

Item 3

30th April 2014



Glasgow City Council

Sustainability and the Environment Policy Development Committee
30 April 2014

Report by Executive Director of Land and Environmental Services

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Establishing a “MyParkGlasgow & Greenspaces Fund”

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide detail on the work that LES Parks Development have been progressing in conjunction with GreenSpace Scotland to develop a funding model that would look to supplement current Glasgow City Council parks and openspaces budgets.

Recommendations:

It is recommended, therefore, that Committee:

- i) supports the concept behind the “MyParkGlasgow & Greenspaces Fund”;
- ii) notes the content and progress that has been made in developing a suitable funding application to the “Rethinking Parks” fund; and
- iii) notes that a further update on progress will be submitted prior to referring the proposals to the Executive Committee for approval.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No ✓

consulted: Yes No ✓

1. Background to Parks Investment and why the need for “funding model”

- 1.1 It is widely recognised that communities place easy and safe access to quality parks and green spaces very high on their agenda, and the social, economic and environmental contribution these spaces make to a city are increasingly understood.
- 1.2 Encouragingly, greenspace scotland¹ has seen a significant rise in the number of local groups and communities looking to get involved in improving and managing their local greenspaces. There is a real opportunity to develop an effective strategy to encourage charitable and corporate giving to support and resource local action to sustain and improve Scotland’s parks and greenspaces.
- 1.3 With the dramatic reduction in central and local government funding, Scotland’s urban parks and greenspaces are at risk.² Recent surveys by greenspace scotland reveal that people think the quality of their local greenspaces has deteriorated and this has had a negative impact on their use and enjoyment.³
- 1.4 Glasgow has a long and proud tradition linked to its many parks and green openspaces and holds dearly its world renowned reputation as the “dear green place”. In addition to the Council’s current financial budget allocations, Land & Environmental Services, (LES) Parks Development Section has been exploring additional mechanisms to secure external donations that enable people, businesses, and organisations to support Glasgow’s parks and green spaces.
- 1.5 Given the specialist nature of donation and legacy funding, LES Parks Development Section has been developing a “giving” mechanism in partnership with greenspace scotland and similarly interested local authorities, including the parks services at the City of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee councils. This has the working title “MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund”.
- 1.6 In simplistic terms the purpose of “MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund” will be to:
 - Establish a “giving” website dedicated to Glasgow (and Scotland wide) Parks & Openspaces.
 - Encourage “giving” from local and multinational organisations and individuals to support Glasgow parks and openspaces projects.
 - Establish a local panel made up from the establishment of a “Friends of Glasgow Parks forum”, local communities groups and local businesses.

¹ greenspace scotland is an independent charitable company and social enterprise that provides a national lead for local action to transform urban spaces into people places. They work with a wide range of local and national partners to support the planning, development and sustainable management of greenspaces and green networks as a key part of the green infrastructure of our towns and cities. www.greenspacescotland.org.uk

² <http://www.stateofukparks.org.uk/>

³ <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/1greenspace-survey-2011.aspx>

This board will determine project bid applications and determine funding allocations to local projects.

- 1.7 “MyParkScotland” is an enabling model which has the potential to embrace and engage the smallest local greenspace to flagship city parks, to connect with individual members of the public and community groups, as well as engage with businesses from high-street champions and multi-nationals to the cornerstone community local shop.

2. Proposed funding model

- 2.1 Drawing inspiration from successful models in the USA and Australia, MyParkScotland is a vehicle that enables communities, trusts and local authorities in Scotland to achieve greater investment in their local parks.
- 2.2 MyParkScotland will provide a framework for sourcing and managing investment (cash donations as well as in-kind support; from individuals as well as organisations) dedicated to a city or authority area.
- 2.3 Whilst the development of the MyParkScotland is being led by greenspace scotland, it is expected that a new arms-length organisation (company limited by guarantee with charitable status) will be established within Scotland which will hold funds for each city and local projects. A local panel will be formed bringing together businesses, community groups (possibly through a Parks Friends Forum), representatives of the local authority, and relevant NGOs.
- 2.4 greenspace scotland will build funding relationships with donors, businesses, trust funds, and grant-giving organisations.
- 2.5 The MyParkScotland Fund will accept donations from companies and the public (including crowdfunding, one-off donations, regular giving through direct debits and legacy giving) across Scotland which will be ring-fenced to provide funding for the donor’s town, city or local authority area or for a particular park/project designated by the donor.

3. Structure- Local Community Involvement

- 3.1 LES Parks Development and GreenSpace will seek to establish a “MyParkGlasgow Fund Local Panel” (GFLP) in Glasgow and is currently exploring the best model option, either a single citywide panel or 3 panels which mirrors current Community Planning Partnership structures. The purpose of the GFLP would be to identify and put forward projects and recommend the spending of monies in the MyParkGlasgow Fund on local parks and green space projects that need financial support.

