

Decision Maker: ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

Date: 6th September 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: KELSEY PARK REPLACEMENT BRIDGES

Contact Officer: David Braybrook, Strategic Commissioning Officer
E-mail: david.braybrook@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Colin Brand, Director of Environment and Public Protection
Email: colin.brand@bromley.gov.uk

Ward: Kelsey & Eden Park

1. Reason for report

To outline the current progress made on searching for feasible options for the replacement of two footbridges within Kelsey Park, and to recommend that Members approve officers continuing to search for options to achieve value for money for the Council within the existing market.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1. **The Environment and Community Services PDS is asked to:**

2.1.1. **Note progress made on sourcing replacement structures to the Kelsey Park Bridges.**

2.1.2. **Agree that officers continue to explore the market for a value for money solution with a further report to follow at the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee in November 2022.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: It is proposed that any replacement structure(s) will be accessible for disabled commuters and satisfy all current requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. In addition it will also contain design features to ensure it is to a width to suit all pedestrian types including pedestrians, runners, walkers, cyclists, rollerblades wheelchair and mobility users and cyclists.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. MBEB Priority: Business and Enterprise
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: N/A
 5. Source of funding: N/A
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: N/A
 2. Call-in: N/A
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All visitors using Kelsey Park.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Ward Councillors noted that they were in support of continuing to search for suitable replacements within the market.

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 Kelsey Park is a large park within Beckenham that serves as an important wildlife habitat but also a community hub with facilities ranging from nature trails through to tennis courts, a café and playground. Its significant footfall demonstrates that it is a valued community facility.
- 3.2 Within the park are two pedestrian timber glulam bridges which both span a shallow body of water which is fed from the River Beck, one of the tributaries of the River Ravensbourne. One is located at the north end of the Park, adjacent to the Information Centre, whilst the other is located at the south end of the Park, near to the Stone Avenue Entrance, and is a key route for crossing from one side of the lake to the other. Both bridges are suffering significant decay and have been deemed dangerous to use, so have been closed to the public.
- 3.3. An independent structural assessment was carried out on both footbridges by Colin Toms Partners in December 2021 in order to both ascertain their condition and in turn, determine the most cost effective method of repair, along with identifying the condition of the embankment substates and confirm whether any additional supports, strengthening or replacement of the foundations was required.
- 3.4. The investigations concluded that whilst it may have been possible in theory to repair and strengthen the existing structures, it was considered that the extent of the repairs and the specialist nature of the works that this would entail would be cost prohibitive. Therefore the overall recommendation was made that the two structures should be replaced.

Design Proposals

- 3.5. The Council looked to undertake an option study for the replacement of the two footbridges which would consider the access constraints, substructure requirements, whole life costs and the required construction programme. This would allow the Council to deliver a replacement scheme to demonstrate value for money whilst also considering the buildability and suitability of the options presented. The design of the suitable replacement considered multiple types of material including Fibre Reinforced Polymer, however after initial consultations the available choices was narrowed down to a replacement on a like for like timber basis (Option 1) and a new galvanised steel structure (Option 2).
- 3.6. The Council awarded the feasibility study to Waterman's Infrastructure and Environment Ltd (WIE) in order to develop restoration proposals that fit the brief in 3.5, whilst also engaging with key stakeholders such as the Environment Agency. The award of the feasibility study was undertaken through the Council's existing contractual arrangements for both major and minor highway works with JB Riney, as outlined previously in Committee Paper ES18040. Spend to date on this contract has been £c36k and was agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Environment to fund out of Earmarked Reserves.

Option 1 – Timber Bridges

- 3.7. This option was for a full like for like replacement with timber structures that retains similar features to those that are already present within the Park.
- 3.8. The hardwood natural finish of this option would generally require a low level of maintenance (but carried out fairly frequently such as the clearance of the deck planks), its assemblage and crange can be provided by a bridge fabricator and its appearance was felt to be more sympathetic with the wider park environment, in particular as the timber struts can be sourced sustainably.

