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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Management Board Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction & Recycling
<b>DATE:</b>	19 December 2022 10 January 2023
<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	Parks and Environmental Services
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Senior Project Officer ( <i>Sandy Botham</i> ) Commercial & Community Development Manager ( <i>Jon Clubb</i> )
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Donation Points in Parks and Open Spaces</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	Valley Gardens, Knaresborough Castle and Ripon Spa Wards
<b>FORWARD PLAN REF:</b>	N/A

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## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To build on proposals in the Valley Gardens Development Strategy to install contactless donation points, including additional locations in principal parks and open spaces across the district.
- 1.2 To request the drawdown of earmarked invest-to-save reserves to fund the installation of donation points in the Valley Gardens, Conyngham Hall, Knaresborough Castle and Ripon Spa Gardens – to generate income for the upkeep and development of all parks and open spaces.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 For Management Board and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling to support the proposal to install donation points across four principal parks and open spaces locations as highlighted in paragraph 5 of this report to enable ongoing improvements within these areas.
- 2.2 To agree the use of £18k of invest-to-save reserves for the procurement and installation of the six donation points.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDED REASONS FOR DECISION/S**

- 3.1 Donation points in key locations will generate income for all parks and open spaces to facilitate investment in these areas.
- 3.2 Donation Points are interactive and contactless allowing payments to be processed digitally and safely for the visitors.
- 3.3 Setting a suggested donation amount encourages visitors to donate more than a cash donation box.
- 3.4 Digital donation points provide for the ease of collection and banking of donations.

#### **4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION**

- 4.1 Not to install contactless donations points and rely on existing cash donations and installing cash collection boxes in other areas.  
Recommended for rejection as this could result in additional costs and limit the value of donations from visitors
- 4.2 Install movable donation boxes, both contactless and for cash.  
Recommended for rejection as these would involve additional staff resource and security implications.

#### **5.0 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 The Valley Gardens Development Strategy set out proposals to install donation points in the Valley Gardens to encourage visitors and residents to make a small contribution to the cost of running and making improvements to these non-statutory services. Research has now been completed on the technical specification, location, investment requirements and potential financial benefits of these proposals.
- 5.2 The proposal is to utilise robust outdoor digital donation posts that allow visitors to make contactless donations – as illustrated in appendix 1. The supplier’s recommendation is for donations to be set at £3 as is common across the industry, this can be altered up or down to a different amount by the user in £1 increments.
- 5.3 The Valley Gardens has suitable locations for three contactless donation points - all with electricity points. These are at the main entrance, the band stand and the children’s play area. The proposed locations will encourage visitor interaction as each is a prominent footfall area and will be particularly busy during the increased number of events held in the gardens. The colourful ‘duck’ for coin donations that is emptied and banked at Claro Road is proposed to be retained.
- 5.4 To maximise the opportunity it is proposed to extend the scope of the initiative to include three further locations across the district at Knaresborough Castle, Conyngham Hall and in Ripon Spa Gardens. In common with the Valley Gardens, they all feature high quality ornamental gardens and relatively high levels of footfall.

- 5.5 Knaresborough Castle is a historical site popular with tourists and locals and Parks and Environmental Services have been holding regular events at this location. The area of the bowling green features a power supply that can be accessed for the installation of a donation point.
- 5.6 Conyngham Hall is a popular area for local walkers and destination visitors. Most visitors pass through the busy car park and this would be recommended as the best location for a contactless donation point.
- 5.7 The popular Ripon Spa Gardens features a Victorian bandstand, circular walk, games-in-parks facilities and an independent café. It is proposed to install a donation point utilising the power supply at the bandstand that will allow maximum engagement with visitors with additional interaction during events.

## **6.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The following were considered: Financial Implications; Legal Implications; ICT Implications; Strategic Property/Asset Management Considerations; Equality and Diversity (the Public Sector Equality Duty and impact upon people with protected characteristics). If applicable, the outcomes of any consultations, assessments, considerations and implications considered necessary during preparation of this report are detailed below.

### **6.2 Financial Implications**

Consultation with Bournemouth Parks Foundation and Lake District Foundation regarding donation posts in situ suggests an average annual income of £2k per contactless donation point. Assuming donations are made at the standard rate of £3 each, this equates to around 670 donations per annum per donation post. With a footfall of up to 4 million visitors per year, it is felt that three donation posts could be supported within the Valley Gardens, with one each at Knaresborough Castle, Conyngham Hall and Ripon Spa Gardens.

- 6.3 Financial modelling as set out in Appendix 2 suggests the initial capital investment of £18k would be effectively repaid within 2 years with an annual income of around £12k (net of rental and fees) achieved thereafter.

- 6.4 Funding of up to £21k from invest-to-save reserves has been pre-agreed with Management Board for the purposes of delivery against the Valley Gardens Development Strategy.

- 6.5 It is recognised that income cannot be ring-fenced specifically for the upkeep of parks and open spaces, but that it will help to further offset the costs delivering these non-statutory services. Marketing materials will need to take account of this requirement.

### **6.7 Legal Implications**

Legal Services has been consulted regarding the contents of this report and has provided advice.

### **6.8 Strategic Property Implications**

Strategic Property were consulted on the drafting of this report and confirmed there were no comments to be considered.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 Supporting the additional contactless donation points will help raise additional funding to maintain and improve parks and open spaces for the enjoyment of residents, visitors and will support the wider local economy.

**Background Papers** – Valley Gardens Development Strategy, PES, July 2022.

### **Management Board Update – Approved**

- Phased roll out of donation points, to take into account events planned 2023.
- Events start in February 2023 with the artisan markets in Valley Gardens and Knaresborough Castle.
- Suggested installation of Knaresborough Castle, Ripon Spa Gardens and 2 in Valley Gardens (main gate and play area) by end of March to test the number of donations in these areas.
- Coronation 6 May 2023 all points to be installed by this date Conyngham Hall and remaining Valley Gardens band stand

**OFFICER CONTACT:** Please contact Sandy Botham, if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at Parks and Environmental Services, Email: [sandy.botham@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:sandy.botham@harrogate.gov.uk) Tel: 01423 500600 Ext 58646