

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

Meeting	Community Services Committee
Date	16 September 2020
Report by	Sarah Brimley – Project Manager
Report title	Boardwalk - Batford Springs Nature Reserve (BSNR)
Business Plan theme	Conserve and improve our parks, green spaces and other assets so they offer a natural haven for residents' use and enjoyment

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. Following the allocation of £100k from the Capital Receipt Funding, this report is to update the Committee on the current status of the Boardwalk Project and request permission to continue as detailed within the Recommendations.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Committee is asked to:

- 2.1.1. Approve the release of £100k Capital Reserves to deliver the Boardwalk project.
- 2.1.2. Approve that the preferred contractor (Maydencroft Ltd), be awarded the Project subject to a reasonable review of their Tender price.
- 2.1.3. Approve that once in contract with the preferred contractor, the 10 outstanding Planning Conditions are discharged as a priority to ensure that works commence within the given timeframe (October 2020 – March 2021). The Planning Conditions can only be discharged with the assistance of the contractor.
- 2.1.4. Approve the timeframe as set out, subject to the approval of items 2.1.2 and 2.1.3;

Key Milestone	Due date
Award Project to the preferred Contractor (<i>subject to reasonable tender price review</i>)	12 October 2020
Update Batford Springs Volunteer group on project status and relay update to The Harpenden Trust	12 October 2020
Submit evidence to discharge outstanding planning conditions (<i>circa 8 weeks duration dependent upon case load</i>)	9 November 2020 (<i>anticipated discharge by 11 January 2021 allowing for the Christmas period</i>)
Tree Works (site clearance outside of nesting season)	1 February 2021
Submission of Environment Agency Commencement Forms (<i>min. 7 days before commencement</i>)	8 February 2021
Works to commence on site (<i>circa 12 week duration</i>)	15 February 2021
Design and Order of interpretation boards for the site	1 March 2021
Submission of Environment Agency Completion Forms (<i>max.7 days after completion</i>)	4 May 2021
Official opening of the Boardwalk (first day of school ½ term holidays).	31 May 2021

3. Background information

- 3.1. The creation of a visitor Boardwalk within BSNR is one of six key development projects within the B.S.N.R Management Plan 2017-2022.
- 3.2. Both the Reedfen and the river repair have funding. The Reedfen will be funded through an external grant from the Harpenden Trust. The B.S.N.R Boardwalk Project was allocated £100k from the Capital Receipt Funding in May 2020.
- 3.3. Planning permission was obtained in 2018 encompassing both the Reedfen Habit and Boardwalk Projects.
- 3.4. These works must commence before July 2021 to comply with the condition that they must start before the expiration of three years from when permission was granted.
- 3.5. A Planning Amendment will need to be submitted as there is a change to the plans which was demanded by the EA in order to get the EA permit, and also because of the new spoils deposit location.
- 3.6. Following the tender assessment, the preferred contractor was notified, though due to funding the project was later paused. However, they have continued to

assist with queries relating to the project to the current date despite not being in contract.

- 3.7. A contractor must be approved and in contract with the Town Council before they can fully assist with the required discharge of Planning Conditions and Environment Agency stipulations ahead of any works commencing on site.
- 3.8. Any works must take place between the months of October and March due to the birds nesting season.
- 3.9. It should be noted that the implications of not proceeding with the preferred contractor would result in the above timeframe window being missed and the planning permission expiring in July 2021. Both the Tender and Planning/EA permit application would need to be repeated at additional cost, both in time and money, to the Town Council subsequently delaying the Project by approximately a year.

4. Resource implications

- 4.1. Batford Springs Volunteers have secured funding for creation of the Reedfen Habitat from the Harpenden Trust. Budget for the river repair already exists. Funding for the Boardwalk has been allocated from the capital receipt.
- 4.2. Total project cost is expected to be c.£100k including the works to the Reedfen.

5. Other implications

Other Implications	Comment
Legal	Planning permission from the LPA has a number of conditions that must be discharged before works commence. Environment Agency permits exist for all three aspects of this project.
Environment and biodiversity	A new Reedfen Habitat within the nature reserve will be a new haven of increased biodiversity. A Boardwalk will provide accessibility through the wet woodland area whilst protecting the environment.
Crime and Disorder	None
Risk/Health & Safety	All works are subject to contractor risk assessments.