

WIRRAL COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE BOARD – 7 JUNE 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

## **PRIDE IN OUR PROMENADES - SEACOMBE TO NEW BRIGHTON**

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### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report updates Cabinet on the £1 million programme of improvements to be started this summer along the Promenade between Seacombe and New Brighton. The works form part of Mersey Waterfront Regional Park's Pride in our Promenades project, which is funded by the Northwest Development Agency and the European Objective One programme. It is a condition of both grants that the Council agrees to a 10 year Management Plan for the Promenade, requiring a total additional revenue budget of £29,700 per annum plus inflation from financial year 2008/09.
- 1.2 If this commitment cannot be given then the project will not proceed and the £1 million capital investment will be lost.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Detailed plans are currently being prepared by TEP consultants on behalf of Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, for a programme of improvements due to commence in July 2007 on the promenade between Seacombe and New Brighton. They have been worked up in conjunction with officers from the Council's Regeneration and Technical Services Departments, and form part of the Pride in our Promenades scheme being developed by Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, with a £1 million funding package from the Northwest Development Agency and the European Objective One programme. The Pride scheme is also funding improvements to the Otterspool Promenade in Liverpool and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal corridor.

### **3.0 THE PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 Detailed drawings of the final proposals will be displayed at the Executive Board meeting. They focus on 3 main areas:
- 3.2 **The Seacombe gateway** to the Promenade adjacent to the ferry terminal is to be given a major uplift, through the creation of a more pleasant, welcoming environment. The proposal is to encourage more walkers and cyclists to use the prom, with vehicular access restricted to emergency vehicles and those servicing the ventilation shaft. Physical works will include new surfacing, steps/ramps from adjoining residential areas, some planting and a gateway feature. There will also be new signs to, and information about, the attractions and historic sites along the Promenade.
- 3.3 **The Seacombe embankments.** Here, the existing planting will be improved, with some seeding with wildflowers on areas not infested with Japanese Knotweed, which the Council is currently eradicating. Railings, paths and seats will be refurbished or replaced,

and the "waterfall" public art feature replaced with an interpretation of the Millennium Trail (the seven pieces of artwork designed by local school children and communities, and laid into the Prom at various locations along the whole length of the Prom).

3.4 **Vale Park.** The proposal is to improve the boundary between the Prom and the Park, through the installation of new railings, enhancements to the surfacing, especially at the main park entrance, some planting and pruning/ thinning of existing trees. Also, the dilapidated shelter at the corner of the park (known locally as "Dr. Poggi's" shelter) will be completely refurbished and re-roofed.

3.5 In addition, some of the Pride in our Proms budget will be reserved for general improvements to the Prom. These will include new signage (interpretation, orientation, finger posts and way markers), seats and bins and improved settings and plaques for the Millennium Trail artworks.

#### 4.0 **FINANCIAL & STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The budget for the capital works is £1 million, all funded by external grants. A Management Plan has been produced by TEP, the Landscape Architects working for Mersey Waterfront Regional Park. This includes for:

- regular site inspections and reports
- enhanced cleaning of bins, foreshore and clearing of storm debris and fly tipping
- improved weeding and maintenance of grassed areas, ornamental planting, hedgerows and treed areas
- continued eradication of Japanese Knotweed
- weeding, repairs and re-marking of Promenade
- annual cleanse and repair of Millennium Trail
- annual re-painting of railings, both landward and seaward
- replacement/repair of signage, seating, litter bins, lighting columns and safety equipment
- maintenance of Dr Poggi's shelter, including removal of litter and graffiti
- monitoring and review of Management Plan

4.2 This Management Plan which is a condition of the grant giving organisations, has been costed at £69,012 per annum.

4.3 The Directors of Technical Services and Regeneration have reviewed this financial requirement against the relevant budgets at their disposal. (Coastal Defence, Landscape maintenance, Highway Maintenance, Street cleaning, Street Lighting, etc) and advise that the majority of the annual maintenance work can be covered by existing service delivery arrangements.

4.4 The Maintenance Schedule shown in the Appendix to this report compares the cost estimates produced by TEP with existing budgets, to identify the additional revenue resources required by the Regeneration and Technical Services Departments to deliver the Management Plan.

4.5 Members will note that, once existing maintenance arrangements have been taken into account, there is a shortfall on existing maintenance budgets of £29,700 per annum plus inflation, which the Council needs to put in place if it wishes to take forward the

programme of improvements to the Promenade. It is a requirement of both the NWDA and the Objective One grant that the Council commits to implementing this Management Plan, and confirms that it has in place the necessary budgets to achieve this before the capital grant will be approved. This resource will be required from the 2008/09 financial year which will need to be built into budget projections.

4.6 Assuming Executive Board approves this report, I will bring a further report to a future meeting, to enable the Council to accept the £1million funding package, approve the transfer of TEP's contract from Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, and award tenders for the construction works.

## 5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Mersey Waterfront is committed to involving communities through its established People's Panels, with the aim of developing projects that meet the needs of all members of those communities. All the proposals developed to date have been informed and endorsed by Peoples' Panels, the latest of which met on 21 July 2006.

5.2 Detailed proposals have been designed in accordance with the principles laid out in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. For example, with the exception of a small amount of 'feature' seating, all seats will have back-rests and arm-rests. Paths and ramps will be designed to gradient recommendations, steps will have handrails and tactile paving will be used as appropriate.

5.3 With respect to contract management, consultants TEP will ensure that all contractors and sub-consultants submit an Equal Opportunities Policy and Action Plan for approval by the Council and Mersey Waterfront Regional Park.

## 6.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Pride in our Promenades project will be developed and implemented in accordance with Wirral council's environmental management policy, in keeping with the principles of Agenda 21. In particular, the project will address:

- Efficient use of resources and energy
- Minimisation of waste
- Reduction of pollution
- Promotion of accessibility and sustainable transport
- Enrichment of local identity

6.2 The Mersey Partnership also has an Environmental Policy in place, within which staff and projects are expected to operate.

6.3 All tenders will be advertised and evaluated in accordance with the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policies.

## 7.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 This report will be of particular interest to members representing the New Brighton, Liscard and Seacombe wards.

## **8.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising directly from this report.

## **9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The proposed improvements to the Promenade are being designed with the aim of increasing the use of the Promenade and improving Community Safety.

## **10.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Some of the proposed improvements require planning permission. These include the new railings at Vale Park, the replacement of the waterfall feature and the proposed artwork at Seacombe. Initial discussions have been held with Planning Officers, and planning applications submitted, with a view to receiving approvals in time for a start on site in July 2007.

## **11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1 Background papers, including the applications for NWDA and Objective One funding for the project, are held in the Regeneration Department at Wallasey Town Hall.

## **12.0. RECOMMENDATION**

That

(1) proposed improvements to the Seacombe to New Brighton Promenade be welcomed, and the funding and implementation of the 10 year Management Plan prepared by TEP Landscape Architects which is a condition of receiving the £1m capital grant be agreed; and

(2) the building into budget projections for 2008/09 until 2018/19 the sum of £29,700 per annum plus inflation (which will be split £26,130 for the Technical Services Department and £3,570 for the Regeneration Department), to the budgets available to the Directors of Regeneration and Technical Services, in order to meet the provisions of the Management Plan, be agreed.

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Director of Regeneration

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