

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020

**SUBJECT: Sunken Gardens Project, Bognor Regis**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Rachel Alderson – Principal Landscape & Project Officer  
**DATE:** October 2020 **EXTN:** 37946

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report seeks approval to progress the Sunken Gardens scheme, including its scope, delivery and project funding.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Cabinet is requested to approve;

1. The scope of the Sunken Gardens project and that the project team progresses its delivery, subject to Full Council approval of recommendation 2.

Cabinet is requested to recommend to Full Council that;

2. To approve a supplementary estimate of £500k for the Sunken Gardens project funded from the £316k balance of the earmarked reserve identified for unallocated project funding and essential capital maintenance and the balance of £184k which equates to a band D equivalent Council Tax of £2.97.

### **1. BACKGROUND:**

#### **1.1 Project Summary**

Cabinet Decision (C/043/090320) rescinded all previous decisions for the Sunken Gardens site and was ratified by Full Council at their meeting on 22 July 2020. New proposals for the site will focus on the footprint of the Sunken Gardens only, with the boundary identified on the site plan included in Appendix 1.

#### **1.2 Consultant Support**

An outline brief for this scheme has been included as part of the consultant tender for Place St Maur. It is intended that landscape consultants would provide services to support the project team, which would include a review of the site, outline designs, planting and construction details to enable tenders to be obtained and also site supervision during delivery.

## 2. PROPOSAL(S):

### 2.1 Project Scope

The scope for the project will concentrate on an enhancement in the quality of the landscape, whilst retaining features within the existing footprint of the site. The design proposals will include:

- Removal of the existing play area and relocation of a play facility within the site
- A new southern entrance to the existing gardens
- Refurbishment of planting borders
- Review of seating

It is proposed that the Project Scope in Appendix 1 is approved to provide clear direction to the project team.

### 2.3 Funding

The project needs to be tailored to the allocated funding of £500K, to include consultant fees. Approval is required from full Council to use part of the £686k in an earmarked reserve identified for unallocated project funding and essential maintenance of Council assets when the budget for 2021/22 was set. If £370k is allocated to the Place St Maur scheme there will be a balance of £316k with the balance requiring a supplementary estimate.

### 2.4 Programme

Appendix 2 details a high-level estimate of the project programme against each of the RIBA work stages.

Officers are unable to predict the future course of the pandemic, lockdown and therefore the impact could impact adversely on the programme and cost.

### 2.5 Project Decisions and Member Involvement

A full update on project progress will be provided as required to future meetings of the Environment & Leisure Working Group and the design will be finalised for approval by Cabinet.

## 3. OPTIONS:

- a. To approve the recommendations as set out in this report.
- b. To not approve the recommendations.

## 4. CONSULTATION:

Stakeholder engagement is planned as part of the design process.

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓

Other groups/persons (please specify) Cabinet Members	✓	
<b>5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial	✓	
Legal	✓	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability	✓	
Asset Management/Property/Land	✓	
Technology		✓
Safeguarding		✓
Other (please explain)		✓

**6. IMPLICATIONS:**

- Financial - The capital budget is extremely limited by the funding available to the Council. The Council has a 5-year essential maintenance programme for high priority projects to ensure that GF assets are maintained in an appropriate condition (health and safety, service reliability etc.). £686k was identified as unallocated when the budget for 2020/21 was set. This sum could be applied to projects like the Sunken Gardens (subject to approval by Full Council) but this should be viewed against the Council's other priorities and the limited funding available for capital enhancements and other projects.  
  
If the Place St Maur scheme does not proceed, the Sunken Gardens project could be fully funded from the £686k in earmarked reserve, subject to approval from Full Council.
- Legal – In progressing the project the Council will be required to enter into various legal agreements.
- Sustainability – Sustainability is a factor when sourcing materials for the scheme and consideration of maintenance of the completed project.
- Asset Management/Property/Land – ADC will retain responsibility for the land on completion and therefore its maintenance.

**7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:**

To progress enhancement plans for the Sunken Gardens in accordance with the project programme.

**8. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 25 November 2020 and 13 January 2021**

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

[Cabinet 9 March 2020](#)  
[Full Council 22 July 2020, Minute 114](#)

