



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
10 April 2018
Agenda Item 8

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: Selden

Brooklands Park - Update on the actions made to date

Report by the Director for Communities

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to update the Joint Strategic Committee on the progress made on the project to dredge Brooklands Lake and also the associated environmental enhancements of the islands, margins and Valley Gardens section of the Teville Stream.
- 1.2. The report also provides information on the successful formation of a Friends of Brooklands Park and also the creation of a Master Plan, following a public consultation exercise to set out the Council's future aims and objectives for the park.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Recommendation One - The Committee to note the progress made on:
 - A. The dredging of the lake and associated environmental enhancements of the islands, margins and Valley Gardens section of the Teville Stream.
 - B. The revised date for for the completion of the above project.
 - C. The successful formation of a Friends of Brooklands Park.

D. The creation of a Master Plan, following a public consultation exercise to set out the Council's future aims and objectives for the park.

3.0 Context

Brooklands Lake

- 3.1 Within Platforms for Our Places, the Councils have committed to supporting the stewardship of our natural resources. Brooklands Lake is a well loved local amenity, and the Committee is well aware of the wealth of public support for its work to improve the lake and its surrounds. This report follows previous reports presented to JSC on 6 December 2016 and 6 June 2017 about the work at Brooklands Lake.
- 3.2 In December 2016, the report to JSC outlined the functions and history of the lake, as well as presenting 4 options for the environmental improvements and future management of the lake. All of the 4 options included the dredging of the lake with different options for the disposal, removal or retention of the silt deposited in the lake.
- 3.3 The committee approved that officers pursue option 4 : the removal of wet sludge and use in margin and island creation , enhancement of valley gardens to reduce the impact of the pollution load from the Teville Stream. The construction of the reed beds and sludge barrier at the northern end of the lake.
- 3.4 The 6 June 2017 JSC report outlined the progress made by officers in terms of:
- The tendering and evaluation process undertaken for the above works.
 - Due diligence carried out.
 - Consultation with other Local Authorities and Agencies.
- 3.5 The recommendations approved delegated authority to the Director for Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for the Environment, to approve the final procurement and award the contract up to the value of £850,00 as allocated within the 2017/18 Capital programme. This was subject to satisfactory due diligence checks and agreement of designs with the Environment Agency.

- 3.6 In July 2017, Five Rivers Environmental Contracting, a Salisbury based company were appointed to carry out the environmental improvement works following the completion of the tendering exercise.
- 3.7 Work started on site in November 2017 following the agreement of the designs and obtaining the required permits from the Environment Agency. Initially works were scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2018.
- 3.8 Once completed the construction phase will have removed 15,500 cubic metres of silt from the lake which is being creatively used in the restoration of the lake's margins and islands, as well as the creation of a further island in the centre of the lake which will provide significant additional habitat opportunities for wildlife. Five Rivers have been busy staking chestnut poles into the ground and using geotextiles (permeable fabrics with 100-year lifespan) to extend the banks around the lake. Amphibious diggers have then been busy scooping silt into position.
- 3.9 Since starting on site, Five Rivers have had to contend with prolonged and higher levels than estimated periods of rain which has led to the project taking longer than anticipated. This is primarily because the silt material being removed has been more difficult to collect and transport around the lake due to the adverse weather conditions.
- 3.10 The dredging of the lake is now programmed to be completed by the end of March 2018, with a revised date having been agreed of the end of April 2018, for the completion of all the works contained within the original contract.
- 3.11 By this time the margins of the lake will have been replanted with native reed beds to act as a natural silt traps and marginal vegetation will be planted on the islands and the Valley Gardens section of the Teville stream to increase the biodiversity of the park. A general clean up of the construction site will be completed in the latter stages of the contract period.
- 3.12 It is anticipated that the temporary heras security fencing around the lake will need to stay in place for 2-3 months after the contract ends, whilst the newly created margins and islands consolidate and become firm enough to allow the general public to once again walk lakeside. A walkway will also be constructed on the south west of the lake to enhance the visitor's experience of the lake during the additional time the heras fencing will stay in place.
- 3.13 A lake management plan is in the process of being drafted to meet the lake's on-going future maintenance needs.

