

Subject:	Royal Pavilion Garden Project Update		
Date of Meeting:	17 January 2019		
Report of:	Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Val Birchall	Tel: 01273 292571
	Email:	val.birchall@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Tourism, Development & Culture Committee concerning improvement plans for the Royal Pavilion Garden, a Grade II restored Regency Garden, and to seek approval for the necessary steps to remove the garden from Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.
- 1.2 The report seeks approval for the formal adoption of the Royal Pavilion Garden Conservation Plan, which is a key step in the removal from the Register. It outlines plans to develop associated policies over the next 12 months.

The report seeks approval to spend up to £25,000 on work required for a resubmission of a Round 1 Heritage Lottery bid in March 2019.

- 1.3 The Council and Brighton Dome & Festival Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 18 August 2014, to formalise the joint working with the Royal Pavilion & Museums (RPM) in the delivery of phased capital works to the Royal Pavilion Estate that aim to secure its long term future and financial viability. Phase 1 of the Royal Pavilion Estate capital programme, due for completion in 2019, will achieve the restoration of Brighton Dome's Corn Exchange and Studio Theatre. Planned Royal Pavilion Garden works form Phase 2.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Tourism, Development & Culture Committee notes the progress made to date on Phase 2 work as laid out in section 4.1.
- 2.2 That the Tourism, Development & Culture Committee adopts the recommendations in the Royal Pavilion Garden Conservation Plan (an executive summary forms Appendix 2 of this report).
- 2.3 That the Tourism, Development & Culture Committee notes the next stages of the Phase 2 project and approves expenditure of £25,000 to complete work to support a resubmission of a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund as outlined in Section 4.3.

3 CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Garden significance

- 3.1 The Royal Pavilion Garden was laid out around 1820 by the architect John Nash, at the same time as he created the Royal Pavilion linking the palace to its Royal Stables and Riding School to form a coherent estate. The Garden is a unique example of a 'picturesque' Regency garden; it is a living museum of plants available in the years up to 1820, featuring new exotic plants which were being brought to England by explorers and botanists. It is the only restored major Regency garden in England and the only surviving Nash garden. As recognition of its significance, it was given Grade II listed status by Historic England in 1987.
- 3.2 Historic England placed the Garden on the Heritage at Risk Register for South East England in October 2017 citing the following reasons:
- The Garden had begun to suffer visibly from the high levels of visitor use and recreational development pressure; and
 - There has been an erosion of the character caused by a disparate range of fencing, litter bins, signage and lighting units.
 - The combination of these factors was viewed as weakening the sense of the Garden's rich history for visitors.

Historic England called for a Conservation Plan to be developed to address these issues as a matter of urgency.

4. Progress, Plan Adoption & Next steps

4.1 Progress update

- 4.1.1. Chris Blandford Associates were commissioned by the Council to deliver a Conservation Plan and associated Management & Maintenance Plan for the Garden. These plans, written during the period October 2017 – April 2018, will support the Council's strategic management of the Garden going forward. Plans will inform current and future development proposals, and ensure that the Garden's heritage significance is conserved during the management of the site.
- 4.1.2 A Round 1 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid was developed by officers and submitted in June 2018 requesting initial funding of £194,000 to facilitate the development of a full (Round 2) funding bid for £3.3million. This would provide capital to address the risks to the Garden's historic fabric and sustainability, conserve its heritage features and biodiversity, provide rich interpretation and engage people in learning about and caring for this unique Regency landscape and ensure the Garden's removal from the At Risk Register. Council funding of £0.5m was approved at Policy Resources & Growth Committee in November 2017, as match funding with a need to raise a further £750,000 through private trusts and individuals to meet total project costs of £4.6million.
- 4.1.3 The Council was informed at the end of September that the bid had not been successful due to competition for funding in that round. The HLF however considered the Royal Pavilion Garden a high priority project and have encouraged a resubmission in the next funding round in March 2019. To strengthen the bid's chances, HLF has highlighted work that it considers should

be undertaken in the meantime. This is detailed in 4.3 next steps below. If the resubmitted HLF Round 1 bid is successful, the Development Stage of works would commence in early summer 2019 to prepare the HLF Round 2 bid for submission in winter 2019/20 with the aim of works starting on site in late 2020.

4.1.4 During April – June 2018 stakeholder and public consultation was undertaken on both the recommendations of the Garden Conservation Plan and proposals for capital priorities and interpretation and engagement outlined in the HLF bid. Stakeholders included Brighton Dome & Festival Ltd, Ward Councillors, the North Laine Community Association, the Royal Pavilion Garden Café, the Chapel Royal, and the Max Miller Society, as well as RPM staff and volunteers. Stakeholders' views informed both the content and methodology of the wider public consultation. A summary of results of the wider public consultation is attached at Appendix 1.

4.2 Adoption of Conservation Plan

4.2.1 The primary purpose of this Conservation Plan is to support the Council's strategic management of the Garden going forward. It is intended to inform current and future development proposals and ensure that the Garden's heritage significances are conserved. In development of the plan the risks and opportunities facing the garden have been considered. These have been identified as;

- * Presence on the Heritage at Risk Register
- * User pressures
- * Condition of the Garden
- * Anti-social behaviour
- * Trees and ecology
- * Long-term climate change risks
- * Completeness of restoration works
- * External development pressures
- * Management costs and resources
- * Access
- * Interpretation

4.2.2 The plan was developed in accordance with published best practice guidelines of both HLF and Historic England and in consultation with Virginia Hinze; historic landscape expert responsible for previous restorations.

