

**Report of South East Area Management Team**

**Report to South Leeds (Inner) Area Committee**

**Date: Wednesday 21st September 2011**

**Subject: Middleton Park Strategic Advisory Group**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Beeston & Holbeck City & Hunslet Middleton Park
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

To outline the current proposals for setting up of the Middleton Park Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and its role in the south of the city, promoting the park to a wider audience.

**Recommendations**

Members of the Outer South Area Committee are requested to:

- a) note the contents of the report and make comment as appropriate.
- b) agree to the SAG being set up as a shadow board of the Area Committee and being monitored accordingly.
- c) To appoint an Inner South Ward Member to represent the Area Committee on the Board.

## **1.0 Purpose of this report**

1.1 This report outlines the proposal to set up the Middleton Park SAG as a shadow board of the South (Inner) Area Committee. The group will act on behalf of the Area Committee in the forward planning and promotion of Middleton Park as a key asset to the south of the city.

## **2.0 Background information**

2.1 Middleton Park is operated and managed by Leeds City Council with the majority of the land held on a 999 year lease from Wade's Charity. For many years Middleton Park has not received any significant capital investment and as a consequence, the infrastructure of the park, the conservation of its features, the perceived maintenance of the site, including horticulture and arboriculture, as well as the quality of the existing facilities, all score poorly in a Green Flag Assessment of the park. Accordingly, the site falls well short of reaching the Green Flag Standard in contrast to the other large parks in Leeds. Despite the condition of the park's infrastructure, Middleton Park receives over 2 million visits each year, the majority of which come from the wards of Middleton, City and Hunslet and Beeston and Holbeck

2.2 The Middleton Park Project was initiated to address some of the issues on the park, funding as been approved to make the necessary improvements to achieve Green Flag status. In June 2010 HLF made an award of £1.465m toward the project, further funding of £287k has been pledged by Wades Charity, £125k of funding will come from Leeds City Council, with a further LCC commitment to spend £320k revenue over ten years for enhanced maintenance.

2.3 The improvements for the park will include the following:

- The redevelopment of entrance points involving interpretation boards, signage, gates art works and features
- The demolition of the existing visitor centre and construction of a replacement facility
- Improvement works to the existing ponds
- The construction of a bandstand and performance area
- The redevelopment of the rose garden and interpretation
- The improvement of existing footpaths and creation of new seating areas
- Creation of new artworks within the park including a horse gin
- The creation of heritage trails throughout the park with directional signage.

## **3.0 Establishment of the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)**

3.1 The Middleton park project will have a significant effect on the local communities surrounding the park though the increase in accessibility. The park will play an important role in the development of local strategies and agendas. Once the works are completed it will act as a resource for the people of Leeds. With the site being situated centrally in the south of the city it links with a range of strategies and initiatives that are aimed to benefit local people. For example access to a large open space will be crucial in supporting walking groups and volunteer environmental groups.

- 3.2 These local linkages will allow the park to be used by a vast number of people, but the key to making the park as successful as the likes of Roundhay and Kirkstall. It needs to act as a destination and provide a broader geographical appeal across the south wedge.
- 3.3 Given the significant financial commitment to the scheme, it will be important to ensure there are high numbers of visitors, which will maximise the opportunities the park will be used for future events. The reasons why events such as Opera in the park etc keep visiting the same venues is due to the guaranteed attendances. Middleton park will need to engage with a wide audience to justify events being put on there and establishing it as a focal point for the south of the city.
- 3.4 To achieve this the engagement with people needs to take a wider approach than that of the surrounding communities. To this end the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) will be made up of relevant partners that have a focus on the wider area and how linkages can be made to existing initiatives and raise awareness to include the park in future schemes.

#### 4.0 Role of the group

- 4.1 The group's main role is to focus on the linkages and opportunities that will make the park a significant asset to the south of the city. As well it will act as a conduit for information updates from the Middleton Park Project Board to partner agencies.
- 4.2 By bringing together both statutory and voluntary sector partners the group will bring in a range of skills and knowledge to look objectively at a range of options for promotion of the park.

#### 5.0 Membership

5.1 The suggested make up of the group is as follows:

Member	Representative group
Cllr Adam Ogilvie	Lead member for Leisure (Beeston & Holbeck Councillor)
Ed Mylan	Chief Officer (Resources & Strategy)
Outer South Area Committee - Cllr Jack Dunn, (Ardsley and Robin Hood Ward)	Ward Councillors to represent each Area Committee
Inner South Area Committee – TBC	
Shaid Mahmood	South East Locality Manager
Ann Chadwick	Wade's Charity
Peter Marshall	Sir George Martin Trust
Graeme Ashton	P&C link officer
Nick Rose / Eileen Hallas	Friends of Middleton park
Kris Nenadic	Parks operations manager
TBC	Local resident rep / 'in bloom' reps
TBC	Police representative
TBC	Business representative
TBC	Extended services cluster rep

5.2 The make of the group is based on the relevant partner agencies and appropriate representatives of strategic groups that can advise and steer the work to the required wider context.

## **6.0 Justification for the group being a shadow board**

6.1 The capital project is being run centrally through Parks & Countryside and following the 'Delivering Successful Change' project management approach. This set up means that there is an expectation that a strategic advisory group is set up but would not be managed as part of the overall scheme.

6.2 After discussions with the programme board and the Area Leader it was decided that due to the impact of the project on the wider community the most appropriate approach would be to be a shadow board of the Inner South Area Committee. This means there is an effective communication route to local councillors. This strategic positioning also helps to drive forward proposals for the benefit of the wider area.

## **7.0 Corporate Considerations**

### **7.1 Consultation and Engagement**

7.1.1 Ward members are aware of the project and will be involved in the forward planning of the project and provide an additional link to local communities.

7.1.2 The nature of the project means that local residents have not been consulted on the recommendation to set up the group. Consultation will take place with local residents on individual projects in due course.

### **7.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

7.2.1 The group consists of relevant agencies to the progression of the project. Equality and cohesion considerations will be taken into account on any individual project developed.

### **7.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

7.3.1 The work outlined in this report contributes to targets and priorities set out in the following council policies:

Vision for Leeds

Health and Well being City Priority Plan

Safer and Stronger Communities Plan

### **7.4 Resources and Value for Money**

7.4.1 No additional resources are need to deliver approach outlined in this report, which will be delivered within existing resources.

7.4.2 The proposal to have a formal link with the Area Committee aims will contribute to achieving value for money

## **7.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

7.5.1 There are no direct implications for the above as a result of this report.

## **7.6 Risk Management**

7.6.1 This report provides an update on current working arrangement and proposed working arrangements for the future between the Area Committee and the Middleton Park SAG. No risks are identifiable.

## **8 Conclusions**

8.1 The positioning of the group under the Area Committee umbrella provides a monitoring and support route to enable a more effective work programme for the group. The potential links that can be created through this joint working approach will hopefully lead to a vibrant and engaging park that is a key asset to the south of the city in the long term.

## **9 Recommendations**

9.1 Members of the Outer South Area Committee are requested to

- a) Note the contents of the report and make comment as appropriate
- b) Agree to position the Middleton SAG as a shadow board of the Area Committee.
- c) To appoint an Inner South Ward Member to represent the Area Committee on the Board.

## **10 Background documents**

10.1 None