

Leeds City Council – Groundwork Yorkshire Limited – Service Level Agreement 2022 - 2025

Date: 8th September 2022

Report of: Recreation Development Manager

Report to: Chief Parks and Countryside Officer

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was first established between Leeds City Council and Groundwork Leeds in 2008. It provides both parties with a clear and agreed approach to the partnership between the organisations, to further the Council's ambition to be the Best City in the UK (as set out in the Vision for Leeds 2011 – 2030) and the Best Council Plan 2020 – 2025. As this agreement has expired and Groundwork Leeds has merged with two other Groundwork Trusts to become Groundwork Yorkshire Limited, a new SLA is now required.

This report outlines the revised SLA and seeks authorisation to proceed.

Recommendation

The Chief Parks and Countryside Officer is requested to give authorisation to the Recreation Development Manager to proceed with the agreed 2022 - 2025 Service Level Agreement between Leeds City Council and Groundwork Yorkshire Limited.

What is this report about?

A Service Level Agreement is required between Leeds City Council and Groundwork Yorkshire Limited to set out how the partnership between the two organisations will operate, to provide maximum benefit for the people of Leeds.

What impact will this proposal have?

This SLA provides a baseline of responsibilities and relationships between the Council and Groundwork Yorkshire Limited. It provides a clear definition and understanding of how they will support and work together in relation to the resources provided by or through the Council to the Trust with the purpose of achieving the Council's priorities, aims and objectives.

The SLA intends to foster good partnership working between the Parties and encourages joint working with other charitable, environmental and regeneration bodies.

Groundwork Yorkshire Limited will prepare an annual Delivery Plan outlining all projects they intend to implement in that financial year and demonstrate how they contribute to Team Leeds and the Best City Ambition

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

Health and Wellbeing – delivering projects which enhance and improve parks and green spaces for everyone in the community. These can include playground improvements, creating seating areas for social interaction and quiet contemplation, installing outdoor gyms to help improve fitness and constructing new paths to improve access for all.

Inclusive Growth – working with local communities to recognise, retain and enhance their identities, culture and heritage. This includes restoring important historical features, working with local history and Friends groups to produce educational information and interpretation panels and helping develop a sense of pride within the community.

Zero Carbon – establishing community gardens and orchards, undertaking work to protect natural areas, enhancing existing and developing new habitats, and creating spaces where people can sit, watch wildlife and learn about their environment.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

The SLA states that Groundwork Yorkshire Limited will agree an annual delivery plan with the Council at the start of each financial year. All projects included in that delivery plan are developed following consultations between Groundwork Yorkshire Limited and Ward Members, Community Locality Teams, LCC Departments, Housing Leeds, voluntary organisations and members of the local community with regard to design and implementation. Each scheme is subject to governance and consulted on accordingly.

What are the resource implications?

There are no additional budgetary requirements relating to the revised SLA.

The Council provides Groundwork Yorkshire Limited with an annual revenue grant to support key posts within the organisation. This is paid in arrears at the end of each quarter. The allocation for 2022/23 is £75,445.52.

Other partnership projects may be agreed annually in the delivery plan which might require additional spend.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

The SLA is designed to identify and address the risks of the LCC/Groundwork partnership, such as the following which are addressed in the document:

Groundwork Yorkshire Limited must carry out all their projects in accordance with LCC's approved Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety and other policies.

They must also ensure that any of their staff or representatives, including volunteers, undergo Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks if their work involves working with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Groundwork Yorkshire Limited is responsible for obtaining and dealing with all necessary health and safety, risk assessment documents and approvals, including those of any sub-contractors.

Funding is only paid out once all the relevant invoices, receipts and certification for the work undertaken have been received, checked and signed off by Leeds City Council.

What are the legal implications?

The SLA has been discussed and agreed with officers from Legal, Procurement and Commercial Services.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

The partnership between Leeds City Council and Groundwork has been in place since 2008 and has proved very effective in delivering the aims set out in the SLA in support of the Best Council plan, so the option not to continue with the partnership was considered but rejected.

The content of the SLA was considered in detail by relevant council departments before the final version was agreed.

How will success be measured?

Success will be measured annually against the delivery plan, agreed at the start of each financial year by the Steering Group.

The impact of each project delivered by the partnership will also be considered in terms of how it has contributed to achieving the citywide priorities outlined in the Best Council Plan and Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

The new SLA will run from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2025.

Appendices

None

Background papers

2022 – 2025 Service Level Agreement between Leeds City Council and Groundwork Yorkshire Limited.