

# **BRIEFING REPORT**

Central Park Improvements Phase 3



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This proposal aims to deliver a programme of improvements to Central Park, Plymouth. It forms part of the growth of the city and aims to deliver significant health and well-being for communities. The proposal objective is part of the Joint Local Plan (PLY 19) to build a 'premier park for the people of Plymouth and outstanding venue of regional and national significance for active recreation and formal sport, culture, art and the natural environment.' The project will take a phased approach. This briefing report concerns delivery of Phase 3 of the project from March 2022-July 2023.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The overall ambition is identified in the Masterplan for Central Park that was adopted by the Council in March 2013 and approved by Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

Assessments of the park carried out as part of the Joint Local Plan 2017 acknowledged the poor state of the park, stating that 'sports and recreational facilities within the park require upgrading to deal with issues such as drainage, and new facilities developed to ensure the sport and recreational offer in the park is outstanding. Other facilities will also be developed within the park to complement its purpose, such as cafes and play areas. Any new facilities will be in-keeping with the purpose of the park and sensitive to its natural and heritage features.'

Since April 2017 through Phase 1 and 2, the Central Park project team has:

- constructed and supported management of a new park café, community sports hub and events field in ways which generate additional revenue for PCC (winner of an Abercrombie Award 2021)
- extended and enhanced play and skate facilities
- built a new sports plateau for rugby, cricket, football and 4 new hard 'pay to play' tennis courts to LTA specification
- provided new park wide seating, access/path improvements, signage and sculptures
- carried out natural and heritage enhancements including tree planting; hedgerows; Devon stonewalling and gateways; meadow and woodland management
- developed and secured planning permission for a Sustainable Drainage design proposal to deal with flooding in the Barn Park area of the park
- consulted with the public and local stakeholders regarding new infrastructure and improvements (engaging over 8000 people on Facebook and over 500 completed questionnaires), sending out regular newsletters and updating the Central Park webpages and investing in a new interactive app for the park
- led a community volunteering and enterprise programme to support ownership and ongoing care/maintenance and secured additional funding to support a green social prescribing pilot, Timeline for Change project and improvements to the Family Tree Field in partnership with Plymouth Tree Partnership
- secured £529k worth of S106 match funding £446k of external grant funding

Phase 3 provides the opportunity to:

- implement a sustainable drainage system to reduce flooding, reducing the risk of pollution and CSO incidents and increase the capacity of highway drainage and combined sewers
- create an exemplar nature-based solution, which could be replicated in other areas of the city.
- contribute to improved air quality, heat reduction and carbon sequestration through increased tree planting, future-proofing the tree stock of the park
- increase biodiversity in the park to support connection to nature for health and wellbeing

- ensure Central Park meets the aspirations as the city's Flagship Park, bringing a more diverse and increased audience to the park, supporting active lifestyles and increasing income generation for the park enterprises and events

### **3. CONSULTATION PROCESS**

The Masterplan was created as a response to the need identified in the Central Park Area Action Plan (AAP) for a comprehensive strategy of improvement to ensure the park achieves its potential as a key public space for the City. Throughout the process of developing the AAP the Council followed the statutory process of consultation that enabled the adoption of the AAP. Consultation has continued throughout subsequent phases of the project, as detailed earlier.

### **4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

Contracts will be awarded in accordance with Contract Standing Orders and Public Contract Regulations 2015 in line with the Council Procurement framework to ensure best value, using approved and trusted suppliers.

### **5. FINANCIAL ELEMENT**

A total of £9million of funding for the Park was allocated in 2017. This briefing note relates to £3million to be allocated for Phase 3 of the works. The breakdown of the spend for this phase of works is as follows:

- Access improvements: £300k
- Drainage improvements: £1.43m
- Sports Improvements: £503k
- Natural Environment Improvements: £250k
- Project Management: £77k
- Contingency: £512k

### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The proposal as set out in the business case is will help to deliver the Masterplan for Central Park that was adopted by the Council in March 2013. Central Park Strategic Green Space Site is Policy PLY 19 in the Joint Local Plan and a key part of supporting the growth of Plymouth over the Plan period.

**It is recommended that Phase 3 delivery funding is approved.**