**Investment & Performance Board (IPB)**

Date of meeting: 19 March 2015

Title of paper: Approval for funding of short term improvements to Crystal Palace Park - stage 2 approval

To be presented by: Debbie Jackson, Assistant Director - Regeneration

Cleared by: (name Adviser & Director) Fiona Fletcher-Smith, Executive Director – Development, Enterprise & Environment, and Ric Blakeway, Deputy Mayor for Housing, Land and Property

Classification: Public

1 Executive Summary

1.1 This paper seeks approval to grant fund to the London Borough of Bromley the remainder of the £2m assigned to develop the capital improvement projects in Crystal Palace Park (the “Park”), based on the feasibility work undertaken in February 2015 by Kinnear Landscape Architects, and as set out at section 5.4 below.

1.2 These projects will help to ensure that the Park will not suffer from a further period of inactivity while more comprehensive development proposals are brought forward. The public were consulted on the projects in June 2014, and through the Crystal Palace Board, in January 2015.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Board approves the investment in the Park and to provide grant funding from the GLA to LB Bromley for up to £1.84m for delivery of the capital investment projects set out in paragraph 5.4.

2.2 That the Board notes that GLA funding will be granted subject to LB Bromley allocating all revenue gained from the expanded facilities in the new café beyond £30,000 per annum to a Park investment fund, for use on Park-related improvements beyond the current level of service and maintenance provision.

3 Introduction

3.1 Crystal Palace Park (the “Park”) is an English Heritage Grade II* listed park which was once home to Sir Joseph Paxton’s Crystal Palace. The Park is owned by Bromley Council who took control in 1986 from the Greater London Council. The Park’s 200 acres incorporate a number of heritage features including the last remaining Paxton fountain basin, pedestrian subway, dinosaur models, and the National Sports Centre.
3.2 The Park requires significant financial investment to its infrastructure to ensure that it can be enjoyed by generations to come.

3.3 The Park borders the boundary of five London boroughs: Bromley, Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. Wards from these boroughs (including those which border the Park) experience levels of unemployment which are above the national and regional average, and levels of deprivation are high. The regeneration projects will provide opportunities for local people to improve their skills and employability, as well as improving the amenity of the Park. The Projects (as defined in paragraph 5.4) will attract more visitors and build the potential to generate revenue from improved facilities. The Projects will also provide opportunities to strengthen the community infrastructure and increase volunteering.

4 Background

4.1 The Park requires significant financial investment in its infrastructure to ensure that it can be enjoyed by generations to come and an approved Masterplan is in place for the Park. The Masterplan was drawn up in 2007 and, after a series of legal challenges, confirmed in 2013. At the time of its development, the Masterplan identified a net cost of £67m of implementing the proposals.

4.2 Following a community conference in 2011, a ‘10 Point Plan’ was developed as a first deliverable phase of implementation of the Masterplan. This formed the basis of a bid for £4.5m to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 2013, matched with £2m GLA funding and £0.45m LB Bromley funding. Stage 1 approval for the £2m GLA budget was approved at IPB in June 2013.

4.3 In the meantime, the proposals from the Zhong Rong Group (ZRG) emerged to rebuild the Crystal Palace and invest £100m in the Park. In December 2013, IPB was informed that while the HLF bid was highly regarded, it was not successful due to the prospect of major investment by ZRG.

4.4 IPB agreed in July 2014 that in order to maintain momentum, scaled back proposals should be developed for investment in the Park using the GLA’s £2m budget. Similarly, LB Bromley took a decision to allocate their match funding to a community fund, for other projects in the park.

4.5 In the summer of 2014, the GLA commenced consultation on the possible redevelopment of the National Sports Centre (NSC), which included alterations to the central part of the Park. Responses were gained from a wide range of stakeholders and community groups, and the GLA is currently working through responses, with the expectation of developing a way forward for the NSC in the spring of 2015.

4.6 Following expiry of the Exclusivity Agreement between LB Bromley and ZRG, Bromley Council is proposing to progress a new plan for Crystal Palace Park with support from the GLA, which will be set out in Bromley’s March 2015 Executive Committee report.
4.7 The proposed £1.84m investment from the GLA in capital improvements will allow momentum to be maintained while discussions on the wider future of the Park are developed, along with the development of the NSC property.

4.8 The projects developed through the HLF bid process are in line with the spirit of the Masterplan, and have provided a starting point that has community, borough and GLA support.

4.9 A revised scheme of projects was developed by LB Bromley, based on the HLF bid proposals, but with reduced scope to suit the smaller available budget.

