

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 23 February 2017

Agenda Item	8
Report No	CIA/ 06/17

Ness Islands Management Works

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report details the allocation of work required on the Ness Islands in accordance with the current Ness Islands Management Plan and a report by Crudens Consulting Engineers dated April 2015.

Members are invited to note the contents of the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 The current Ness Islands Management Plan was approved by the City of Inverness Area Committee on 2 June 2015. The aim of the plan is to ensure that the islands area is maintained and managed in an appropriate way. As a result of the implementation of the plan, additional Common Good funding has been allocated to the Ness Islands Project to bring the islands up to an acceptable and manageable level.
- 1.2 The works have been divided into four specific groups; Paths, Bridges, Bank Erosion and Trees.

2. Proposal for the allocation of work

- 2.1 All paths, banks and tree works have now been allocated. The quote for the bridge work is due by end of January.
- 2.2 A bat survey was commissioned and the results will determine when work on the trees can proceed.
- 2.3 There will also be a meeting with Chris Conroy of the Ness District Salmon Fishery Board to discuss whether bank erosion work will impact on salmon spawning grounds. It is possible this may delay work proceeding until June 2017.
- 2.4 The Forestry Officer has been and will continue to be fully informed and consulted regarding tree work and any path work concerning tree roots.

3. Timescales

- 3.1 Overgrown shrub work maintenance will continue throughout the winter.

- 3.2 Tree work will commence once the results of the bat survey are available.
- 3.3 Paths and bridge work will commence as soon as conditions are suitable.
- 3.4 Bank erosion work will commence once conditions are suitable and in agreement with the fisheries board.
- 3.5 Once all these works are completed, the Ness Islands Management Plan will be operational and annual maintenance schedule implemented with general inspections every 3 years and comprehensive inspections every 9 years.
- 3.6 The nature of the islands and the likelihood of seasonal flooding will impact on progress. Work progress will be monitored and to be completed within the coming year.

4. Implications

4.1 Resources

The budget of £250,000 has been allocated to the Paths, Banks, Bridges and Tree work.

The annual maintenance budget is £35,000 of which £29,560 has been spent on refurbishment of artwork, benches, minor repairs, litter picking, bat and tree surveys and shrub maintenance. Further shrub work is anticipated.

4.2 Legal, equalities, climate change/carbon clever, rural, Gaelic, risk

There are no legal, climate change/carbon clever, rural, Gaelic or risk implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to:

- i) Note that the improvement plan is in progress;
- ii) Note that a further report will be available once works are underway and there is more progress to report.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 16 January 2017

Author: Debbie Sutton, Amenities Manager South