

BRADBOURNE LAKES - SEVENOAKS - PROGRESS REPORT

Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 29 October 2019

Report of	Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services Chief Officer Finance and Trading Services
Status	For information
Key Decision	No

Executive Summary: This report updates Members of the Advisory Committee on progress to date on moving forward the implementation of the ‘Vision for Bradbourne Lakes’ to try and obtain external funding for improvement and restoration works to the Lakes.

This report supports the Key Aim of a green and healthy environment.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Margot McArthur

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Recommendation to Advisory Committee:

To note the progress made on implementing the ‘Vision for Bradbourne Lakes’, the next steps and the potential opportunity to try and attract external funding for the improvement and restoration works identified in the ‘Vision’ document.

Reason for recommendation: The results of the public consultation has identified the community vision for the future of Bradbourne Lakes. To achieve this vision substantial expenditure is required for the improvement and restoration works identified. Such expenditure is outside the Council’s ten year budget and therefore external, and potential internal funding will need to be identified to wholly or partly, fund the prioritised works.

Introduction and Background

- 1 At the meeting of the Direct and Trading Advisory Committee on 9 October 2018 (and agreed by Cabinet on 11 October 2018), it was agreed that:-
 - a) The results of the public consultation be noted and that Land Use Consultants (LUC) be commissioned to develop a full vision costed plan and to explore funding opportunities and to submit various grant applications to fund the proposed improvement and restoration works, and

- b) To fund this consultancy works, a 'one-off', 'Invest to Save', growth item for the 2019/20 budget be considered as part of the 2019/20 budget setting process.
- 2 A £60,000 budget was agreed, available from 1 April 2019, and LUC were commissioned.
 - 3 The priorities identified from the consultation were; de-silting of the lakes; repair of lake edges; repair of broken structures; repair/improvement of eroded paths; removal of overgrown vegetation, ecological enhancements and biodiversity improvements.
 - 4 In order to prepare a fully costed plan various surveys have been undertaken, by LUC. These are:-
 - Tree survey
 - Ecology survey
 - Sediment (Silt) survey
 - Structure survey

Tree Survey

- 5 446 trees identified, 26 species, 34 trees identified as 'Grade A': (Sycamore; Ash; Oak; Thorn; Beach; Horse Chestnut and Scots Pine). 25 trees identified for removal as roots damaging structures; contaminating the lakes, overgrown, and preventing other natural growth (1 grade B tree, 14 grade C trees and 10 grade U trees).

Ecology Survey

- 6 Recommendations for enhancement:-
 - Improving water quality and potential of boundary habitats to North and South
 - Reduction of tree canopies to lake edge to encourage marginal planting.
 - Establishment of wet woodland habitat to the South, with additional planted Willow.
 - Marginal and aquatic planting through establishing reed banks with a wet grassland mix to soften lakeside edges.
 - Relaxation of mowing regimes along woodland and open water habitats.
 - Increase habitat connectivity along East and West boundaries for bats and birds, through tree lines and hedges.
 - Creation of dead hedges for invertebrates and small mammals.

- Measures to dissuade large populations of water fowl to reduce damage they cause. Enhancing marginal vegetation around lake sides would help discourage Canada geese, along with relaxed grassland border habitats and park interpretation to dissuade feeding.
- Production of a habitat management plan to inform future management and maintain ecological gains.
- Installation of bat boxes mounted on trees within the woodland habitat.
- Installation of bird boxes, in particular species specific boxes for UK Biodiversity species Action Plan priority species.
- Refuges for waterfowl in areas that are inaccessible to the public, such as Islands and North and South of site. This should include a Kingfisher nesting bank within the banks of the stream.
- Deadwood areas such as log and brush piles along boundary habitats, including standing deadwood for reptiles, small mammals and invertebrates.