4.10 Public consultation was carried out by LB Bromley in June 2014, with 590 people taking part. The results of this consultation indicated how the public would like to see the remaining £2.24m spent on improving the Park. The results showed that landscape, heritage and visitor facilities works were all important.

4.11 From the consultation, the nine most popular projects are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Built heritage</th>
<th>Landscape</th>
<th>Visitor facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserving the dinosaur models</td>
<td>Return parking site in central area to parkland</td>
<td>Renovate concert platform to be a functioning venue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserving the sphinxes and south terrace steps</td>
<td>Remove areas of parking from central axis</td>
<td>Restore existing café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserving the Paxton basin and improving surroundings</td>
<td>Remove turnstiles from central axis</td>
<td>Create new wheeled sports facility (skate park)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.12 The results of the consultation also confirmed that there was an appetite for a Community Projects Fund. The public’s ideas for how they would use grants from this fund ranged from a youth club, to pony rides, to open air cinema. Based on the ideas provided, and the public appetite to see the other larger improvement projects realised, LB Bromley and the GLA recommended that £0.24m was allocated for this purpose, and Bromley Council approved the release of this revenue sum in July 2014, from their £0.4m allocated sum.

4.13 Many of the popular projects are scalable. To produce detailed costings for all nine capital projects, and assess their feasibility and extent, £0.16m revenue funding was required, approved by IPB in the meeting of the 24 July 2014.

4.14 With this sum, the following work was carried out:

- A condition survey of the dinosaur models was produced detailing the cost of fully conserving the models.
• Drainage issues at the concert platform, as well as the future management of the stage, were assessed and detailed costings produced.

• Detailed costs for reintegrating the Paxton basin and south terrace steps into the Park was produced.

• Detailed costs for removing parking from central axis produced.

• Detailed costs for removing the turnstiles produced.

• Options for the restoration of the café and detailed costs for these options produced.

• Options for the creation of a skate park and detailed costs for these options produced.

The full results of the feasibility study, and options within each project, are included in the appendix.

4.15 This paper seeks approval to grant fund LB Bromley the remaining £1.84m to deliver the Projects described in paragraph 5.5 below and described in the recommendations of the feasibility report.

5 Outcomes of the feasibility report

5.1 The feasibility work examined not only the detail of the budget of each project, but also the scope, and the degree of scalability.

5.2 The premise of the investment in the regeneration of the Park, as confirmed through the consultation response, was that investment should combine projects that focus on three priorities: the built heritage, the landscape, and visitor facilities. The feasibility recommendations therefore balance these three priorities with each project’s scalability, within the overall budget available. This has been consulted on through the Crystal Palace Executive Project Board and with a wide range of other stakeholders in meetings in January and February 2015.

5.3 Concurrently with this approval, LB Bromley are approving £160,000 of their remaining £400,000 of match funding allocation, which increases the total remaining project budget to £2m. The remaining £240,000 of LB Bromley funding was allocated to the Bromley managed community fund, for other projects in the Park.

5.4 The capital investment projects the feasibility recommend consist of: Commencement of the conservation programme of the dinosaurs and their setting, building of the new and expanded café, conservation of the six sphinxes, removal of areas of parking /hard standing, removal of turnstiles, and building of a new skate park (the “Projects”).

5.5 The following table details how the budget will be divided between the six capital Projects that the feasibility identifies, with three projects not funded for
the reasons given in paragraph 5.19. LB Bromley Officers advise that this project budget division may vary as the detailed design develops:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital Project</th>
<th>Project theme</th>
<th>Assigned budget following feasibility work £'000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of the dinosaurs and their setting</td>
<td>Built heritage</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building of new café with visitor facilities</td>
<td>Visitor facilities</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of the six sphinxes</td>
<td>Built heritage</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of areas of parking /hard standing</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of turnstiles</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building of new skate park</td>
<td>Visitor facilities</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees (excluding RIBA stages 1&amp;2 already completed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Of which, GLA contribution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Of which, Bromley contribution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conservation of the dinosaurs

5.6 The conservation of the dinosaurs is considered by many to be the most important project. The dinosaur models are Grade 1 listed and internationally recognised. They are the Park’s unique selling point. However, the cost of their renovation alone has been confirmed as far exceeding the total budget, without including the commensurate landscape works.

5.7 It is therefore recommended that £360,000 is provided for security improvements to the weirs to provide ongoing environmental and vandal protection, and some on educational interpretation (e.g., signage and labelling). The remainder of the budget can then be used on for basic urgent conservation works to the models. This wider approach is important to ensure funds spent on conservation provide lasting value.

