

Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee

Date:	9 February 2016
Title:	Open Spaces Working Group / Elms Park Consultation
Contact Officer:	Graham Hunt, Town Clerk Janine Howells, Asset Manager

Purpose of this Report

1. To provide a verbal / written update on the Elms Park Consultation being undertaken by the Open Spaces Working Group.

Update

2. Tenders were received on 16 October 2015 from three companies to undertake the Elms Park consultation. Tenders were submitted by The Environment Partnership (TEP), Lipton Group/Freestyle and Marko and Placemakers Ltd.
3. All three companies presented their proposals to the full Working Group on the 19 October 2015. Following the presentations the tenders were scored against a pre agreed weighting system and criteria by each individual member of the Working Group. This information was collated and the tender was awarded to TEP.
4. Following the award of tender to TEP a project initiation meeting was held with the full Working Group on the 2 November 2015. The project timeline was discussed and various opportunities for public consultation.
5. A topographical survey was undertaken on Elms Park on 18 November 2015.
6. Public consultation was undertaken by TEP on 4 December 2015 at the Christmas Lights Switch-on Event and on 5 December 2015 at the Small Business Saturday Event. Postal consultation questionnaires were available at the Town Hall and electronic questionnaires were also available on the Council's and TEP's website and responses closed on the 14 December 2015. Consultation has also been undertaken with key stakeholders.
7. The Town Clerk has received legal opinion on the Conveyance of Elms Park from the Principal Solicitor (Conveyancing) at Oxfordshire County Council.
8. TEP published the Landscape Stage 1 and 2 Report on the 17 December 2015 which was distributed to the full Working Group, all Members and staff for comment. The report detailed the outcome of the consultation and initial design sketches.
9. A meeting of the full Working Group and TEP took place on 6 January 2016 to discuss the report, feedback on the report and to make some decisions about key components of the design. Costing for designs were also provided. Following this meeting and feedback on the design ideas, TEP will prepare a scheme design that they will consult further on with stakeholders and the public. At this meeting it was agreed that a meeting with Rectory Homes

to clarify and discuss matters raised at the meeting would be beneficial to TEP on preparing a scheme.

10. Following the meeting on the 6 January 2016, MiTP have confirmed in principal that funding will be available to provide benches as part of the scheme.
11. Utility searches on Elms Park have been commissioned by TEP.
12. TEP issued an updated Landscape Design Stage 1 & 2 report (ver2) on the 13 January 2016. The revised report summarised the key decisions with an updated diagram. The report was distributed to the full Working Group for feedback by 20 January 2016. Feedback from the full Working Group has been submitted to TEP.
13. The Town Clerk, Chairman of the Working Group and Asset Manager met with representatives from Rectory Homes on 15 January 2016 to clarify and discuss a number of matters. Notes from this meeting have been circulated to the full Working Group. Rectory Homes will respond to the points discussed in the near future.
14. Clarification has been sought by TEP on matters raised following the Rectory Homes meeting and it has been agreed that 2 schemes will be produced with the MUGA in the existing location and the other scheme with the MUGA in a revised location.
15. The following orders have been issued by the Council in relation to the project:
 - 10 November: TEP - to undertake services as described in the Invitation to Tender - Elms Park.
 - 10 November: TEP – topographical survey of Elms Park.
 - 14 December: TEP – public consultation expenses.
 - 11 January: TEP – Thames Water and UK Power Network utility searches.
16. Officers continue to manage the project in line with the timescales and financial contribution as detailed in the s106 Agreement.

Action Required

To note the report.