

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Development Services
2.	Date:	2 February 2009
3.	Title:	Rotherham Renaissance Flood Alleviation Scheme – Wetland Management Partner Landscaping
4.	Programme Area:	Economic and Development Services

5. Summary

This report seeks to update and confirm approval to external partner investment in the landscaping of the wetland created as part of the Flood Alleviation Scheme at Centenary Riverside.

5. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member

- (1) Notes the handover to Sheffield Rotherham Wildlife Trust.**
- (2) Notes the enhanced form of landscaping delivery now to be delivered on the Centenary Riverside Wetland Area including approval for reallocation of the contribution of £100,000 from RMBC that levers the external sources of grant.**

7. Proposals and Details

Background

Previous Report to Members in April 2007 agreed the appointment of Sheffield Rotherham Wildlife Trust (SRWT) as our Partner to manage the wetland area and a lease of the site for this and contribution to third party external grant bids.

Current Situation

The construction phase of the Renaissance Flood Alleviation Scheme was effectively completed in December 2008 (subject to the minor completion items on the end of the contract work.) The new wetland site will now be handed over to SRWT for them to begin the next phase of work on the landscaping treatment at Centenary Riverside wetland site.

The lease and management plan have been agreed and the management sum of £436,000 has been transferred.

Within the initial Flood Alleviation Scheme funding contracts an allocation for the nature conservation and wetland management costs for the Centenary Riverside site was included on the basis that this is dealt with as a capital sum as part of the current capital works.

The relationship with SRWT will now deliver a more enhanced landscaping treatment of the site, both in terms of extent and type of site treatment for wildlife biodiversity aspects and community interest.

Accordingly the original landscape element, approximately £100,000, was stripped out of the main (Volker Stevin) delivery contract. This has now been put alongside the SRWT delivery.

As a consequence SRWT have submitted and been successful in bidding for external funding for enhanced planting/landscaping and interpretation costs that would enhance the site.

Therefore the landscaping work will now be undertaken by SRWT with RMBC contributing the £100,000 landscaping budget effectively as match funding for the external grants that SRWT will access - grants that RMBC could not access as they are specifically for voluntary projects:

The total landscaping element now comprises		
	Biffaward	(landfill tax)
	Wren	(landfill tax)
	SITA	(landfill tax)
	VALUE Interreg	(through SY Forest)
	RMBC capital contribution	(£100,000)
TOTAL	PACKAGE	£ 322,000.

As part of the landfill tax funded form of grants there is a requirement for a public contribution of around 11% of the grant provided and the Council are providing this contribution as part of our input.

An element of Revenue costs are included in the work to be delivered by the SRWT and covers community, business and schools engagement works, press and publicity and other associated revenue costs that will enable an enhanced site profile (including on-site volunteer practical activity and training with local community members of all ages).

On Centenary Riverside there are two management aspects. One is the role of SRWT in terms of the wildlife and community opportunities of the new wetland area. The second is the Environment Agency in terms of flood defence operation of the water area effectively as part of the River. These 2 agencies are committed in their respective roles to ensure the future sustainability of the site for their respective purposes jointly.

8. Finance

The Council's Capital contribution of £100,000 forms part of the £1.2 Million capital contribution that is already approved to support the Renaissance Flood Alleviation Scheme

The RMBC public contribution to landfill tax grant sources referred to in section 7 is included in the funding package.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The management partner agreement for the wetland area for the continuing year on year maintenance costs of this area requires attendance at management meetings and regular report back by SRWT against targets.

Expenditure will be monitored by specific evidence of defrayed expenditure. In this context it is anticipated that the process of Partnership will produce further funding support so as to not just maintain a wetland but further enhance its interest and interrelationship with the local population.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Flood Alleviation Scheme project supports the aims of:

- Rotherham Community Strategy
- the vision for Rotherham Town Centre (as contained in the Charter and the Strategic Development Framework)
- the objectives of PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk
- the delivery of the objectives of the South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder.

In terms of sustainability, the wetland area at Centenary Riverside has been developed with the re-use of materials within the site wherever possible. The Centenary Riverside site and provision of the wetland site improves conveyance of

water in the river channel. It also provides a nature conservation area available for passive public enjoyment and contributes to biodiversity.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Cabinet member Regeneration and Development Services Report 27 April 2007.

Through SRWT there will be ongoing consultation with both local stakeholders and the local community.

Consultations with the Director's of Finance and Legal have been undertaken.

Reports to members will continue as the delivery of the scheme progresses.

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