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**BRAUNSTONE PARK/SPINNEY HILL PARK HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BID**

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**Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report updates Cabinet on the current status of the Braunstone Park Heritage Lottery Fund project and asks Cabinet's approval for an alternative application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for Spinney Hill Park.

**2 Summary**

- 2.1 In December 2005 officers submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for major landscape improvement works to Braunstone Park. The HLF subsequently responded that for a bid to succeed it would need evidence that there was a sustainable use of Braunstone Hall and a commitment made by the partners in the bid to resource its restoration.
- 2.2 On the advice of the HLF and because of the continuing uncertainty about Braunstone Hall officers withdrew the grant application in July 2006. The HLF have said that they would consider a new application for Braunstone Park in the future, once the issue of Braunstone Hall is resolved.
- 2.3 The HLF have also advised us that they would consider an application from Leicester City Council for Spinney Hill Park as part of the new 'Parks for People' Funding programme (2006-2009)

**3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
- 1 Note the suspension of the Braunstone Park Heritage Lottery Fund project.
  - 2 Note the development and submission of a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for Spinney Hill Park.
  - 3 Agree match funding of £420k (one-off investment) from the 2007/08 Capital programme, together with £120k from the sale of land on the park to Leicestershire Police Authority being earmarked for future development of the Spinney Hill Park (Cabinet decision of 2nd February 2004).

## **4 Financial & Legal Implications**

### ***Financial Implications***

- 4.1 The current HLF application for The Braunstone Park project has incurred costs to date of £168k, primarily consultation fees; these have been jointly met by the Leicester City Council and BCA.
- 4.2 The potential funding for the Braunstone Park project (£8m) was anticipated as HLF (£5m), BCA (£1.1m), and £1.9m from the council's revenue budgets over 10 years (project life). The City Council has £200k in the 2007/08 Capital programme for this project to satisfy match funding from the local authority criteria.
- 4.3 The HLF Parks for People programme provides a maximum grant of £5m, with the applicant providing 25% partnership funding for the project, with a minimum 5% cash contribution.
- 4.4 HLF People Project Planning Grant can support the project development costs up to maximum of £50k .
- 4.5 The Spinney Hill Park project cost is estimated at £3.5m to £4m. The project development costs are likely to be £50k to £70k.
- 4.6 The project development costs are anticipated to be met from both HLF People Project Planning Grant as well Parks re-investment fund.
- 4.7 The match funding of £420k has been identified in the 2007/08 capital programme, and £120k arising from the sale of land on the park to Leicestershire Police Authority being earmarked for future development of the park (Cabinet decision of 2nd February 2004).  
The capital programme item of £420k is one of a number of schemes which are dependant on capital receipts which are not yet realised but are currently under negotiation.
- 4.8 Additional future on-going maintenance costs will be funded by using a proportion of the existing parks re-investment budget.

*Raj Pathak, Principal Accountant, R&C – ext. 7397*

### ***Legal Implications***

- 4.9 Legal services will prepare any consultancy contract arising from this project on Council terms and conditions. A review of the Grant conditions will also be undertaken should the application be successful to further protect the Council's position.
- 4.10 The suspension of the Braunstone Park project is regrettable, not least in terms of the loss of money that the Council has suffered. On reviewing the Consultants Instructions and Brief the Report Author does not consider there to be any merit in pursuing them directly to attempt to recover some of these costs  
*Rebecca Jenkyn, Legal Services – ext. 6378*

## **5 Report Author**

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## DECISION STATUS

<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Reason</b>	N/A
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	N/A
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	Executive (Cabinet)

**CABINET**

**5 SEPTEMBER 2006**

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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**1. Background**

1.1 The Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Strategy (2001) identified a number of major Parks as requiring significant investment to improve their landscape infrastructure and facilities. The top three Parks identified as requiring major reinvestment were:

- Braunstone Park
- Abbey Park
- Spinney Hill Park

Braunstone Park was prioritised because of the external funding through the New Deal for Communities programme available to support a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). An earlier feasibility study for Abbey Park had shown an estimated Council Capital contribution of £4m, and at the time of the strategy no such provision could be made in the capital programme. The bid for Spinney Hill Park was timelined to take place after the Braunstone Park Bid as the land sale capital receipt from the sale of parkland to develop the Spinney Hill Local Police Station provided the majority of the match finance for an HLF bid

1.2 Since 2001, following Cabinet approval and subsequent Cabinet Lead briefings, the City Council has worked together with the Braunstone Community Association (BCA), supported by an external landscape expert, to develop a project to improve Braunstone Park. That project was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 2005 under the 'Public Parks Initiative' funding programme.

1.3 The HLF subsequently advised the Council that due to continuing uncertainty regarding the future of Braunstone Hall they would not approve the current application. Since the grant programme under which the application had been submitted (the Public Parks Initiative) was about to close, officers decided to withdraw the application for Braunstone Park in July 2006.

1.4 The HLF have advised the Council that they would consider a grant application to support the improvement of Spinney Hill Park from the new 'Parks for People'

funding programme (2006-2009). However, if the issues relating to Braunstone Hall are resolved before the end of 2009 they would also look favourably on a re-worked, application for Braunstone Park.

- 1.5 Making a successful application to the HLF is extremely time consuming. The Regeneration and Culture Department does not have the capacity to develop more than one bid a year, and, indeed the HLF will not consider more than one bid a year. The Spinney Hill Park bid has already been partially completed and can be delivered within the timetable. While it would be possible to work up a bid for another historic park, the Department would not be able to do so in time for the HLF bidding round and not without external consultant support, for which we have no budget provision. Since Spinney Hill Park is high on our priority list for investment there is a high risk that a grant application for an alternative Park would be rejected by the HLF.

## **2. The Issues**

### ***Braunstone Park***

- 2.1 A substantial amount of work on the part of the Council and the BCA has gone into the development of a sustainable grant application for Braunstone Park. If we were to apply later for a grant for Braunstone Park only minor modifications would be needed to comply with the requirements of the new 'Parks for People' funding programme.
- 2.2 Unless the HLF can be convinced that Braunstone Hall has a real and sustainable future then they are unlikely to support any future bid for Braunstone Park. The HLF recommends a Local Authority only submits one application a year under the 'Parks for People' funding programme. The programme runs from 2006 until 2009.

### ***Spinney Hill Park***

- 2.3 Officers started the outline work for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant application for Spinney Hill Park in 2002. Those proposals for the Park included the resurfacing of major pathways, extensive landscape management, and major improvement to existing facilities and buildings.
- 2.4 The HLF advised us that any application for funding improvements to the Park should include evidence that the local community supported the development of the Spinney Hill Local Policing Unit on land inside the park boundary. The Council has undertaken extensive public consultation with residents around the park and can demonstrate that the majority of local residents support the development of the Police Station in the park.
- 2.5 The recent advice we have received from the HLF indicates that they would welcome a grant application for Spinney Hill Park. However they have stressed the importance of the Council being able to evidence that the application is a high priority for us, that we are committed to resourcing a sustainable application, and that there are no major blockers to our commitment.
- 2.6 Officers are confident that the application for Spinney Hill Park is sustainable, meets the Council's priorities as identified in the Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Strategy and can be submitted to the HLF by September 2007.

## **3. Other Implications**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	No		
Policy	Yes	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Strategy (2001) - throughout	
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	Throughout – a bid will ensure the sustainable future of the park and consider the environmental impact of the work	
Crime and Disorder	Yes	Throughout - a bid will ensure that crime is reduced in the park	
Human Rights Act	No		
Elderly/People on Low Income	No		

### 3.1 Risk Assessment Matrix

	Risk	Likelihood L/M/H	Severity Impact L/M/H	Control Actions (if necessary/or appropriate)
1	HLF rejects Spinney Hill Park grant application	Low	High	Ensure bid likely to meet criteria by continuing conversation with HLF
2	Failure to meet Grant application deadlines	Medium	Low	Allocate adequate project development resource to the bid. Do not try to submit more than one bid. Give enough resources and time to planning adequately
3	Failure to secure sustainable tenant and use for Braunstone Hall compromises future HLF grant application	High	High	Develop alternative plan for investment in Braunstone Park without HLF funding.

L - Low  
M - Medium  
H - High

L - Low  
M - Medium  
H - High

#### 4. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Cabinet report – Spinney Hill Park, February 2004

#### 5. Consultations

Jeff Miller, Service Director, Regeneration & Culture  
Gervase Smith, Acting Head of Asset Strategy & Review, Property Services  
Rebecca Jenkyn, Legal Services  
Raj Pathak, Finance, Regeneration & Culture

#### 6. Report Author

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