

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – 18th October 2011

Imperial and Montpellier Gardens - Phase 1 Proposed Enhancements

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| Accountable member | Cabinet Member Sustainability, Councillor Roger Whyborn |
| Accountable officer | Assistant Director of Operations, Rob Bell |
| Accountable scrutiny committee | Environment |
| Ward(s) affected | Lansdown |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Executive summary | Following the council's cabinet meeting of the 26th July 2011 firm quotations and costings have been obtained for the proposed phase 1 works to Imperial Gardens and these are outlined in appendix B. |
| Recommendations | 1) That authority be delegated to the Director Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member, Sustainability and the Council leader, to undertake the first phase of the proposed works in Imperial Gardens as outlined in Appendix 2 and in accordance with the consultation plans entitled "Imperial Gardens Design" and dated May 2011, and subject to minor alteration where it is deemed necessary. 2) That tentage designs for Montpellier gardens be restricted to 4700M2, and 2750m2 in Imperial Gardens (excluding walkways and gazebos) in 2012 and onwards. All to be contained in the areas outlined in red on appendix C and D. 3) That both Imperial Gardens and Montpellier Gardens be subject to a maximum usage cap of 75 special event days each (including setting up and taking down). |

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| <p>Financial implications</p> | <p>The 2011/12 budget as approved by Council on 11th February 2011 included a one-off revenue budget of £140,000 for Investment in Imperial and Montpellier Gardens to provide improved facilities for hirers, including Cheltenham Festivals. An additional one-off budget of £5,000 is allocated for works to the side of the Town Hall.</p> <p>The final scheme, to be agreed by Cabinet in October 2011 must be delivered within the approved one off revenue budget, and the ongoing maintenance of the gardens to be financed from existing annual revenue budgets.</p> <p>Contact officer: Andrew Powers andrew.powers@cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 264121</p> |
| <p>Legal implications</p> | <p>The award of the contracts must be in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.</p> <p>The Council has powers under Section 145 Local Government Act 1972 to use and/or enclose areas of parks or gardens for the provision of entertainment.</p> <p>Contact officer: Donna Ruck, Solicitor, One Legal donna.ruck@tewkesbury.gov.uk 01684 272696</p> |
| <p>Development Control Implications.</p> | <p>Elements of these proposals will require planning permission and listed building consent; an application has currently been made.</p> <p>The planning application will seek to resolve the uncertain planning situation regarding temporary use of the parks for tented accommodation with a view to resolving this situation from 2012 onwards. Planning has indicated that there will be no issue with the provision of the tents in Montpellier Gardens this year in view of the forthcoming planning applications.</p> <p>Contact officer: Robert Lindsey robert.lindsey@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 26416</p> |
| <p>HR implications (including learning and organisational development)</p> | <p>None.</p> <p>Contact officer: Julie McCarthy julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264355</p> |
| <p>Key risks</p> | <p>The risk assessment is included as appendix 1</p> |

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| <p>Corporate and community plan Implications</p> | <p>Four outcomes from the Council's Corporate Strategy that are of relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheltenham has a clean and well-maintained environment • Cheltenham's natural & built environment is enhanced and protected • Create a financially sustainable structure for delivering arts and culture activities. • Arts and culture are used as a means to strengthen communities, strengthen the economy and enhance and protect our environment |
| <p>Environmental and climate change implications</p> | <p>The proposed planting arrangement in Imperial Gardens will largely stay the same in terms of seasonal bedding requirements with the use of perennials where possible. Skillicorne Gardens will contain mainly perennial plants that are less resource hungry in terms of compost and water.</p> <p>The re-instatement method advocated will minimise water usage by employing drill seeding techniques in Spring and turfing in Autumn.</p> |

1. Background

1.1 On the 26th July 2011, the Council's Cabinet resolved the following;

- Authority be delegated to the Director Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member, Sustainability and the Council Leader, to go forward with a tendering process to undertake the first phase of the proposed works in Imperial Gardens.
- Tentage designs for Montpellier Gardens be restricted to approximately 4700M2, (excluding walkways and gazebos) and authority be delegated to the Director Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member, Sustainability to agree the exact figure.
- At the same time, authority be delegated to the Director (Operations) in consultation with the Cabinet Member, Sustainability and the Council Leader to go forward with a tendering process for infrastructure in Montpellier Gardens.
- Authority be delegated to the Director Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member, Sustainability and the Council Leader, to submit the relevant sections of the scheme for planning approval and listed building consent.
- The final decision to go ahead with works in Imperial Gardens and Montpellier Gardens are to be referred back to Cabinet for decision on the 18th October 2011 in time for completion of works over the winter 2011/2.

2. Progress Report

2.1 Phase 1 of the work has now been worked up in more detail and competitive quotations received. Other items that are being undertaken "in house", such as planting have also been costed. Details of these costs are provided in Appendix B to this report.

2.2 The provision of upgraded electricity and water supply in both Gardens is still under discussion between the Council and festival event organisers in order to best meet their requirements. The cost of this element has therefore been capped.

2.3 Listed building and planning consent has been applied for in relation to elements of the landscape design in Imperial Gardens that require this.

3. Next Steps

3.1 If approved by Cabinet, orders and contracts for the works will be put in place, and detailed discussions held with contractors about the precise timing of works taking into account lead in periods for ordering of materials and allocation of resources. All contractors have indicated that they can undertake the work within the required timescale.

Once the precise details are known on timings then this will form the basis of a press release. It is anticipated that the first piece of work to occur will be the redesign of the seasonal flower bed areas, as this will need to take place as soon as possible after the Literature Festival this October in order for the Spring plants to be planted. Temporary notices will be put up on site explaining the works as they take place.

Beyond phase 1 works the Friends of Imperial Square and Gardens have started planning and fund raising to replace the historic railings surrounding Imperial Gardens.

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| Report author | Contact officer: Adam Reynolds – Green Space Development Manager adam.reynolds@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 774669 |
| Appendices | Appendix A – Risk Assessment Appendix B – Cost Plan Appendix C – Imperial Gardens Appendix D – Montpellier Gardens |

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| Background information | <p>Environment Scrutiny Committee, 2nd March 2011 -Imperial and Montpellier Gardens Strategy</p> <p>Cabinet, 15th March 2011- Imperial and Montpellier Gardens Strategy</p> <p>Council, 27th June 2011 - Imperial Gardens Outline Design and Consultation</p> <p>E&BI Scrutiny Committee, 18th July 2011 - Imperial and Montpellier Gardens Strategy</p> <p>Cabinet – 26th July 2011, Imperial Gardens Outline Design and Consultation</p> <p>Environment Scrutiny Committee, 14th September 2011 -Imperial and Montpellier Gardens Strategy</p> |
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