

**TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**DELEGATED EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REPORT**

**Report to:** Executive Member for Culture and Leisure  
**Date:** 13.08.19  
**Report for:** Decision  
**Report of:** Corporate Director, Place

**Report Title**

Longford Park National Lottery Heritage Fund Development Phase Bid.

**Summary**

The report describes the detail of a proposed development phase funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund including timescales, requirements and financial implications for the Council.

**Recommendation(s)**

That the Executive Member for Environment provides approval to proceed and submit the application before 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

**Contact person for access to background papers and further information:**

**Name:** Paul Farrand  
**Extension:** x5504

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	The project links well to the 'Health and Wellbeing'; 'Successful and Thriving Places', 'Children and Young People'; 'Pride In Our Area' and 'Green and Connected' Corporate Objectives.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	The project is aligned with the draft GMSF in terms of Objective 8: Improve the quality of our natural environment and access to green spaces and Objective 9: Ensure access to physical and social infrastructure. There is clear alignment with the GM Moving Strategy through the focus on creating a major hub for sport and physical activity at Longford Park, plus strong links to the key priorities of the GM Cultural Strategy in terms of maximising the impact of GM's cultural and heritage offer.
Financial	£50k match funding via 2019/20 Greenspace Capital Programme, to be reallocated if the Development Phase bid is unsuccessful. If the bid is successful, Development Phase costs incurred are at risk up to the value of the Council's capital match if the project does not progress to the Delivery Phase, creating a revenue budget pressure.
Legal Implications:	National Lottery Heritage Fund grants are governed by standard legal contracts covering payment arrangements, monitoring of outcomes and publicity. A 'Permission to Start' form is submitted by the Council before 'Permission to Start' approval is issued by the NLHF.
Equality/Diversity Implications	The audience development plan will be focused on increasing the diversity of the park's audience, identifying and removing barriers to participation in heritage and targeting specific groups not currently using the park.
Sustainability Implications	Environmental impact and sustainability are key bid criteria in terms of the park's role in climate change adaptation and enhanced biodiversity.
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	Existing staff and partner resources identified to support the bid. The project involves bidding for funds to improve council assets at Longford Park.
Risk Management Implications	A successful Development Phase bid would carry an element of risk in terms of the additional costs incurred potentially becoming a revenue budget pressure if the project did not progress to the Delivery Phase as outlined in Finance section.

Health & Wellbeing Implications	The bid and proposals have the potential improve the health and wellbeing of local residents, especially in the north of the borough.
Health and Safety Implications	The bid and proposals can address health and safety issues at Longford Park in terms of the condition of buildings, structures, infrastructure and facilities.

## 1.0 Background

1.1 The Council commissioned AECOM in September 2018 to develop a masterplan for Longford Park, Trafford's largest park and a designated Conservation Area, linked to an anticipated bid submission to The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). As part of their brief, AECOM have completed detailed drainage, structural and heritage assessments, as well as a draft masterplan, a draft conservation management plan and associated display materials and visualisations for the consultation events.

1.2 GM environmental charity City of Trees were commissioned to deliver the consultation and audience development components of the project, as part of their annual programme of work with the Council. Stakeholder and general public consultation sessions were held at the Longfords, at Stretford Public Hall and in Stretford Mall during March 2019, linked to the draft masterplan and an online survey.

1.3 The project, under the title of 'Longford Park: People, Place and Nature', is concerned with the built, social, cultural and natural heritage of Longford Park and its importance to Stretford, Trafford and Manchester with a particular heritage focus on:

a) The evolution of Longford Park, reflecting the transition of Stretford from rural village to urban town with the advent of the railway, canals and population growth associated with nineteenth century urbanisation;

b) The legacy and influence of important local industrialists and benefactors John and Enriqueta Rylands to the physical, social and political landscape of Stretford and Manchester, with further reference to earlier residents of the park such as Thomas Walker, the cotton merchant and prominent local politician;

c) The natural heritage of the park, recognising Longford Park's role as an important natural capital asset on the edge of The Mersey Valley, delivering important ecosystem service benefits for people, places and nature.

1.4 Following meetings with assigned NLHF case officers and the publication by the NLHF of a revised national funding programme and guidance for heritage projects in late January 2019, a formal expression of interest (EOI) was submitted in April 2019. The EOI outlined the scope, scale and key outcomes of the project in line with NLHF guidance and was successful at this competitive stage, enabling the submission of a development phase application (often referred to as a 'stage one' bid).

## 2.0 Wider Corporate Links

2.1 The project is aligned with the Council's Corporate Priorities, primarily 'Green and Connected', but with strong links to those such as 'Health and Wellbeing'; 'Successful and Thriving Places', 'Children and Young People' and 'Pride In Our Area'. The project has the

potential to deliver significantly against Corporate Plan Priority 6: Maximising our green spaces, transport and digital connectivity and its aims to encourage more people to use Trafford's green spaces and be more active as well as mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change in Trafford.

