

Cabinet Member delegated decision 08 August 2018

Report title: Hillside Gardens Park – Investment Plan

Ward: Streatham Hill

Portfolio: Councillor Sonia Winifred, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture.

Report Authorised by: Sue Foster, Strategic Director Neighbourhoods and Growth.

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Report summary

Lambeth's 2014 Parks Capital Investment Plan outlined a £20m investment programme covering the majority of our parks and open spaces. The Plan included a proposed package of works for Hillside Gardens Park, focused on converting the small depot building into a community facility to support the Pioneer Parks proposal.

In 2017/18 the original Investment Plan was comprehensively reviewed and Hillside Gardens Park was placed at number seven in terms of priority for capital investment. A broader package of works was scoped out and prioritised with the Friends and ward councillors to address capital investment needs across all existing infrastructure. These works were articulated within a new Management Plan for the site.

A recent significant allocation of S106, combined with other covenants generated within the Streatham area, means there is now an opportunity to undertake a major programme of improvement works for Hillside Gardens Park.

This report recommends the allocation of S106 covenants worth £596,624 to Hillside Gardens Park, to fund capital improvement works and a dedicated revenue maintenance programme.

Finance summary

The Parks Service have in 2018/19, secured S106 covenants totally £596,624. £494,056 of S106 funding is proposed to fund capital improvement works at Hillside Gardens Park. £102,568 of revenue S106 is proposed to fund a Park Attendant for a two year fixed term contract, along with plants, tools and other materials needed to ensure an acceptable standard of upkeep for the park.

Recommendation

- (1) To approve and allocate ten Parks, Sports and Children's Play capital S106 covenants generated within the Streatham Hill ward, totalling £494,056, to be used to fund a programme of improvement works within Hillside Gardens Park.
- (2) To approve the commitment of two Parks revenue maintenance S106 covenants generated within the Streatham Hill ward, totalling £102,568, to be used to fund ongoing maintenance within Hillside

Gardens Park, including the employment of an additional Park Attendant, initially on a two-year fixed-term contract.

1. Context

- 1.1 In January 2015, Cabinet approved Lambeth's first Parks Capital Investment Plan. The document included a proposed package of improvement works at Hillside Gardens Park, focused on converting the depot and toilet building into a new community facility, partly to support the proposed Pioneer Park model.
- 1.2 Hillside Gardens is Lambeth's 18th largest park at 3.71 acres and is located in Streatham Hill ward. It has held Green Flag accreditation for many years and is supported by an active Friends group. Although a relatively small site it includes a large number of facilities, including a play area, public conveniences, four tennis courts, two MUGAs, an outdoor gym, table-tennis, a community garden, a one o'clock club and a dog-free picnic area. This infrastructure is now relatively dated and deteriorating in condition.
- 1.3 In 2017/18 a new management plan for Hillside Gardens Park was co-produced with the Friends group and ward councillors. This included a prioritised list of developments for the site, updating the original proposals contained within the site Masterplan. Proposals for the depot/toilet building were scaled back because of pragmatism over the availability of sufficient capital within the authority and commercial viability. In addition, core infrastructure within the park is in an increasingly poor condition and needs to be addressed as a priority.
- 1.4 Hillside Gardens Park is the only public open space within the Streatham area which has not benefitted from past or planned major capital investment or significant external grant-funding in recent years.
- 1.5 A significant quantity of capital and revenue S106 allocated to Parks has recently been banked from the development at 142-170 Streatham Hill and Wentworth House. Hillside Gardens Park is the open space closest to the development with capital investment requirements which justify this level of funding. The site also has mess facilities suitable for accommodating staff working on site.

2. Proposal and Reasons

- 2.1 It is proposed to allocate S106 covenants arising from developments in Streatham Hill ward in order to fund a major programme of capital improvements at Hillside Gardens Park; and an additional Park Attendant, along with a range of plants, tools and materials to enhance the park and support volunteer programmes run by the Friends. The Park Attendant would also undertake some maintenance works at Palace Road Nature Garden, which is the other public open space within Streatham Hill ward and is located close to Hillside Gardens Park; as well as increase capacity for essential works at other sites in the south of the borough.
- 2.2 The package of capital works as agreed with the Friends and ward councillors would consist of: improvements to boundary fencing and gates to improve security; resurfacing the tennis courts and MUGAs; installing floodlighting; replacing the sports court fencing with rigid mesh; redeveloping the depot building to refurbish the toilets and mess room and possibly create one or two rental units; replace signage, seating and bins; resurface paths; refurbish the play area and install new equipment for a broader age range; install new drinking water fountains and an additional table-tennis table; create wall murals; replace internal fencing; improve the boundary of the dog-free picnic area and upgrade the community garden. There would also be the opportunity to create some additional perennial herbaceous beds to bring more colour into the park.

2.3 The capital works would be managed as a project and so all suggested works are provisional and subject to consultation and full costings.

