

CABINET

Storey Tasting Garden- Update 2nd November 2016

Report of Chief Officer Environment

PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To provide an update on progress with the Storey Tasting Garden projects and recommend a way forward.			
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Officer Referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision	NA		
This report is public			

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the scope of the project is broadened to one that includes the whole of the Storey garden space and that the Council provides active direction (in partnership with the Friends group) of this project, thereby allowing the Tasting Garden restoration project development and fund-raising to continue but with officer support.
- (2) That Cabinet thanks the Friends of Storey Gardens for their efforts to date and recognises this by the provision of greater support.
- (3) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Chief Officer (Environment), in agreement with the Chief Officer (Resources) /Section 151 Officer, to approve the making and acceptance of external funding bids above the key decision threshold for this project, where it can be contained within the budget and policy framework and would not require redirection of resources between service areas, functions or activities on an ongoing basis.
- (4) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Chief Officer Resources / Section 151 Officer, in agreement with the Chief Officer (Environment), to adopt the role of "accountable body" where appropriate, in order to support the partnership with the formally constituted Friends of Storey Gardens group, subject to any due diligence and any financial implications being contained within the budget and policy framework.
- (5) That that above delegations remain in place until March 2018 and be

subject to review at that time.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Cabinet of 3rd Nov 2015 made the following decision regarding the Storey Tasting Gardens and the desire of the Friends of Group to restore the artwork therein-

'That restoration of the artwork is not a high priority for the Council, but nevertheless a minimal amount of officer time will be provided to clarify the governance issues necessary to enable the Friends group to apply for major grant funding to restore the artwork as the lead partner with the Council. This funding would need to include a reasonable sum to cover appropriate project management of the restoration, plus insurance and future maintenance costs of the artwork to minimise any future liability on the Council's budget. Following the clarification of governance issues and clear permission to proceed, the Friends group to be given 12 months to raise the necessary funds. If fundraising is unsuccessful in this timescale, the Council to revert to the alternative masterplan option of improving the gardens without restoring the artwork and this will be reported back to Cabinet.'

1.2 This report will provide an update on progress since then.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 In the last 12 months the Friends Group have –

- Produced detailed budget for restoration works including negotiations with Mark Dion.
- Secured private donation pledge of £18K.
- Had regular meetings with relevant Council officers to agree details and direction of project.
- Submitted application to The Henry Moore Foundation for artwork restoration costs; unfortunately unsuccessful – feedback has been requested.
- Submitted application to Lancashire Environmental Fund (LEF) for improving access to the gardens - decision awaited.
- Engaged in pre-application discussions with Heritage Lottery Fund. An informal visit from the HLF case officer is scheduled for 20th October 2016.
- Started process of contacting Sir Nicholas Serrota to follow up on his offer to assist with finding funding.
- Requested that City Council act as accountable body for Friends group - decision awaited.
- Held 6 open days and continued to gather comments from members of the public.
- Continued to maintain garden including agreeing reduced City Council mowing regime.

- Implemented funding secured from LEF to plant 'Hollygon' area on Castle Park and butterfly border in the garden.

2.2 The above demonstrates a very positive commitment from the Friends group to progress the project.

2.3 The eventual outcome of this project needs to contribute to the business plan for the Storey Institute, and furthermore it is expected that it would need to be considered as part of the 2018/19 budget, given its wider remit. In essence, this gives more time for fund-raising. (NOTE- the scheduled review of the business plan is expected to be delayed until summer 2017, rather than it be completed prior to 2017/18. This will enable this potential project and other Storey developments to be taken into account.) The Friends project is focussed on the Tasting Garden but the wider masterplan covers the lower garden also. To capitalise on the good work done to date and to ensure a joined up outcome it is recommended that the Council now takes an active lead and broadens the scope of the project to one that looks at the development of the gardens as whole. In practical terms this will mean-

- Direction of the project as a whole to ensure the Tasting Garden project links with the plans for the lower garden which in turn supports the Storey business plan. The intention being to work in partnership with the Friends of Group, but with the Council as lead.
- Some Officer support to the Friends of Group for the current tasting Garden project.
- Contributing to and providing approval for the making of accepting of external funds that will contribute to the project.
- Acting as accountable body, where appropriate, for external funds raised that will contribute to the project.

2.4 It is anticipated that some increased Officer input can be provided from within some service areas, but this is limited and will need to be kept under review, especially in terms of any call on support services.

2.5 This proposal is intended to provide greater support to the efforts of the Friends of group and to ensure that if progressed, the gardens are developed in a way that will best support the wider business plans for the Storey.

3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 As outlined in the report

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 **Option 1-** that the scope of the project is broadened to one that includes the whole of the Storey garden space and that the Council provides active direction of this project. This will allow the Friends Tasting Garden restoration project to continue but with officer support.

4.2 **Option 2-** that the current Friends of Group project is given a further 12 months to continue with minimal officer time allocated to their efforts. The group has made excellent progress to date but without greater input from the Council as landowner there is a risk the project may become disjointed and not provide the best outcome

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 The Officer preferred option is option 1.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The report outlines progress made so far and recommends a way forward.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Clean and Green places are a priority for the Council

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

Development of the Gardens will need to be undertaken in such a way as the gardens are accessible and mitigations to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour are designed in. Sustainability of design / development will also be considered as it is important that ongoing maintenance costs are minimised.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal have been consulted and have no further comments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications arising at this time as it is expected that working more closely in partnership with the Friends Group can be met from within existing officer resources, including officers from Property Group and Regeneration & Planning in terms of links with the Storey Institute Business Plan where appropriate.

In taking on the role of accountable body for external funds raised, as the Council already has well established systems in place, then it would be better placed to manage such funds as well as mitigating against any significant potential risks arising.

Finally, Members are reminded that any funds raised would need to include the ongoing maintenance and associated costs for the artwork and also the wider masterplan.

Given Council's requirement for there to be a review of the Storey business plan, it is expected that this matter will feed into development of the 2018/19 budget and planning process.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**Human Resources:**

NA

Information Services:

NA

Property:

The gardens are integral to the Storey Institute and development needs to contribute to the business plan for the building.

Open Spaces:

As outlined in the report

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

none

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