

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

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Priory Park Chichester – Project Initiation Document

1. Contacts

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2. Executive Summary

This report presents a PID relating to the proposed enhancement scheme in the North West corner of Priory Park and sets out the background to the need for such a scheme and the intended project objectives and parameters. The report recommends that the preferred option is agreed along with the PID and that funds are allocated for the project.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Cabinet approves option three and the associated PID in appendix 1 to the agenda report for the proposed enhancement scheme in the North West corner of Priory Park.**
- 3.2 That the Cabinet recommends to the Council to forward fund £450,000 from the Asset Replacement Programme for the refurbishment of the buildings in Priory Park to part fund the project.**
- 3.3 That the Cabinet approves the allocation of £72,274 of section 106 funding, as outlined in the PID, appendix one, to part fund the project and that £62,000 of General Fund reserves is allocated to cover the remaining estimated cost for the project.**

4. Background

- 4.1. A number of the buildings in the north west corner of Priory Park are in poor condition and nearing the end of their useful life. In addition to this, delivery of grounds maintenance is undertaken in a different way meaning there is not now a need for a large depot facility in the park. The white pavilion, located to the**

southern edge of the park, is also in need of repair and refurbishment.

- 4.2. The café facility is a relatively new addition to the park, which has been well received by park users. This building has a temporary planning permission, which expires in 2020.
- 4.3. In June 2017, the Council appointed an architect to carry out an options appraisal of the identified area and buildings, with a brief to consider how best to deliver a balance between commercial and community based opportunities.
- 4.4. Considering the cost and community/commercial benefit of the options and taking into account feedback from stakeholders and Council services, a final preferred option (Option 3) has been developed into an indicative scheme, which is the basis of PID now being considered.
- 4.5. A plan of the preferred scheme is attached as Appendix 2.

5. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 5.1. By undertaking this project, the Council will achieve the best use of the existing assets, enhance the character of the area, improve the historic setting of the park and increase the area of park accessible to visitors. The proposals will increase the opportunities for community use of the park whilst maintaining the sporting use and create new sources of revenue income.
- 5.2. Without this work, buildings nearing the end of their life will need significant work to repair or replace and areas of the park behind current buildings will remain inaccessible to park visitors. Approaching such issues in a piecemeal way will mean the ability to take a holistic approach to this area of the park will be lost.

6. Proposals

- 6.1 It is recommended that the preferred option (Option 3) is selected and the PID approved. This option comprises the following key elements:-
 - Demolition of the depot buildings and public conveniences
 - Removal of current café buildings
 - Retention of 'Brick Pavilion'
 - Provision of new public conveniences
 - Provision of a new 'roller store'
 - Retention of 'Bowls Clubhouse'
 - Retention and refurbishment of 'White Pavilion'
 - Footprint of buildings demolished/removed to be returned to park 'green space'
 - Repair/restoration of Coade Stone statue
- 6.2 It is recommended that monies from the Asset Replacement Programme, £450,000 the repairs and maintenance budget, £15,000 and s106 monies as outlined in the PID are used to part fund this project, with the remaining funds of £62,000 allocated from reserves to cover the total estimated costs of the project of £599,000.

- 6.3 This scheme will provide lettable and operational premises that are fit for purpose and of appropriate size with an acceptable future life. The scheme will also result in the refurbishment and enhancement of buildings which are of local historic interest and fund repair work to the coade stone statue that has suffered from weathering and vandalism in recent years.
- 6.4 The project timescale is in the PID (see Appendix 1) and proposes that the consultation work commences in late autumn/early winter following the appointment of a consultant to carry out the design and cost appraisal work.

7.0 Alternatives Considered

- 7.1 Due to the condition of a number of the buildings, a 'do nothing' option is not appropriate.
- 7.2 The architect produced a long list of eight options, which varied in the extent of redevelopment and the level and type of new facilities suggested. All the options incorporated café and function space, as well as new public conveniences and the removal of the depot buildings. The Council worked with the architect to streamline the long list of options to produce three short listed options for further discussion and consideration the two alternative options are listed below:
- Option one - Refurbishment of public conveniences, white pavilion and brick pavilion, along with the demolition of depot buildings and construction of a smaller replacement facility. This is the option with the minimum level of work, and carries with it a number of disadvantages against other options, as well as risks. A key issue with this option is that current buildings blocking access to areas of park behind them would not be removed or relocated, thereby missing a key opportunity to enhance the park environment and green space. Furthermore, the current café only has a temporary planning permission and initial feedback is that this is unlikely to be renewed on expiry in 2020.
 - Option two – Redevelopment of café, public conveniences and depot facility in new locations, together with the construction of a new function space and refurbishment of the white pavilion. This is a more ambitious scheme, which involves a much higher level of new building and which comes at a higher cost. There would be a risk with this scheme that planning permission for this level of new development would not be granted and the scheme would generate more floorspace for commercial letting with the market for this as yet untested. Whilst innovative in terms of looking at possible scenarios, this scheme was felt to be less 'in keeping' with the park environment.