5.8 Partners are exploring how match funding could be raised to conserve the dinosaurs. It is also proposed that the additional income generated from the new café would contribute to the long-term conservation of the dinosaurs (see below). This is in recognition of the dinosaurs’ role in attracting visitors to the Park and the Park’s prosperity.

Building of new café

5.9 The original plan had been to remodel the café. However, during feasibility, the potential of a café to provide additional income to the Park, and a new larger café with a viewing area overlooking the dinosaurs became apparent as a way of maximising the potential of this investment, and increase the potential for
private match funding. This is also in line with the intention of the masterplan that the café be linked to the dinosaurs.

5.10 The tender process for the new café operator will take place early in the process to allow the new operator involvement in the design process and to agree operator capital investment, which would be required to achieve the ambition of a café with expanded facilities. The additional floor space will allow the café to hold private events, deliver a visitor services function, and provide introductory interpretation and information about the dinosaurs. This may then allow for the portakabin building opposite to be demolished, thereby increasing green space in the park. Work on site would likely start in September 2015.

5.11 It is proposed that the additional income obtained from the new café lease is set aside into a ring-fenced fund for the Park. The arrangement for this will form part of the grant agreement between the GLA and LB Bromley.

Conservation of the six sphinxes

5.12 It is recommended that all six sphinxes are conserved, however, the cost of also conserving the south terrace steps was found to be prohibitive (see appendix), and, as the steps lead to a location where further large scale landscape work would be required that is beyond the scope of this project. It is understood the conservation works for the sphinxes could be delivered in an early phase.

Removal of areas of parking and tarmac

5.13 The consultation showed that the community is keen to see grey space and parking in the Park removed and returned to parkland. Therefore it is recommended that areas of parking are identified, which will not displace cars on to local streets or have a negative impact on NSC users, and removed.

5.14 £150,000 is being committed to this project aim, but the location of works will be developed further.

5.15 The area at the top of the central axis slightly uphill from the current Paxton bust position, has been identified as a preferred area to return to parkland. This area is of strategic importance on the main axis, and has some elements of attractive landscaping already in place (a small avenue of trees). However, further work is required to identify how it is currently used before a final option is made, to ensure any parking capacity lost in this area is sufficiently available elsewhere within the park.

Removal of turnstiles

5.16 A small budget of £50,000 has been determined to remove the turnstiles with the purpose of improving wayfinding in the Park, and removing unsightly clutter. Removal of the turnstiles will open public access from the top park to lower park and provide better access to the dinosaurs.
Building of new skate park

5.17 The support for the skate park was evident in the public consultation and support for this project has grown to other stakeholders represented on the Park board. A flexible skate park caters for all ages, and serves to animate a section of the Park.

5.18 A number of possible sites for the skate park are currently under consideration. Due to the Park’s historic landscape, it is proposed that a design that adapts to the local landscape rather than an off-the-peg solution is developed. The recommended higher budget reflects this need for high quality design, worthy of the historic landscape. The preferred locations for the GLA at this stage are away from the Penge end of the park, to possible sites in the upper park, to align with locations where skating currently happens informally and ensure investments aren’t all concentrated in one area of the park.

5.19 **Projects the feasibility proposes are not funded**

Of the nine projects shortlisted, it is recommended that three of the projects are not taken forward to the delivery stage. The reasons for not taking the three projects forward are as follows:

- The conservation of the Paxton basin has proved a costly item, and English Heritage has said that although the basin structure is part of Paxton’s grand design, it is now an isolated element and only has a slight historic presence without a much wider reinstatement of the historic context.

- The feasibility indicated the concert platform will cost in the region of £650,000 to restore to a basic operational standard. However, even with this level of investment, expert analysis during feasibility has indicated its uses are very limited as a performance venue. The platform is not suitable for pop concerts, full orchestras or many other performance types. It would only be suitable for small scale community or not-for-profit use, which would not generate an income. As no other revenue funding has been identified, it is therefore not considered a viable capital project at this time. Other uses for the platform suggested during consultation, such as transforming the building into a café of restaurant, could be considered in the future, outside the remit of this scheme of works.

- The more complex parking removal projects are not considered viable at this time due to their relationship with the NSC and their usage patterns. The central car park is used by coaches for NSC events which could not be easily displaced elsewhere. Additionally the removal of large numbers of day-to-day visitor parking would impact on local roads. Bromley Council will not support the removal of these large car parking areas until the future of the NSC is determined.
6 Objectives & Expected Outcomes

6.1 The overall regeneration impacts of the project remain as the stage 1 paper set out in February 2014, and are as follows:

- To better connect the surrounding residential areas and town centres to the Park;
- To improve pedestrian connections across the Park to the excellent (and recently improved) public transport available in the area;
- To reduce the perception of the Park as a scene of crime or antisocial behaviour;
- To restore the heritage assets of the Crystal Palace Park.