3. Finance

3.1 The Parks Service have in 2018/19 secured S106 covenants totally £596,624. £494,056 of this S106 funding is proposed to fund capital improvements for Hillside Gardens Park and the remaining £102,568 is proposed to fund revenue maintenance works. These works, including the employment of an additional Park Attendant on a two year fixed term contract, will manage ongoing maintenance of Hillside Gardens.

4. Legal and Democracy

4.1 Monies paid by a developer under an agreement entered into in accordance with Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 must be applied by the Council in accordance with the terms of that agreement. The decision maker should be satisfied that the terms of the Section 106 agreements in question permit the funds to be spent in the manner proposed by this report.

4.2 This proposed key decision was entered in the Forward Plan on 4 June 2018 and the necessary 28 clear days' notice has been given. In addition, the Council's Constitution requires the report to be published on the website for five clear days before the proposed decision is approved by the Cabinet Member. Any representations received during this period must be considered by the decision-maker before the decision is taken. A further period of five clear days - the call-in period – must then elapse before the decision is enacted. If the decision is called-in during this period, it cannot be enacted until the call-in has been considered and resolved.

5. Consultation and co-production

5.1 The appropriate stakeholder group has been consulted (Friends of Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden) as well as ward councillors. Unanimous support for the proposal was expressed.

6. Risk management

6.1 S106 allocations are time-limited and if they are not committed there is a risk of developers requesting their return. The covenants consisting of residual sums have reached their spend deadlines. The spend deadlines of the other covenants range from April 2019 to December 2022.

6.2 The service takes a risk in the utilisation of allocated S106 as expenditure has to be made in advance of the S106 being drawn-down. Officers have been careful to ensure proposed utilisation meets the specific requirements of each covenant.

7. Equalities impact assessment

The 'Justification for not completing an equalities impact assessment' document has been completed for this report. This is on the basis that there will be no change in service, or new services implemented. The S106 monies will be used to maintain standards in our parks and open spaces and the decision offers no potential for discrimination against any of the protected characteristics.

8. Community safety

No direct implications. Increasing uniformed staff presence in Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden will help act as a deterrent to some forms of anti-social behaviour.

9. Organisational implications

9.1 Environmental

No direct implications. The Park Attendant will be either based within Hillside Gardens Park or accompanying existing staff on a mobile round and will not require a separate works vehicle.

9.2 Staffing and accommodation

The proposal includes the recruitment of one additional member of staff, initially on a two year fixed-term contract. This extra post is based on the existing Park Attendant role and will be inserted into the current structure, under the area manager, without impact on levels of supervisors or managers. There is adequate capacity within the mess facilities at Hillside Gardens to accommodate the additional member of staff when they are working on site. New mess facilities are being installed at Palace Road Nature Garden which the employee can also use.

9.3 Procurement

No direct implications. The additional recruitment will necessitate a small increase in procurement requirements for uniform, PPE, tools etc. These purchases will be subject to procurement rules.

9.4 Health

Parks and open spaces provide a vital resource for helping our residents maintain a healthy lifestyle through a range of options for exercise. If approved, this proposal will improve the sports facilities, play opportunities and maintenance of Hillside Gardens, making it more attractive, safer and inviting to residents. This will be likely to increase their use and assist in our aims of improving the health of our residents.

Timetable for implementation

July 2018: CMDDR approval

August 2018: recruitment of Park Attendant commences

August 2018: capital programme commences

Audit trail				
Consultation				
Name/Position	Lambeth Directorate or partner	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in para:
Cllr. Sonia Winifred Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture	Cabinet Member	27.07.2018	30.07.2018	
Sue Foster Strategic Director	Neighbourhoods and Growth	27.07.2018	30.07.2018	
Raj Mistry Director of Environment	Neighbourhoods and Growth	19/07/2018		
Andrew Ramsden Assistant Director, Finance	Corporate Resources	18/07/2018	19/07/2018	3
Peter Flockhart Senior Planning Lawyer	Corporate Affairs	01/05/2018	10/05/2018	4
Maria Burton Democratic Services Officer	Corporate Resources	01/05/2018	14/05/2018	4
Procurement Board		-	-	-

Report history	
Original discussion with Cabinet Member	01/05/2018
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	N/A
Key decision report	Yes
Date first appeared on forward plan	04/06/2018
Key decision reasons	Financial value over £500,000
Background information	Parks Capital Investment Plan 2014-2019 January 2015 Cabinet report – Parks Capital Investment Plan
Appendices	None

APPROVAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHEME OF DELEGATION

I confirm I have consulted Finance, Legal, Democratic Services and the Procurement Board and taken account of their advice and comments in completing the report for approval:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Post: Kevin Crook, Head of Neighbourhoods

I confirm I have consulted the relevant Cabinet Members, including the Leader of the Council (if required), and approve the above recommendations:

Signature: _____ **Date:** 08 August 2018

Post: Councillor Sonia Winifred, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture

Any declarations of interest (or exemptions granted):

Any conflicts of interest:

Any dispensations: