

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

to
Cabinet
on

18th September 2018

Report prepared by: Paul Jenkinson, Parks Technical Officer

Centenary Fields

Place Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Cllr Lesley Salter
A Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide background information to Members of the Centenary Fields Programme.
- 1.2 To approve the process for dedicating Southend Cliffs Gardens to Fields in Trust as part of the Centenary Fields Programme.
- 1.3 To identify the potential implications on future maintenance and improvement of the gardens that might result as a consequence of the dedication.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet;

- 2.1 **Review the draft dedication, Appendix 1, and confirm that they agree with progressing an application to dedicate the Southend Cliff Gardens to Fields in Trust.**
- 2.2 **Agree that if the application is successful that the Southend Cliff Gardens will be dedicated to Fields in Trust and acknowledge that the Council may be restricted from future changes to the gardens.**
- 2.3 **Delegate responsibility for agreeing the final detailed area of the Southend Cliff Gardens to be dedicated as a Centenary Field to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet member.**
- 2.4 **Note the allocation of £10,000 from the contingency for the investment in any procurement memorabilia.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Fields in Trust, working in partnership with The Royal British Legion has developed a Programme that aims to protect parks, playing fields and other recreational spaces in perpetuity to honour the memory of the millions who lost their lives in World War I.
- 3.2 Landowners across the UK are being encouraged to dedicate war memorial playing fields and recreation grounds, memorial gardens, parks or recreation grounds that contain a war memorial and other valued green spaces that have some significance to World War I as Centenary Fields.
- 3.3 By dedicating land through the Centenary Fields Programme local authorities and other landowners can ensure valuable green space is protected as a living remembrance to those who fought and lost their lives in World War I. This dedication is aligned with the spirit of the Armed Forces Community Covenant and will be recognised by the local community as a clear commitment to the importance of these spaces now and in the future.
- 3.4 Southend Cliff Gardens have been identified as a possible Centenary Field for a number of reasons. The gardens overlook the Thames Estuary and during the First World War, the gardens bore witness to Gotha bombers and Zeppelin raids. Troops were billeted in the surrounding properties. Within the gardens is the town's Cenotaph, designed by Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyen. Today with the floral displays and stunning estuary views the gardens are a popular green space with visitors and residents alike.
- 3.5 Dedicating a site under the Centenary Fields Programme does place a number of restrictions on the site. The following restriction in the deed of dedication should be noted as this could impact on the site: "Not (in so far as it has power to do so) to erect any building or structure on the property the use of which is outside the permitted use stated in Clause 3.1) without consent of Fields in Trust." Full details of the restrictions can be found in the draft dedication, Appendix 1.
- 3.6 The deed of dedication (appendix 1 clause 3.5) provides the Council with the ability to still maintain the site. This is particularly relevant given the historic slippage in the vicinity and a bespoke additional reference will be added to our deed to ensure that this need is highlighted and that any necessary works are not restricted.

4. Other Options

- 4.1 Not participate in the Centenary Fields programme at all.
- 4.2 Dedicate an alternative site.
- 4.3 Members have indicated a desire to participate and this site is the preferred location.

5. **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 To represent the Borough's formal support to The Royal British Legion and Fields in Trust to honour the memory of the millions who lost their lives in World War I.

6. **Corporate Implications**

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

6.2 Financial Implications

6.2.1 There is no external funding available directly to support this initiative.

6.2.2 Any permanent memorabilia for the designated site will need to be funded by the Council and an allocation of £10,000 from the contingency budget will be set aside to fund the relevant investment.

6.2.3 There will be minimal legal costs associated with signing and registering the dedication, which will be contained within existing resources.

6.2.4 There will be a requirement for the Council to maintain the site and the budget available for this is within the existing approved budget for the service.

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 Entering in to the deed of dedication would require the Council's seal.

6.4 People Implications

6.4.1 No people implications have been identified at this time.

6.5 Property Implications

6.5.1 Future uses, development and maintenance of the Cliff Gardens may be restricted. However there are no buildings or structures in the area proposed. Maintenance by the Council is permitted within the draft deed and a specific reference will be made to cover any land movement issues should they arise in the future.

6.6 Consultation

6.6.1 No public consultation has been undertaken.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7.1 No changes to access or use of the site is proposed as part of the dedication. Therefore, an equalities impact assessment is not required.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
Application turned down by Fields in Trust	None identified at this time. Site will continue to be a public open space.
Restrictions on works within the Cliff Gardens put in place by Fields in Trust prevent reaction to landslides.	Negotiate conditions within the deed of dedication.

6.9 Value for Money

6.9.1 Any associated works will be procured in line with Council policies and procedures.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 No community safety implications have been identified at this time.

6.11 Environmental Impact

6.11.1 No environmental impacts have been identified at this time.

7. Background Papers

7.1 None

8. Appendices

8.1 **Appendix 1 Draft Dedication**

8.2 **Appendix 2 Area of Cliff Gardens to be dedicated**