4.2.3 Through the development of the Conservation Plan the following vision for the Garden has been articulated;

'Our vision is to restore, conserve and enhance the diverse significances and values of The Royal Pavilion Garden while retaining the Garden as a public open space in the historic centre of Brighton. At the heart of the vision is a celebration of the Garden's heritage, lively atmosphere and open space, and its capacity to enrich the lives of the local community. This forms the basis of a commitment to on-going sustainability, quality and inclusivity to ensure that the widest possible audience can appreciate and benefit from the diverse opportunities afforded by the Garden.'

- 4.2.4 The plan also outlines a series of actions and priorities that should be developed to support this vision including:
- Governance
 - Strategic Principles
 - Capital work Priorities
 - Management & Operational Priorities
 - Interpretation; and
 - Audience Development and engagement

Further detail is outlined in the schedule attached (Appendix 2b).

- 4.2.5 The Conservation Plan will be a living document for the period 2018 – 2023 and will be reviewed on an annual basis by officers to ensure it remains relevant. This will identify and document where progress has been made, identify and document remedial actions to address issues, update the plan, and provide progress reports to Members and senior officers as required.

4.3 Next Steps

- 4.3.1 HLF has provided specific feedback on the Round 1 grant application and suggested that to strengthen the bid prior to resubmission;
- An access audit is undertaken
 - More developed designs of what a new boundary and improved entrances to the estate might look like are included
 - More evidence is provided on how multi-agency working will ensure that anti-social behaviour issues will be resolved in the longer term
 - Further definition is given to the activity programme to show how each target audience will be engaged
 - The proposed Interpretation Strategy is refined to show a hierarchy of information and how it will be made accessible
 - Volunteer roles and skills that will be developed are further defined
- 4.3.2 It is estimated the above will cost in the region of £25,000 to deliver which will be met from 2018/19 RPM Core budgets. The current HLF funding scheme has now closed and new guidance for the scheme opening in March 2019 including any new or changed priorities will be published in January.
- 4.3.3 In the event that the resubmitted HLF is not successful, (outcome expected June 2019), the capital monies identified by the Council as match funding will be used progressing as far as possible with the required improvements.
- 4.3.2 Given the rising costs of addressing anti-social behaviour and littering during 2018, a multi-agency review of management of these issues is necessary prior to the 2019 summer season.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Public consultation was undertaken in May – June 2018 which involved both presentations and the opportunity to complete papers and online surveys on the council's consultation portal. The surveys attracted over 1,350 respondents who

were both resident in and visitors to the City. The findings are summarised in Appendix 1.

- 5.2 Further consultation on the proposed capital works, interpretation, activities, community and volunteer programmes relating to the Garden will be undertaken throughout the Phase 2 capital works.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Council's adoption of the Conservation Plan will provide confidence to Historic England, HLF, Stakeholders and the community that the Council is committed to revitalisation of the Royal Pavilion Estate and removal of the Royal Pavilion Garden from the At Risk Register
- 6.2 Doing nothing can be expected to have serious implications for the future condition of the Royal Pavilion and Garden and jeopardise the Garden's listed status.
- 6.3 Resubmission of the Round 1 HLF bid will be the next step in achieving the overall vision of the Royal Pavilion Estate. Should this bid not be successful, Capital monies identified as match funding will be used to progress improvements as far as possible.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Work to support the resubmission of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2019 is estimated to cost £0.025m. This will be funded from 2018/19 Royal Pavilion & Museums revenue budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Gemma Jackson

Date: 12/11/18

Legal Implications:

The £0.025m will need to be spent in accordance with the council's Contract Standing Orders.

Lawyer Consulted: Alice Rowland

Date: 13/11/18

Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 The proposed works to the Royal Pavilion Garden will improve access and enjoyment for all users. An Access Audit is being undertaken during the winter 2018/19 to inform future planning. Event and activity programmes will be developed to target a range of priority groups, opportunities for volunteering and participation will be increased. New interpretation will be provided in a variety of formats throughout the garden to meet different individual needs. RPM has a strong track record in co-curation and community engagement projects and this methodology will be applied in the design and development of interpretation and associated activities for the Royal Pavilion Garden.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.3 Implementation of the Conservation Plan and associated policies with proposed capital works will result in upgrading and investment in infrastructure required to support current Garden usage and long term maintenance. Such improvements will result in reduced on-going maintenance costs. The programme of associated community engagement, interpretation, volunteering and events alongside security improvements will in the long term reduce current costs associated with anti-social behaviour. Adoption of the Conservation Plan will ensure that the garden continues to be managed on organic principals and it remains a safe and accessible public green space.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.4 The principal risks include the continued deterioration of the fabric and quality of both the Royal Pavilion and Garden and the loss of the Garden's listed status. Both of these would contribute to reducing future resilience and may adversely affect continued use by visitors and residents.

Public Health Implications

- 7.5 Protecting the Garden and improving control of its use will improve environmental conditions with a beneficial effect on people's enjoyment of the green space.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Results of Public Consultation
2. Royal Pavilion Garden Conservation Plan, Executive Summary
3. Conservation Plan Policy Schedule

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. Royal Pavilion Garden Conservation Plan, Full Version

Background Documents

1. Royal Pavilion Estate Capital Project Phase 2, Policy Resources & Growth Committee, 30 November 2017
2. Royal Pavilion Estate Capital Project Phase 2 Up-date, Tourism, Development & Culture Committee, 11 January 2018