

# **CULTURE AND LEISURE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

9 December 2008

## **BARNES PARK REGENERATION UPDATE - PARKS FOR PEOPLE FUNDING**

### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES**

#### **Strategic Priorities**

Attractive and Accessible City : Cultural Regeneration

Prosperous City : Implementing regeneration projects around the city

#### **Corporate Improvement Priorities**

CIO1 – Delivering Customer Focussed Services

CIO4 – Improving Partnership Working to Deliver ‘One City’

#### **1. Why has this report come to the Committee?**

- 1.1 To update Committee on the Parks for People Big Lottery Funding Stage 2 application for Barnes Park

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Sunderland Parks Management Strategy recognises the need for a strategic focus for parks, by aiming to improve the City's Parks, through re-development, maintenance, engaging communities, and identifying natural as well as historical features in individual parks.
- 2.2 Mowbray Park, Roker Park and Herrington Country Park and Rainton Meadows have all been successful in achieving Green Flag Status.
- 2.3 The Parks for People fund is a three-year joint initiative between Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) which is aimed to help with the restoration and regeneration of public parks and gardens, including squares, walks and promenades in England.
- 2.4 It was agreed by Cabinet on 8 November 2006 that Sunderland would submit one funding application to the Big Lottery Parks for People Fund and the park chosen for re-development, should the application be successful, was Barnes Park.
- 2.5 The Parks for People grant programme applications are assessed using a two-stage process. Sunderland City Council submitted a Stage 1 application in September 2007 for Parks for People funding for Barnes Park and received a stage 1 pass to the value of £2,420,000 in May 2008.

### **3. Current position – Stage 2 Application**

- 3.1 Following receipt of the stage 1 pass in May 2008, work progressed on the stage 2 application at a pace. The stage 2 application was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Regional office on Friday 31 October 2008. The extremely tight deadline was agreed to enable the Heritage Lottery to have the four months they require to review the application and then present the application to the Heritage Lottery National Panel (London) on 24 March 2009 - the panel meet only twice a year and if the application was made any later than 31 October 2008 Sunderland would have been required to wait until September 2009 for the panel to approve the application.
- 3.2 During the stage 1 and stage 2 application process significant consultation was undertaken with the community, local schools and specialist groups, as well as various services across the council specifically relating to Art, Children's Play, Sport and Wellness and Heritage. Utilising the opportunity to draw-in substantial match funding due to the size and extent of the application, it was considered to be appropriate to consider additional elements to the application for which external match funding could be secured.
- 3.3 Sunderland City Council commenced the active pursuit of securing additional match funding from the following organisations:
- |                                   |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Play Pathfinder                   | £200,000 |
| County Durham Environmental Trust | £150,000 |
| Local Transport Plan              | £100,000 |
- 3.4 Cabinet agreed to contribute £375,000 match funding, which was on 8 November 2006. An additional £300,000 has since been agreed by Council as part of the 2008/2009 budget setting process.
- 3.5 The overall project cost now stands at £3,661,344. If secured, the Heritage Lottery will fund 67% of the overall project cost with its contribution of £2,420,000.
- 3.6 If successful, the proposed plans will sensitively adapt and regenerate the Park in order to secure its vitality for future generations and extend and enhance its appeal to those that live, work, study and visit Sunderland.
- 3.7 Historic features such as the bandstand, canon, entrance gates and railings will be restored to prime condition. Equally, obtrusive and inappropriate features such as the depot will be removed.
- 3.8 The play area adjacent to the Barnes Park Road entrance was updated in 2006 to a disabled access standard. However, given the size of the adjacent community and concern from the residents of Sunderland in

relation to a lack of disabled play facilities in the area, it is proposed that the play area be moved adjacent to the Coach House Café and include both a toddler play area and adventure play for older children, suitable for children of all abilities to enjoy. This will be complemented by a specialist toilet and changing pavilion designed to 'Changing Places' specification, suitable for visitors and their families/carers with physical disabilities and impairments.

- 3.9 All proposed plans have been developed in line with extensive public consultation including liaison with the Friends of Barnes Park, local schools and community groups.
- 3.10 The stage 2 application will now be reviewed by the Heritage Lottery Fund over a four month period, prior to presentation to the Heritage Lottery National Panel on 24 March 2009.
- 3.11 If successful, works will commence in Barnes Park in August 2009 (coinciding with centenary of the Park opening in 1909) and will be complete by spring 2011.
- 3.12 A Community Development and Education Officer has been appointed as part of the regeneration project and she is based within Barnes Park Coach House. Her role is to develop the Park as a community development and educational resource.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The stage 2 application will now be reviewed by the Heritage Lottery Fund over a four month period, prior to presentation to the Heritage Lottery National Panel on 24 March 2009.
- 4.2 If successful, works will commence in Barnes Park in August 2009 (coinciding with centenary of the Park opening in 1909) and will be complete by spring 2011.

#### **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report and to support the Stage 2 application for Parks for People funding for Barnes Park

#### **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1 Stage 1 and Stage 2 Parks for People Funding Application for Barnes Park
- 6.2 Public Consultation Feedback from August 2007 and 8 August and 19 September 2008
- 6.3 Sunderland Parks Management Strategy

## 7. Glossary

HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund

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