Sediment (Silt) Survey

- 7 It is calculated that there is currently 5627m³ of in-situ sediment in the 5 lakes, with approximately 5080 tonnes for removal and disposal.
- 8 It should be feasible, with the agreement of the Environmental Agency (Environmental permits) to apply most of the dredging to local land, if a receptor site, and a willing land owner can be found (Could be existing SDC land).
- 9 The permits will allow the arisings to be applied to agricultural or non-agricultural land, or to land that has been subject to industrial or other man made development for restoration, reclamation or improvement and could result in a benefit to agriculture or ecological improvement at a rate of up to 5,000 tonnes per hectare.
- 10 Some of the material within lake 5, where the road run off / stream enters, may not be suitable for spreading under an environmental permit and would require disposal at a suitable licenced site.
- 11 Water quality appears to be good despite the lakes not having being de-silted for many years.

Structural Survey

- 12 The following locations have been identified as a priority for remedial works:
 - The sidewalls and base of lake 4 and its overflow pond.
 - The steel supported in-situ concrete bridge at the Southern end of Lake 3

- The sidewalls of the upstream overflow stream.
- 13 It should be noted that many of the structures within the park require general repairs to ensure the longevity of the lake banks and improve the general aesthetics of the park.
- 14 The following actions have been identified as being required to develop the required repair details:
- The draining and dredging of lake 4 and its overflow pond facilitating further investigation and remedial works.
 - Trial pits dug at key locations to determine the current construction and condition of the sidewalls and base of lake 4, and the sidewalls of the overflow stream.
 - Developing solutions in areas where trees add to the complexity of repair details.
 - Repair costs are optimised in regard to cost, aesthetics, robustness and longevity.

Landscape Proposals (All to be further developed)

- 15 Nature play. (Trim trail type) utilising wooden equipment.
- 16 Improvement to existing paths and edges.
- 17 Improvement to park threshold
- 18 Creation of circular walking path with deck bridge and stream stepping stones.

Timetable and Next Steps

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|
| 19 | August | Complete Vision Plan (Done) |
| | September | Cost estimates (Done) |
| | | Develop detailed designs (Done) |
| | | Apply for CIL funding (Submitted 30.9.19) |
| | | Liaison with Bradbourne Residents Association |
| | October | Detailed cost estimates (Done) |
| | November and later | Planning application (if required) and Environment Agency permission (Licence and exemptions) |
| | | Submit other grant applications (Including Heritage Lottery Fund and Enovert) |

Agree priorities

Further liaison with Bradbourne Residents Association

Key Implications

Financial

The funding for the priority works identified in the vision for Bradbourne Lakes is outside the Council's ten year budget and therefore external funding will need to be applied for to wholly or partially fund the required works to implement the vision.

This will include an application to the Council's next CIL Spending Board and other external organisations who may give financial support to this project, this will include the HLF and Enover (CIL Spending Board Meeting on 9th December)

On-going maintenance liabilities for the Council also need to be fully taken into account in any improvement programme.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Without assistance from external funding the vision cannot be implemented for the lakes, however, priority works, such as de-silting, will be essential in the near future, to ensure the correct functioning of the lakes, and again, the estimated cost of these works are outside the Council's ten year budget.

There is no guarantee, however, that any application for funding will be successful, and this is a significant risk to the implementation of the vision.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

Obtaining funding to wholly or partially support the improvement and restoration works identified in the vision will be the greatest opportunity to deliver the desired outcomes. LUC have identified numerous organisations they could bid to, to provide the necessary funding to deliver the desired outcomes identified through the vision consultation, although there is no guarantee of success.

Appendices

Background Papers

Bradbourne Lakes - A Vision for the Future -
prepared by LUC - August 2018

https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s35579/06%2010270%20Bradbourne%20Lakes%20-%20Masterplan_5.0_Public%20-%20Appendix%20A.pdf?J=4

Tree Survey

<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s39625/Tree%20Survey%20A1.pdf?J=10>

<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s39626/Tree%20Survey%20A2.pdf?J=10>

Ecology Survey

<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s39622/Ecology%20Survey.pdf?J=10>

Sediment Survey

<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s39624/Sediment%20Survey.pdf?J=10>

Structural Survey

<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s39623/Structural%20Survey.pdf?J=10>

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