ITEM NO 9

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE

DATE 18th August 2009
PORTFOLIO Leisure
REPORT AUTHOR Simon Goff
TEL NO 01282 664614
EMAIL sgoff@burnley.gov.uk

Memorial Park Restoration Project – Next Steps

PURPOSE

1. To consider the next steps for the restoration of Memorial Park following the rejection of the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund’s ‘Parks for People’ programme

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Executive is recommended to:
   a. To affirm the Council’s commitment to progressing the restoration of Memorial Park.
   b. To approve the priorities for improvements outlined in the report which will be implemented using funding that has been identified.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. Memorial Park is one of the Borough’s main parks and benefits users from a wide area.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Background

4. The Green Spaces Strategy (2007) identifies that the improvement of Memorial Park is a priority and that the Council would work to “secure external funding to restore Memorial Park and improve access to it”.

5. The failure to secure funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is a setback to the Council’s ambition to improve Memorial Park, but important elements of the restoration plan can still be progressed.

6. In preparing the HLF application, officers worked with the Friends of Memorial Park
and the wider community of Padiham to develop a detailed Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Memorial Park. The CMP identifies the priorities for improvement based on consultation with park users and the aspirations of the Friends group.

7. This report identifies elements of the CMP that can still be achieved using the funding that has already been identified and how other aspects of the CMP might be achieved.

**Green Flag Award**

8. Memorial Park has not been awarded a Green Flag this year, (an award which it had held since 2000). Whilst disappointing, this was not un-expected as feedback from previous years had identified the need to improve facilities such as the toilets, ball court and play areas. However the judges feedback report concluded:

“Even though this park has failed this year, the improvement of access through the Greenway together with the planned improvements and through the dedication of the staff, the partners and the friends group, I see this park bouncing back in the years to come”

9. The proposed improvements identified in this report will help ensure that Memorial Park meets the Green Flag Award standard.

**Improvements that can proceed**

10. The following projects have funding available and will proceed:

11. ** Provision of New Toilets**
   Funding of £105K is available in the Council’s capital programme 2009/10 to provide new toilets in the upper park to replace the old toilets which don’t allow disabled use. Design work has commenced and there will be consultation with the Friends group and local residents prior to a planning application being submitted. It is expected that the new toilets will be complete by spring 2010.

12. ** Refurbishment of the Ball Court**
   Funding of £24K is available through the Outdoor Activity Development Programme to replace fencing around the ball court adjacent to the Leisure Centre. This work will be complete by March 2010.

13. ** Tennis Court Improvements**
   The tarmac surface of the tennis courts is deteriorating and requires resurfacing. Funding of £14K is available through the Outdoor Activity Development Programme and S106 contributions for resurfacing work which will be completed before the end of March 2010.

14. ** ‘Fresh Air’ Fitness Equipment**
   Fitness equipment intended for installation in the vicinity of Padiham Leisure Centre has been purchased. Playground maintenance staff will undertake the installation and the cost of materials, estimated at £3K, will be funded from the Outdoor Activity Development Programme. Installation will be complete before the end of March 2010.
15. **Play Area Improvements - Upper Park**  
Funding of £50K is identified in the Play Area Improvement Programme 2010/11 to refurbish the play area in the upper park and it is planned that this work will be completed by summer 2010.

16. **Restoration of the Rose Garden and shrub beds**  
The CMP included proposals to entirely redesign the Rose Garden and replant shrub beds throughout the park at a cost of £100K of which £38K was in-kind labour by GS&A staff and volunteers. It is now proposed that the existing Rose Garden will be retained and improved and replanting of shrub beds will progress over a longer period with work undertaken by gardening staff and volunteers. The cost of plants will be funded by the Friends Group and a commemorative planting scheme.

17. **Tree Management**  
The CMP identifies a 3-year programme of tree management in Memorial Park at a cost of £75K. The majority of this work is to be undertaken by the Council’s in-house tree team as ‘in-kind’ match funding. This work remains a priority but will be implemented over a 5-year period. New tree planting will be funded through the Council’s existing commemorative tree planting scheme, which is wholly funded by donations.

18. **Padiham Greenway**  
Work on the Padiham Greenway, funded by LCC’s REMADE project is well underway and will provide improved access to Memorial Park. The scheme is due to be completed by spring 2010. The Greenway will also provide a new link, accessible for wheelchairs, between the two parts of the park. The value of the link that joins the two parts of the park is £341K and this was identified as match funding in the CMP.

19. **Park Rd footpath improvements**  
Resurfacing of the footways on Park Rd have already been completed by Lancashire County Council.

20. **The Secret Garden**  
Proposals to develop former bandstand area as a ‘secret garden’ garden will be progressed using the Probation Service’s Community Payback scheme.

21. **Seats and Bins**  
A programme to refurbishing seats and bins will be undertaken with the Community Payback scheme. A commemorative bench scheme will be promoted.

**Improvements that require additional external grant funding**

22. The following two schemes require external funding, which has not been secured.

23. **Play Area Improvements – Lower Park**  
The play area in the lower park was also identified for improvement in the CMP. £10,500 of S106 contributions are available and will be used to provide match funding for an application to the LCC Play Builder Programme (in October 2008) and an application to landfill tax trusts.
24. **Restoration of the War Memorial**
Proposals for the restoration of the war memorial included provision of disabled access, lighting and horticultural improvements. Gardening staff will undertake some work and Officers will work with the Friends of Memorial Park and Padiham Town Council to submit a funding application to the War Memorial Trust in 2010.

**Improvements that are not funded**

25. The remaining proposals that were identified in the Conservation Management Plan include:

- A new performance structure and terraced amphitheatre
- Restoration of footbridge
- Yorkstone patio to visitor centre
- Interpretation of the air raid shelter
- Footpath resurfacing
- Extended teenzone
- Riverside footpath
- New woodland path
- Traffic calming and lighting improvements on Park Rd

26. There will be further discussion with the Friends of Memorial Park to identify whether of these proposals should be included in the 5-year action plan for Memorial Park. Proposals will be included only where there is a realistic prospect of obtaining external funding to enable them to be implemented.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION**

27. Funds for improvements to Memorial Park toilets are contained in the Councils DDA capital programme 2009/10

28. A separate report to the Executive will seek approval to allocate funds from the Outdoor Activity Development Programme for ball court fencing, tennis court surfacing and installation of Fresh Air fitness equipment.

29. Funds for improvement of the play area in the upper park are included in the Council’s Play Area Improvement Capital Programme 2010/11.

30. S106 funding referred to in the report has been received and the Council’s procedure for approval of use of S106 receipts will be followed.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

31. The improvement of Memorial Park is identified as a priority in the Council’s Green Spaces Strategy 2007 – 2012

32. The Improvement of Memorial Park compliments the refurbishment of Padiham Leisure Centre and the creation of the Padiham Greenway and collectively these
schemes support the sustainable development of Padiham and will benefit the health and wellbeing of local residents

**DETAILS OF CONSULTATION**

33. Cllr Charles Bullas, Executive Member for Leisure
    Mick Cartledge, Director of Community Services
    Cllrs Harbour, Tatchell, Cant, Wilkinson, Thompson, Starr
    The Chair of the Friends of Memorial Park
    Lindsey Cowburn, Finance Unit

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

34. Project file held at Green Spaces and Amenities Unit, Cemetery Office, Rosendale Rd, Burnley

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

PLEASE CONTACT: Simon Goff, Head of Green Spaces and Amenities
ALSO: Andy Buck, Parks Officer