### **3.0 Draft Masterplan**

The draft masterplan proposes the following improvement works for Longford Park (see Appendix 1):

- (i) A redesigned former Longford Hall footprint, portico and gardens as a central performance and cultural space plus restored and redesigned grand lawn, steps and ha ha
- (iii) Restored walled gardens to enhance the setting of the successful community allotments and Rylands Kitchen Garden
- (iv) Restoration and transformation of the stables/shippon complex into the park's volunteering, activity and skills development hub along with improved accommodation for First Stretford (Longford) Scout Group, present in the park for over a century
- (v) Pet's Corner improvements to broaden its appeal
- (vi) Refurbishment works to positive contributors to the Longford Park Conservation Area, including the Rylands gardens, rockery and shelters
- (vii) Works to entrances, boundaries, furniture and signage/interpretation in keeping with the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- (viii) Soft landscape works including the reintroduction of Longford Brook into the park landscape at surface level to create priority habitat, visual appeal, improved water management and learning opportunities
- (ix) Access and circulation improvements for the benefit of the park's assets, residents, visitors and businesses
- (viii) Play and formal/informal sports facility improvements to enhance the park's role as a major hub for sport, physical activity and wellbeing

### **4.0 Consultation**

4.1 A stakeholder group was established involving key representatives, with regular meetings held starting in November 2018 following the appointment of AECOM. This group helped to shape initial project ideas for a draft masterplan and associated public consultation, using results of a Friends of Longford Park survey which ran from October 2017 to July 2018.

4.2 A public consultation event took place at The Longfords (Trafford Athletics Stadium) on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019, with over 150 people in attendance. This event also marked the launch of an online survey seeking views on the park and the draft masterplan. 463 responses were received, which were broadly supportive of the draft masterplan with strong support for the refurbishment of The Shippon Complex (27% of respondents voted this their top priority under 'Buildings and Structures' theme), improved children's play facilities (29% under 'Entertainment' theme) and Trim Trail/Fitness Trail (36% under 'Sport and Leisure' theme).

4.3 If the Development Phase bid is successful, further activities will focus on engaging with existing and new audiences through an Audience Development Plan, to be delivered through City of Trees, continuing their ongoing role at the park alongside The Friends of Longford Park and other local groups, organisations and stakeholders.

## 5.0 Development Phase Application Requirements

5.1 The Development Phase bid represents an application for additional funding to work up in more detail the preliminary ideas expressed through the draft masterplan to take the project up to a Delivery Phase bid (often referred to as a 'stage two' bid) within two years of a successful Development Phase bid (see project timeline in 6.0).

5.2 For this phase, detailed information is required regarding project management, the project team, additional consultant briefs and project timescales. Detailed costs also need to be submitted covering all work proposed during this phase, including further design work, consultation, activities and how funding sought through the NLHF will be matched by the Council and partners.

5.3 As part of the bid, outline information is required relating to the subsequent Delivery Phase in terms of the scale of proposed capital works; audience development activities; project outcomes and also partnership and match funding. At this stage, it is estimated that overall project costs for the Delivery Phase will be approximately £5m, around £2.5m of which would be sought from the NLHF for repair and conservation work to the park's built, natural and landscape heritage, along with a sustained programme of facilitated events and activities.

## 6.0 Project timeline

Phase	Submission	Decision
Development Phase Bid	20/08/2019	30/11/2019
Delivery Phase Bid	31/05/2021	30/09/2021

6.1 If successful, implementation would commence in 2020/21 in terms of the procurement of capital works, with work commencing on site during 2022/2023 and continuing during 2023/2024.

## 7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The Development Phase financial implications are illustrated in the table below:

Phase/Bid	Project Costs	Match Funding	Grant Request (% of project costs)
Development	£175k	£75k	£100k (57%)
Delivery	£5m	£2.5m	£2.5m (50%)

7.2 The estimated £175k Development Phase costs allow additional consultancy costs of £150k, non-cash contributions of £10k (volunteer hours) and a contingency of £15k.

7.3 The £75k match funding secured includes £50k unspent monies from the Greenspace Capital Programme for 19/20, £10k from the Council's annual partnership agreement with City of Trees and £15k of volunteer hours and partner input. This would mean a grant request to NLHF of £100k, equating to 57% of development phase costs. Payment is made by NLHF in arrears based on actual spent during the development phase at the same percentage, although the maximum NLHF grant cannot be exceeded. Provision would therefore be made within the capital programme to enable work to be procured and payments to be made to consultants up to the value of the NLHF grant award, in line with project milestones.

7.4 Delivery Phase costs and match funding are indicative only at the Development Phase bid stage, with no financial commitment on the Council's part. The remaining Delivery Phase costs could potentially be funded via secured and anticipated Council capital funding, Section 106 contributions, external grant funding for non-heritage items, community group fund raising, Council management and maintenance input and converted in-kind volunteer hours. Options for match funding from the Council and these other sources will need to be determined during the Development Phase leading up to the Delivery Phase bid.

7.5 Should this project not progress to the Delivery Phase then the capital costs incurred during the Development Phase will be recharged back to revenue. This would create a revenue pressure of £50k in year.

**8.0 Other Options**

8.1 Not submitting the bid would risk the further deterioration of the built and landscape heritage of Trafford's largest and strategically most important urban park, whilst also missing the opportunity to realise Longford Park's potential to provide multiple environmental, social and economic benefits for Trafford.

8.2 Should the Development Phase bid be unsuccessful in November 2019, the Council will need to consider available options to take the project forward. There is also an element of risk involved in that the additional costs incurred over the Development Phase would become a revenue budget pressure should the project not be progress to The Delivery Phase.

**9.0 Next Steps**

9.1 Project progression in its current form is dependent on the outcome of the Development Phase bid. If successful, a programme of stakeholder and public engagement will be carried out to support the development of a final Conservation Plan, Activity Plan and Management and Maintenance Plan over an 18 month period from November 2019 to May 2021.

**10.0 Recommendation**

10.1 It is recommended that the Executive Member for Culture and Leisure approves submission of the Longford Park National Lottery Heritage Fund Development Phase bid.

**Key Decision** (as defined in the Constitution): No

**Finance Officer Clearance** (type in initials).....**FF**.....  
**Legal Officer Clearance** (type in initials).....**CK**

**[CORPORATE] DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE**

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To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Corporate Director has cleared the report prior to issuing to the Executive Member for decision.