4.0 Friends of Brooklands Park

- 4.1 A series of five public meetings led by the Executive Member for the Environment, and supported by officers from Environmental Services and Five Rivers, have been held regarding Brooklands lake and the wider park since the project started. These meetings were initially set up to inform the local community and interested stakeholders of the progress being made and to engage widely with our communities around this project. The public meetings have taken place approximately every two months and have been extremely well attended with between 50 - 70 people present at each meeting.
- 4.2 The local community have shown real interest, and their passion and love for the park has been clearly demonstrated at these meetings. This has led to a Friends of Brooklands Park Group being formed, which held its inaugural meeting in October 2017.
- 4.3 The Friends of Group have now adopted a constitution and created a shadow board chaired by Councillor Callum Buxton, the local Ward Councillor from the Selden ward. All of the required Officer posts have now been filled, until the 1st Annual General Meeting which will be held in October 2018 where the board will be duly formally elected.
- 4.4 A first Friends Of event was held in February 2018, where the Friends of Group held a litter pick event in the Park. Despite the weather being un-seasonally wintry over 30 people attended, contributing over 80 hours volunteer time and collected 36 bags of litter, which equated to 120kg of rubbish.
- 4.5 The Friends of Group are key to ensure they are communicating widely and engaging with their communities and local residents. They have produced their own logo, taken possession of a new noticeboard provided by the Council to display the group's information, as well as setting up social media channels including facebook, twitter, instagram and an email account.
- 4.6 The Friends of Group are planning further events this summer possibilities include; litter picking, wildflower sowing, picnics and other get together events.

5.0 Brooklands Park Masterplan

- 5.1 In January 2018, following a procurement exercise, the Council appointed Chris Blandford Associates (CBA), a nationally renowned landscape design

and environmental planning consultancy to prepare a masterplan and vision report for the refurbishment and reinvigoration of Brooklands Park.

- 5.2 One of their early actions, in conjunction with the Council's Communications team was to launch a online consultation exercise to give the local community and interested stakeholders the opportunity to have their say and help to shape the future of the park.
- 5.3 The response from the local community was amazing, with over 800 responses received online. The collated feedback is being used by the consultants to develop concept options for the future of the park. Included in the brief given to CBA was to provide options to turn the park into a major asset for the community.
- 5.4 An ecological study of the park is being undertaken, so that the consultants were aware of the park's current wildlife habitats and species present. This study and findings will be fed into any future designs for the park.
- 5.5 The brief also includes an assessment of the long term, practicality and financial sustainability of the all potential options, hence all potential options for the final master plan, will be tested against some commercial viability parameters. Clearly it is the wish of the Council that whatever route is taken, this is a for the long term benefit of our communities, and that benefit is sustainable.
- 5.6 The next step is to present potential options for further public consultation later this year, before selecting a preferred option, which will then be developed into the final spatial masterplan, in collaboration with Council Officers and the Executive Member for Environment.

6. Engagement & Communication

- 6.1 A full online consultation exercise has been undertaken which resulted in over 800 responses being received, which have been passed to the consultants to help shape the concept options being provided.
- 6.2 The online consultation exercise was advertised on the Council's website and also via the Council's social media channels - facebook, twitter and linkedin. The Worthing Herald, the Argus and local radio stations Juice and More all also highlighted the consultation to their audiences.
- 6.3 The consultation was also promoted at the Brooklands Park public meeting on

16th January 2018.

- 6.4 The Executive Member for the Environment has been kept apprised of progress throughout and been actively involved in support the formation of the Friends Of Group and chairing public meetings. Overall the level of engagement and consultation around all aspects of this project have been extremely high.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The Capital Programme approved on the 20th December 2016 by Worthing Borough Council included a budget of £850,000 for Environmental Improvements to Brooklands Lake.
- 7.2 The report to the Joint Strategic Committee dated the 6th June 2017 sought approval, following a procurement exercise, for the awarding of a contract up to the value of £850,000 and the formal release of the budget.
- 7.3 At this stage of the project, it is expected that the project will be delivered within the budget released.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 8.2 Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 allows the Council to enter into a contract in relation to any of its functions. In addition, the Council must comply with its Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- 8.3 Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 provides that a Local Authority shall have the power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

Background Papers

- Joint Strategic Committee Report - 6 December 2016 - Environmental improvement and future management options - Brooklands Lake.
- Joint Strategic Committee - 6 June 2017 - The environmental management of Brooklands Lake.

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

- Transforming the facilities on offer at this community asset will help to positively contribute to the economic development of our places.

2. Social

- The creation of a Friends of Group and improved facilities on offer at this community asset will also help to positively contribute to the social development of our places.

2.1 Social Value

- All of the developments outlined in the above report will have a positive impact on our local communities.

2.2 Equality Issues

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- The increased local community engagement with the park can only contribute positively to the Council's aim of reducing crime and disorder in the vicinity of the park.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

- All of the developments outlined in the above report will have a significant positive impact on our management, custodianship and protection of this much valued natural resource.

4. Governance

- The developments outlined within this report are aligned to the Council's priorities contained within the Stewarding our Natural Resources platform