8.0 Resource and Legal Implications

- 8.1 The project will be managed by the Estates Project Manager/Projects Officer, with consultants appointed for the design and costings work.
- 8.2 The ARP is funded by way of annual revenue contributions that are set aside each year. These contributions are based on a rolling 25 year replacement programme. In effect the whole 25 year programme is funded over its life. However, individual

schemes within the ARP are formally allocated each year as part of the budget process, and cover just the following 5 years. The current approved ARP therefore covers the period 2018 – 2023 and this includes £300,000 for Priory Park schemes. The remaining £150,000 is not due to be allocated to the ARP until next year for the financial year 2023-24. This report seeks to bring all of the £450,000 forward, but does not increase the total cost.

- 8.3 A full report on title will be requested at an early stage of the project, to ensure any covenants or other legal issues are accommodated. None of the buildings covered by the project are formally listed, although both the white pavilion and brick pavilion are locally listed. There is also some local historic interest in the air raid shelters behind the current public conveniences that will need further research to establish additional information.
- 8.4 The project will incur VAT charges on the works and would have significant implications for the Council; this will be mitigated by opting to tax on the proposed scheme. This will have an impact on those tenants of let premises who are not VAT registered as VAT is chargeable on any lease rentals. This will lead to an increase in their operating costs if they are not able to recover VAT. Given the type of tenant expected to occupy the premises post-project completion, this is expected to impact on all of those occupiers.
- 8.5 The cost estimate does not include an allowance for temporary loss of income or facilities whilst works are undertaken. Detailed proposals for the phasing of the work are yet to be drawn up but it is hoped that these can allow for continued operation of the café and hiring of the pavilions for as long as possible. Consideration will need to be given as part of the project as to whether temporary public conveniences and café facilities can be brought into the park for the duration of the works.
- 8.6 The estimated revenue from the completed scheme is not expected to deliver a financial return on monies expended, with the drivers for the project being more towards the wider community benefits and enhancing the green space areas of the park not currently accessible.

9.0 Consultation

- 9.1 Stakeholders, comprising those with leases of premises in the park or groups linked to the park, including the Friends of Priory Park, were consulted as part of the options appraisal to collect views and aspirations for the future. If the project is approved they will be consulted regarding the arrangements for implementing the proposals. Service teams within the Council have also been consulted to provide their input to the options being considered.
- 9.2 Following receipt of the initial long list of options, views were sought from Council services, with feedback from the Development Management Service advising that appropriate level of development which reflects the characteristics of the sensitive park setting may be granted planning permission along with confirmation that there are no assurances a further planning permission would be granted for a café facility in the current location.

10.0 Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 10.1 The proposals outlined in the PID will require planning permission, which cannot be guaranteed. It is hoped that by engaging with the planners from the options appraisal stage, risks associated with securing planning permission will be minimised.
- 10.2 The costs shown in the PID are estimates at this stage and include limited allowances for contingencies that are likely to be reflected in a contractors estimate and tender price. Refurbishment costs are more difficult to assess than new build and costs could vary as detailed design and building investigations go forward.
- 10.3 The current locations of buildings in the park is considered by some to be the most suitable arrangement; as with all projects proposing change, there will inevitably be some level of impact on those with an interest, which the intended consultation will seek to address.

11.0 Other Implications

Crime and Disorder The proposal to bring additional areas of the park back into public use will help reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour in those areas	Yes
Climate Change and Biodiversity: The proposed refurbishment works will enable current energy standards to be met.	Yes
Human Rights and Equality Impact	None
Safeguarding	None
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	None

12.0 Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1 – Project Initiation Document

12.2 Appendix 2 - Plan of Preferred Scheme

13.0 Background Papers

- 13.1 PID Options Comparison [**Note** This is confidential Part II exempt material which will be published for online viewing by members and relevant officers – Para 3 in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 ie information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)]