3.9. It does however have a shorter overall design life of only 40 years (compared to Steel which has 120 years) and is of a higher weight, which may have an impact on the abutment geometry.

Option 2 – Steel Bridges

3.10. This option was for a replacement of the existing structures with Vierendeel Steel Footbridges, with longitudinal beams.

3.11. The truss structure of this option allows for a reduced deck depth, it has a long design life of up to 120 years (providing a protective system has been applied) and its assemblage and craneage can be provided by a bridge fabricator.

3.12. However, it has higher initial capital costs compared to Timber, and also requires regular extensive maintenance including minor repainting where required, major repainting of the whole structure at set intervals and waterproofing.

Moving Forward

3.13. The total estimated cost of both proposals that have resulted from the Option Study are higher than initially anticipated. Therefore officers will undertake a full options appraisal for the proposed works, including exploring options within the market to ensure that any proposed remedial solution provides value for money for the Council, with the outcome of this work being reported to Members at the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee in November 2022.

3.14. Desk based research does note that there are other providers that could offer appropriate solutions. However, as the Council already had the options to procure these works via its existing contractual arrangements with JB Riney, it would have un-necessarily have increased officer time and costs to complete a tendering exercise for this phase of works. By making use of our existing contractual arrangements it was anticipated that the entire process could be managed on the Council's behalf through to completion by WIE however the current initial costs of this do not appear to be viable.

3.15. Officers shall now seek to explore further options which may include seeking to contain costs within the options currently provided by WIE, and/or to explore other options within the market. This will be led by the Strategic Commissioning Officer who will report back progress regularly to the Assistant Director of Carbon Management and Greenspace. Officers will ensure that the Portfolio Holder and Ward Councillors are briefed on progress at key milestones.

4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

4.1. Observations from within the Council's Planning, Building Control and Conservation divisions have been sought as to the design of the replacement structure(s). Any necessary consent as they may advise is required will be sought if necessary.

4.2. Advice has been sought from the Environment Agency as to the design, and any environmental permits will be applied for and/or impact assessments undertaken as they advise.

- 4.3. Initial observations collected by Members from The Friends of Kelsey Park (a key stakeholder in the ongoing conservation and protection of the park) were fed into the brief for the option study.

5. SUSTAINABILITY/ IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 5.1 Kelsey Park is a formal public park within Beckenham that historically formed part of the Kelsey Manor Estate. It is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), so any proposed bridge design and its manner of construction will give due weight to its impact on the parks value for biodiversity to ensure that any nesting birds and bats are not disturbed during any nesting or breeding season by any on site activity. Any proposed replacement structures must not increase the flood risk.
- 5.2. The Park is also adjacent to the Manor Way Conservation area, and any proposed design will give due consideration to ensuring that it is sympathetic to the surrounding areas character and appearance. The timber replacement for example, sought to strongly emulate the natural wood features that exist in the current footbridge, and sought to ensure that all timber used was Forest Stewardship Council Certified.

6. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 6.1. Any proposed design will look to ensure that all current requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 are satisfied. This will include any replacement being wider than the structure that it replaces to suit all commuter types including pedestrians, runners, walkers, wheelchair and mobility users and cyclists, and allow two wheelchairs to pass one another comfortably.
- 6.2. Any proposed design will also attempt to ensure that they are suitable for bikes, rollerblades and heavy pedestrian traffic by containing non-slip decking.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The ‘*Making Bromley Even Better*’ objective of ‘Business and Enterprise’ refers to the Council’s intentions to ensure that it progresses with its vision to build upon the borough’s heritage so it continues to represent the best of town and country.
- 7.2. An improvement plan for Kelsey Park is an Action Point under Strategic Objective 2 within the Council’s *Open Space Strategy 2021-2031*, through which it aims to develop proposals for the park to reflect its uniqueness, history and horticulture.

Non-Applicable Sections:	IT-GDPR Considerations, Personnel Considerations, Procurement Implications, Legal Implications, Strategic Property Implications.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	