



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Tropical Ravine – Award of Heritage Lottery Funding
Date:	5 December 2013
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Frankie Smith, Project Sponsor

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will note that permission was granted to develop a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the restoration of the Tropical Ravine, Belfast Botanic Gardens.
1.2	The project sought to restore the Tropical Ravine, leveraging value through physical restoration and the development of ongoing programme delivery.
1.3	Key objectives of the bid included:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works which will ensure the preservation of the Tropical Ravine into the future. This will be done in a way which preserves existing features and restores missing elements;• Ensure ongoing conservation and development of the plant collection;• Emphasise linkages with the historic landscape and built heritage of the Botanic Gardens, as well as the surrounding communities and institutions; and• Provide facilities which maximises access and provide a venue for on-going programme of community involvement and learning.
1.3	The Heritage Grant application was awarded a Round 1 pass in March 2012, with permission to proceed granted on 23 August 2012. A stage C review was undertaken with the HLF Lottery on May 2013 and a full Round 2 application was submitted 8 th August 2013.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	Following consideration at the National Committee of the HLF 19 th November; Officers have been notified that the Tropical Ravine has been successful in its application for funding.
2.2	Although a formal letter of offer has yet to be provided the grant will be the region of £2.3 million.
2.3	The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee 20 th September 2013 has agreed capital funding of £1.5 million as part of the Council's Investment Programme. Members should note that the overall cost for the project includes costs of future maintenance over five years; volunteer time and non-cash contribution of existing staff time. A further funding bid is being prepared for the Northern Ireland Environmental Agency's 'Listed Building Fund' and the Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens Group has confirmed a cash contribution to the project.
2.6	Members will note that following the successful agreement of terms and conditions within the letter of offer from HLF the project will proceed through detailed design and development of interpretation and outreach work.

3.	Resource Implications
	£1.5 million agreed 20 th September 2013 from the Strategic, Policy and Resources Committee as match funding.

4.	Equality Implications
	There are no implications at this stage. However, Equality and Good Relations factors will be taken into account in the development of the project.

5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to note the contents of this update report.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Letter of offer to be signed December 2013.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund

8.	Documents Attached
	None