

**GROWING OUR GREEN SPACES: SECURING A VALUABLE FUTURE FOR
CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S PARKS AND GREEN SPACES**

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 11 July 2019

From: Steve Cox – Executive Director, Place and Economy

Forward Plan ref: N/A **Key decision: No**

Purpose: To inform Committee of a recent grant award from the Heritage Lottery Fund to the Council and to seek a County Council representative for the Members Group for the Growing Our Green Spaces Future Parks Accelerator Project.

Recommendation: To note the award of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant and confirm the new County Council representative for the Future Parks Accelerator Project.

Officer contact:		Member contacts:	
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF), the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the National Trust have joined forces to launch the Future Parks Accelerator (FPA), which is a UK-wide £10 million strategic initiative to secure a sustainable future for Parks and Green spaces across the country.
- 1.2 The initiative will run over two years (ending in June 2021) and combine a minimum of £5m in HLF grant funding with a further £5m of 'in kind' support comprising expertise from the National Trust.
- 1.3 As part of this, a partnership of local authorities, conservation organisations, private sector and community groups across Cambridgeshire, led by Cambridgeshire County Council, bid for and has been awarded funding and support to deliver improved parks and green spaces across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough as part of this project. Just 8 locations across the country have been chosen for this funding.
- 1.4 The project will also collaborate with local charities, developers and businesses including Natural Cambridgeshire, the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. The LNP includes but is not limited to Nene Park Trust, Wildlife Trust, National Trust, RSPB, Urban & Civic, and O&H Properties Ltd.
- 1.5 The project's objective is to explore new management and funding solutions for, and to create a strategy for the delivery of, high quality green spaces across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- 1.6 This is not a statutory piece of work but has links to:
 - The Combined Authority's non statutory spatial framework – Phases 1 and 2. The framework includes a strategic objective which links directly to this area of work and indicates a desire to increase the amount of green space in the county
 - The Council's forthcoming Environment and Climate Change Strategy. The County Council's legal a duty to conserve and enhance its own green space sites importance for biodiversity and people – we are the landowner of eight Local Nature Reserves.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 A project structure has been developed to ensure the project can move ahead effectively and with good governance. It is proposed that the project will be governed by a Project Executive Board that will oversee the successful delivery of the project including having oversight of key milestones and expenditure. The County Council will be the lead partner in this. The County Council Chief Executive has agreed to be the Project Sponsor and also to chair the Executive Board. Representatives from the following organisations will be on the Board:

Executive Board

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Peterborough City Council
- East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Fenland District Council
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Nene Park Trust
- Wildlife Trust BCN
- National Trust
- Future Park's Project Manager
- Future Parks Account Manager

- 2.2 There will also be a Members Reference Group to ensure close political involvement in and knowledge of the project. It is proposed that each of the Local Authorities involved in the project nominate one Member to sit on this group, which will meet quarterly and will guide the development of the project. Committee is asked to consider the County Council representative to this group.
- 2.3 On a day to day basis, the project will be overseen by a Project Management Team of local authority officers and officers from the other partner organisations.
- 2.4 Terms of Reference will be developed for each of these groups and will be agreed at the first of their meetings.
- 2.5 Given the profile of this project, it is important that this full structure be established at the outset, but as the first phase of the project is primarily focussed on research and evidence gathering, it is likely that there will be little in the way of strategic decision making until late 2020/2021.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

- Having access to high quality green space is shown to have significant benefits for the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals and communities

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

- Accessible green space is an important factor in place making and makes for a more attractive environment where people and businesses will want to live and work.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

- Where high quality green spaces is provided this can lead to an increase in positive physical and emotional development within children.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

As part of this project up to ten separate items of work may need to be commissioned in line with the council's Contract Procedures. As part of joint working with the other FPA projects it is also expected that we will collaborate on some procurement activities. Advice from LGSS Procurement will therefore be required in due course.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

As the lead organisation Cambridgeshire County Council are responsible for delivering the project and ensure best value with the funding. We will be managing a budget of £716,000.

One of the project requirements is that all of the learning from this project is shared nationally. As a result the funders require us to have evaluators working on the project throughout out that will evaluate the activities that work well and less well.

The funding partners have recognised that of all eight councils taking part our bid has the highest level of risk. This is due to the number of partners involved within this Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's project. Whilst at the same time MHCLG recognise our project as ground breaking for its scale and complexity.

Memorandums of Understanding will need to be signed with the district councils and a contract needs to be signed between the County Council and the funders. Legal advice will be required for these.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

A significant amount of engagement will be required with: partner organisations, local green spaces volunteers, green space users, potential new green spaces user/new communities, developers, public health delivery groups, parish councils and local businesses.

The County Council communications team are involved in the project and are already liaising with the National Trust communications team. The Members Reference Group will be asked to guide/input to and approve major communications exercises before these take place.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

As per section 4.5 above.

4.7 Public Health Implications

The project will make positive links with this work area in order to encourage use of green

spaces to promote active healthy lifestyles. Otherwise there are no significant implications within this category.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus de Silva, Head of Procurement.
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Debbie Carter-Hughes, Interim Executive Director, LGSS Law
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Quinton Carroll
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Jo Dickson, Communications and Marketing Manager
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Quinton Carroll
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Stuart Keeble, Consultant in Public Health

Source Documents	Location
None	