

Park Improvement Sub-committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 10th September 2024 at the Druid Inn Llanferres

Present:

Cllr Allan Morgans
Ann Catherall
Cllr Lyn Gibson
Amanda Curtis
Paul Sheldon
Margaret Narburgh - Clerk

Apologies:

Sean Thomas

Members of the Public:

None

There were no requests to join the meeting by video link.

1. Apologies

Mr Thomas sent his apologies due to being on holiday.

2. Meeting Open to the Public

None present

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Approval of Minutes from Meeting on 30th April 2024

Mrs Catherall proposed accepting the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, Cllr Gibson seconded. Cllr Morgans voted in favour and Cllrs Curtis and Sheldon abstained due to their not having been present at the previous meeting. There were no votes against and the motion was carried.

5. Actions Arising from Minutes of Meeting on 30th April 2024

Actions 7 and 10 have been completed. Action 6 is still outstanding as they cannot be completed until a later stage in the project.

6. Update on Progress

The clerk reported that the project had grown into something much bigger than anticipated due to having to apply for planning permission, that submitting the planning application was taking longer than it should, due to last minute requests for additional reports and that the planning application should be ready for submitting before the end of September.

The revised costings indicated the works would be around £160,000 exc. VAT. Adding the professional fees, solicitors fee, translation costs, costs associated with re-opening the park and a contingency would probably result in a total project cost of around £200,000 which is higher than expected.

Cllr Morgans stated that he had analysed the revised costings prepared by Harrisons and could not reconcile them with the original costings or details on the drawings, and that there were still a number of items missing.

The Clerk stated that if the Council's income or expenditure exceeded £200,000 (project and precept) in any one year it would need to change its method of accounting to comply with Welsh Audit regulations. She has sought advice from One Voice Wales to understand of what would be involved and is waiting for them to reply.

Cllrs Morgans, Curtis, Sheldon and Gibson all agreed the Council should stay below this threshold to avoid complication and additional costs on the precept. The Clerk stated that the project could be phased over 2 years but to do so would add to the overall costs because contractors would charge for setting up on site twice.

Cllr Morgans stated that he is not at all comfortable with the costings and would 'walk the park' to do a manual measure of the different areas. He will prepare his own cost estimate based on his measurements with Harrison's rates and section them into different parcels of work. This would help the Council to decide if it wanted to phase the work over 2 years to stay below the £200,000 threshold or reduce the scope of work to stay below it. **Action: Cllr Morgans and the Clerk to prepare total project cost estimates.**

Cllr Sheldon stated that planning may impose conditions that would result in additional costs which would also need to be considered.

The Clerk stated that to date the costs for this phase were still within budget but that Harrison's have twice mentioned that they have spent more time on this than they quoted for. Most of the contingency has been allocated to cover the unexpected planning costs so there is very little left to fund any additional fees from Harrison's. **Action: Clerk to continue updating the Lottery funding manager on progress.**

The Clerk stated that if planning permission is granted, the next stages would be for Harrison's to prepare technical drawings, employ a Quantity Surveyor to prepare a detailed cost estimate from these and the Council to apply for a second grant from the National Lottery to fund the works.

Cllr Sheldon proposed waiting for the planning decision before deciding how best proceed, Cllr Gibson seconded. Cllrs Morgans and Curtis and Mrs Catherall voted in favour. **Action: Clerk to report on progress of the application.**

The Chair stated that all his and the Clerk's concerns had been addressed during the open meeting and so there was no need to move to Part II. The meeting was closed at 8.35 pm.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed