

Meeting Notes
Mountsfield Park – The Way Forward
Civic Suite Room 3
9 July 2014

Officers Present

Martin Hyde – Regeneration Parks Manager
Gavin Plaskitt – Programme Manager
Sandra Plummer – Project Manager

Distribution List

Rory – Chair of FOMP (Friends of Mountsfield Park)
Cllr Helen Klier
Cllr Damien Egan
Cllr James Walsh

1) A little Background

Sandra and Martin provided some of the background information to the project for any new comers or those not yet familiar with the full project detail:

- M/Park funding was secured in 2002 from the Rushey Green Renewal Area Fund for environmental works
- Used as Match Funding' on 2 occasions since then to try and secure English Heritage Funding for Mountsfield but not successful
- Some S.106 funding has been matched against the budget for play provision, cycling, environmental improvements etc
- Pocket Park Funding secured against the project - £35K from the GLA
- Martin Hyde submitted a bid last year to secure £67K from the Marathon Trust to increase the budget

Total budget £525 (without the Marathon Trust Fund)

- Groundwork's were engaged initially to develop some design concepts and consult on them.
- An event was held in the park on 12 October 2012 by Groundworks.
- Consultation revealed that 83% people asked said they wanted a better café
- 63% wanted to see better play provision
- Consultation did not include demographics so unfortunately we know little about the details: working people/ non working, their ages, ethnicity, gender etc.
- The Parks Team have engaged the services of the Programme, Management and Property Team to deliver the project – Sandra Plummer and Gavin Plaskitt have been working on this since 2012.

- The project team engaged with the FOMP - meetings were held in July 2013
- Talked to the group about the design and aspirations for Mountsfield Pk
- Park works area to be separated into 3 areas:

- A The Hub
- B Community Garden
- C The Playground

- The FOMP preferred to see a brick built café within the hub area but after considering other options in the event that a brick built café was not affordable, the group preferred a café made from containers rather than a modular building
- We agreed that we would engage a consultant to work with us who could look at the budget for a brick built or container structure and who could also deliver the works to areas B and C
- Tendered to all multi-disciplinary Landscape Architect Teams listed within the appropriate 'Lot' using the Councils Framework.
- BDP (Building Design Partnership) were appointed as the winning team
- BDP and Lewisham met with the FOMP in November 2013– it became evident that the group wanted more input into the Community Garden design therefore we held a further workshop with the FOMP and BDP in Jan 2014 to establish their most important elements
- Dec 2013 - we heard that the Marathon Trust bid was not successful
- BDP and the Council still wanted to try and deliver everything possible for the park but we knew we had to have a container build because the budget was not enough for a brick design.
- It was agreed that we would move forward with a container built café model
- Planning consent for the container café has been granted by Lewisham Planning department.
- Tenders went out separately for:

Café manufacturer

Landscape/ Civil Engineering (to include the in-ground infrastructure for the café area)

- No tenders were returned for the café, generally tenderers tell us they are too busy to tender for further work
- A low number of tenders have been returned for the landscape and what we have is considerably over budget
- We believe this is due to the economy picking up and construction recovering/ costs for materials have escalated dramatically
- It is clear we can't deliver the full scope of works.

2) The shortfall and options

Following an initial meeting with the Chair, Treasurer of FOMP and a number of Lewisham Councillors, Officers had been asked for the meeting to try and explain to a wider group how we might keep the project on track and still deliver as much of the work as we can.

Sandra and Martin explained to those at the meeting the view of the Council's parks team:

- We can still make the project happen but reduce the scope
- It is the view of the parks Division and the Council that if we deliver the Community Garden and the Playground area that we will help attract more

users and create better conditions to support an enhanced café that could be delivered at a later date.

- That we should go back to tenderers removing the works to the café area and asking them to re-price the project.
- Should any funds still remain that we seek to improve the café area we have in place already
- That the parks team talk to the current café operator to see if they would be interested in extending their contract with Glendale and continue to deliver the existing café

Several people gave their views including:

- Would like to see a Modular Building in the park like the model being delivered at Abottshall Road
- That we could stop the project and re-assess the café model and the play area infrastructure.
- That stopping the project could result in the project never getting off the ground again, given that funds have remained unspent for a decade.

After much discussion officers determined from the 'majority' of those present that:

- Play provision is very important to many and that they would like to see a greater scope of works to this area than is in the existing plan
- Better toilet provision is of particular importance to those who use the park, particularly those with young children
- Having a good café in the park is seen as an important enhancement needed for the park.
- Stakeholders are concerned that the issue of the café may just be left unresolved once money is spent.
- Options for further bids may be reduced if we don't have a pocket of funding to 'match fund' grant provisions which is normally a requirement
- That halting the works and starting again may also result in a hindrance to delivering anything at all and that we would also incur abortive fee costs

3) The Way Forward

Officers have taken on board the views of those at the meeting and retained other information and comments from others already provided. The final decision taken from the meeting is that:

- We seek to deliver the park works in two phases:

Phase 1

Sandra Plummer and Gavin Plaskitt of the Programme, Management & Property Team will:

- Remove the café and surrounding works for this area from the current scope
- Ask tenderers to re-price the scope of works with this area omitted, delivering the Community Garden and the Play Area.
- Look at any savings made from this process and/or how we can further value engineer the project to:

- 1) Enhance the existing café area
- 2) Enhance the toilets
- 3) Enhance the play area

Phase 2

Martin Hyde of the regeneration parks team has committed to:

- Help and advise the FOMP to seek other ways to raise further funding to support a better café for the park
- Continue to bid for funding via the parks Division wherever possible (grants, s.106 funding etc)
- Approach the current café operator to see if they would like to extend the current lease, if this is the case then seek ways to support and enhance that through suggestions made in Phase 1 above to enhance the existing café area but in conjunction with current café operator.
- Liaise with the Councils Corporate Asset Services Division about how we could procure the café via a private investment.
- Hold a meeting in the Autumn with the FOMP to discuss these options in more detail.