter.

4. APPENDICES

- 4.1 Appendix A - Questionnaire
- 4.2 Appendix B – Indicative Master Plan

5. CONTACT OFFICERS

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