

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 1st March 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities

PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment

SUBJECT: Hale Restoration Project – Replacement Childe of Hale Statue

WARDS: Hale

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update Members on progress with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project and seek waiver of standing orders 4.1 competitive requirements for contracts under £173,934. In order to appoint a preferred artist and foundry to create a new statue.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That under procurement SO 1.8.2 (e) SO 4.1 be waived in respect of commissioning Phil Bews and Castle Fine Art Foundry (nr. Oswestry, Powys, Wales) as the preferred artist and foundry.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Members will recall that Halton Council successfully gained a HLF grant of £643,000 in 2007 for improvements in Hale Park and Hale Village; to promote the heritage value of the area for local people and wider tourism purposes.

3.2 The majority of the work has been carried out in the Park itself, which successfully gained a green flag in 2008 following the improvements works. This work cost less than the original budget estimate partly because it was tendered at the time of the 'credit crunch', which meant that very competitive tenders were received from competing contractors.

3.3 It has been agreed with HLF that the money saved from these main works can be spent in the village on related features that support the main aims of the project.

3.4 Members may know that in the mid 1990's an artist was employed to carve a Beech tree in the village to commemorate John Middleton, also known as the 'Childe of Hale' due to his considerable height. This carving became a well known feature in the village, which unfortunately had to be removed in June 2011 due to decay.

3.5 Some preliminary consultation was undertaken in the summer of 2011 to determine public opinion on the desire for a replacement and what form this should take. The original artist was employed for one day in June 2011 to work

with local residents to help formulate opinions and ideas for a suitable replacement and location within the Village. It was widely agreed that a more permanent feature should be considered as a replacement.

- 3.6 As part of the consultation exercise and to meet the broader requirements of the Hale Restoration Project, it is intended that interested local people will be able to visit the foundry during the manufacturing process. They will also continue to work with the artist and be able to take part in a small bronze casting exercise if they wish. Both of these ideas are intended to strengthen ownership and local pride in the finished artwork. This supports one of the main outcomes required of the HLF grant.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Hale Heritage Restoration Project has made significant contributions to preserve and enhance this part of the Borough and continues to create new attractions for the benefit of local communities, and wider audiences. The addition of the Childe of Hale statue will provide an additional permanent feature which will help to promote the local history. Overall the project will improve leisure and educational links, helping to achieve the objectives of 'A Healthy Halton', 'Urban Renewal' and 'Employment, Learning and Skills'.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Ahead of the consultation exercise in June 2011 expressions of interest were sent to a short list of artists in order to gain information on feasibility and outline costs for different materials each artist specialised in. They were also asked for ideas on what consultation they would be able to provide. From this a shortlist of possible artists, Officers together with the Friends of Hale Park and representatives from Hale Parish Council selected the most appropriate submission. This was from Phil Bews, the sculptor of the original Childe of Hale Carving. The value of this initial stage of consultation was below £1,000. This cost has been met as part of the grant funded project.
- 5.2 Part of the proposals put forward by the preferred artist included working with a particular foundry which can cater for public visits (which is unusual due to health and safety risks) and for visitors to try casting bronze themselves. The artist has also suggested reuse of pre existing moulds that he and the foundry hold, adapted to the new design. This substantially reduces the costs of creating a bronze casting. The proposed foundry is also close enough to visit in one day.
- 5.3 The budget cost allocated for producing the finished bronze statue, including all artists fees, delivery and installation is in the order of £45,000. This cost can be met from within the remaining Hale Restoration Project budget which is funded by HLF together with a small contribution from Area Forum. Should the HLF not be utilised, this proposal and alternative options not be identified then the funding will have to be returned to the Heritage Lottery.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Sustainability: a permanent 'Childe of Hale' Statue will provide a long lasting attraction for people to visit in the area. Through a combination of good design, and material choice the statue will require minimum maintenance and present no additional risk to the Council.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 7.1 A Healthy Halton: improved facilities will encourage more recreation and exercise in the area, helping to combat obesity, to encourage cardio vascular and muscular activity and to promote mental well-being for local communities.
- 7.1 Halton's Urban Renewal: improvements to Halton's green infrastructure will further improve the image of the Borough and help retain and attract residents, business and visitors.
- 7.1 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton: community enablement will offer opportunities for local people to gain additional knowledge and skills which will support personal development and will be transferable for future employment.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 There are limited number of other opportunities to secure funding for this type of high quality feature that the Council can access, if the money saved from other parts of the project are not directed towards the feature it will be lost form the Lottery grant.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1 No significant Equality and Diversity issues have been identified.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Executive Board Report 25 th September 2008	Open Space Services)
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) Nick Martin
HLF 'Parks for People' Hale Park Restoration Project award letter.)
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