- 3.2 Projects put forward will be featured on the MyParkScotland (Glasgow) website, which will provide a platform for crowd funding and other forms of giving. There may be opportunities for national campaigns (similar to Love Parks Week) and linkage with Green Flag Awards etc.
- 3.3 Glasgow's Local panel(s) and project sponsors/supporters will also be encouraged to develop effective social media campaigns to encourage local residents and businesses to support their projects.
- 3.4 Whilst not being prescriptive on the make-up of each GFLP and recognising their need to reflect local circumstances, further discussions are ongoing with greenspace Scotland but it would intended that any new panel would be inclusion with members coming from:
- the local business sector (a business sector champion to promote the GreenPlaces Fund)
 - Chair of city-wide friends forum and one other friends forum representative
 - Other business representatives including Chamber of Commerce
 - Senior officer of local authority parks department
 - Representatives of local NGOs (non-governmental organisation is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group)
 - Representative of GreenSpace
 - Other members eg. police, community safety partnership' to widen potential board membership/support Representative of GreenSpace

Each GFLP will ideally be chaired by a representative from the local business sector or from the city-wide friends forum.

4. Next Steps in the Development of a Glasgow "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund"

- 4.1 Nesta,⁴ the Big Lottery Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund have teamed up to encourage, support and fund new business models that will help sustain the UK's public parks into the next century. The £1 million Rethinking Parks fund offers a package of up to £100,000 per project, together with expertise, mentoring and support over an 18 month period.
- 4.2 greenspace scotland, supported by both City of Glasgow and Edinburgh Councils submitted a stage 1 bid to this fund seeking £100k funding to take forward the development of the "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund". The stage 1 bid was successful reaching the stage 2 bid process and a decision on the success of the bid will be given by the end of May 2014.

⁴ NESTA is an innovation charity with a mission to help people and organisations bring great ideas to life.

- 4.3 To showcase Glasgow's commitment to the "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund" it would be advantageous for Glasgow to provide an element of continual support both in terms of in-kind officer's contribution and a small element of continuous financial contribution.
- 4.4 It would be a recommendation of this paper that the Council consider allocating a percentage from Council budgets to help encourage people's involvement in reinvigorating open spaces. These should include those budgets that support improved health, vulnerable people, the co-operative council and the development of multifunctional open spaces. Whilst there may be a perception that funds from developer contributions could also be a source, these are governed by specific controls that make this currently difficult to promote. The next stage of the process should also explore further opportunities to develop continuous funding models from the public sector.
- 4.5 greenspace scotland and Glasgow City Council has produced an outline process for developing the "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund. Key stages include:
1. Develop an action plan for the establishment and implementation of a Glasgow "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund"
 2. If successful prepare stage 2 application for "Rethinking Parks fund"
 3. Identify and engage with key internal and external stakeholders to secure early support and buy-in to the concept, including early engagement with the business community to recruit a champion to chair the board and promote the "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund" to other businesses
 4. Engage with established Friends of groups and other community greenspace groups to work towards developing a city-wide Friends of/community group Forum.
 5. Develop the structure and governance arrangements for the partnership panel, administrate and facilitate initial meetings of the MyParkGlasgow Panel, identify and 'package' the first tranche of projects to be supported by the "MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund"
 6. Promote and publicise the Fund.

5. Council Strategic Plan Implications

Economic Impact:

MyParkScotland & Greenspaces Fund will create a sustainable income source for short term parks projects and an endowment fund which will secure long term financial sustainability for parks.

The project will encourage community led management of open spaces, which will build management, leadership and practical skills within communities.

Improved connectivity between local communities and local businesses will encourage future funding opportunities along with corporate and individual volunteering opportunities.

<i>Sustainability:</i>	The creation of an endowment fund will secure long term funding for parks and open spaces. Increased investment in parks and open spaces contributes to the City's sustainable development and assists in areas like improving surface water management and increasing biodiversity.
<i>Financial:</i>	The Council will be asked to provide an element of continual support both in terms of in-kind officer contribution.
<i>Legal:</i>	Formal agreements will be entered into with greenspace scotland and other partners.
<i>Personnel:</i>	None
<i>Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:</i>	None

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

- i) supports the concept behind the "MyParkGlasgow & Greenspaces Fund";
- ii) notes the content and progress that has been made in developing a suitable funding application to the "Rethinking Parks" fund; and,
- iii) notes that a further update on progress will be submitted prior to referring the proposals to the Executive Committee for approval.