6.2 The key objectives remain as stage 1 IPB paper, and are:

- To deliver capital improvements to the Park’s infrastructure, enhance the visitor experience and restore the park’s heritage;
- To support a joined up approach to the regeneration of the area;
- To increase participation, develop skills, learn about heritage and increase volunteering.

6.3 The key outputs will be 3-8 construction jobs, and an increase in visitor numbers. These figures are based on the figures generated in support of the Heritage Lottery Fund Bid, and has been adjusted downwards to reflect a reduced investment of £2m.

7 Equality comments

7.1 All projects will be developed and delivered in compliance with relevant Codes of Practice and in line with the public sector equality duty to ensure that the following issues have been considered. All design proposals will be assessed in terms of accessibility to ensure we minimise disadvantages suffered by people who share a protected characteristic; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

8 Key Risks and Issues

8.1 There is a risk that the commercial operator of the café is not identified or brought on board early in the process, and so the commercial contribution to the scheme would remain unknown. However, the consultant team developing the project includes specialised business consultants, who indicate that the facility will be commercially attractive, and would make moves to engage with commercial partners very early on.

8.2 The sum devoted to the dinosaur model restoration only covers a small proportion of the costs, and so further deterioration of the other models will occur unless groups such as the Friends of the Dinosaurs raise more funding.
However, the funding described here is aimed towards maintaining security to prevent vandalism of the models, and on labelling and interpretation, which is aimed to aid visitor understanding and garner support for the fundraising.

9 Financial comments of the Executive Director Resources

9.1 Approval is being sought to grant fund up to £1.84m of capital over the two financial years 2015/16 - 2016/17 to LB Bromley to deliver six projects at Crystal Palace Park.

9.2 The current approved capital budget for Crystal Palace Park is £1.84m. The original capital budget of £2m was reduced by £160,000 when MD1401 approved the use of £160,000 revenue funds for this project.

9.3 This report notes that LB Bromley will contribute £160,000 of capital towards the cost of the projects, and will also support the creation of a Community Projects Fund (managed by LB Bromley) by funding £240,000 of revenue.

9.4 The GLA funding will be granted subject to LB Bromley allocating all revenue gained from the expanded facilities in the new café beyond £30,000 per annum to a Park investment fund, for use on Park-related improvements.

10 Legal Comments

10.1 The proposals in this paper appear to fall broadly within the GLA’s statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of social development and the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London.

10.2 Officers must also ensure that:

10.2.1 if IPB approve their proposals, appropriate authority (by way of MD/DD as appropriate) is sought before proceeding further; and

10.1.2 that any grant funding is distributed fairly, transparently and in accordance with the GLA’s equalities and in a manner which affords value for money in accordance with the GLA’s Contract and Funding Code and appropriate funding agreements are put in place between the GLA and the recipient(s) of the funding before any commitment to fund is made and that appropriate provisions are included to ensure that third parties whose assets are involved are fully engaged in the process; and

10.1.3 if any services or supplies are required, these must be procured by Transport for London Procurement who will determine the detail of the procurement strategy to be adopted in accordance with the GLA’s Contracts and Funding Code and Officers must ensure that appropriate documentation is put in place and executed between the GLA and the successful bidder before the commencement of the services or supply.
11  **Next steps**

11.1 The next steps following consideration/in-principle approval by IPB are summarised below:

There is a unified design team for all projects appointed, led by Lynn Kinnear Landscape architects. This appointment covers the feasibility and the full design and construction stages of the project.

It is proposed that, with the grant agreement to Bromley, construction contracts will follow Bromley’s procurement processes and standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIBA stage</th>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>Ends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enter into grant agreement with Bromley</td>
<td></td>
<td>31/04/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riba Stage 2 Completion of concept design</td>
<td>25/02/2015</td>
<td>01/05/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riba Stage 3 developed design</td>
<td>04/05/2015</td>
<td>03/07/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIBA Stage 4 technical design</td>
<td>06/07/2015</td>
<td>23/10/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBB procure and appoint contractors</td>
<td>06/07/2015</td>
<td>18/12/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIBA Stage 5 Construction</td>
<td>04/01/2016</td>
<td>06/01/2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendices:**

None

*Background Documents*

Full Feasibility report, Kinnear Landscape Architects

Feasibility recommendations, Kinnear Landscape Architects