

Committee(s)	Dated:
Culture Heritage and Libraries Committee	04 09 2017
Subject: Keats House Access Improvements funded by Camden Community Infrastructure Levy Fund	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
Report author: Vicky Carroll, Open Spaces & Heritage Department	

Summary

Keats House has been successful in obtaining a grant of £58,500 from the London Borough of Camden's Community Infrastructure Levy Fund towards a £65,000 project to improve public access.

The project will:

- Improve the visitor entrance to the garden eliminating flooding issues
- Install path lighting to allow safe and welcoming access in hours of darkness
- Refurbish the toilets

The remaining funding for the project is coming from the City Surveyor's CWP budget (£5,000 allocated to toilet refurbishment) and the Keats House local risk budget (£1,500).

As the value of the project is over £50,000 the project needs to go through the Gateway process. Approval is sought from the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee to proceed through the Gateway process.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the progression of the project via the Corporate Project Procedure.

Main Report

Background

1. In November 2016 Keats House applied to the Camden Community Infrastructure Levy Fund for funding for a project to address three key access issues at Keats House: redevelopment of the external visitor entrance to make it more welcoming and address flooding issues; provision of external path lighting; and refurbishment of the external toilet block.

2. Proposals were voted on by local residents and the Keats House application was successful in being allocated funding.
3. A grant of £58,500 was awarded towards a total project cost of £65,000. A further £5,000 – allocated to toilet refurbishment – is being contributed from the City Surveyors Department, Keats House Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) budget; £1,500 is being allocated from the Keats House local risk budget.
4. The project has been discussed with the Keats House Consultative Committee, who are supportive of the developments. The Keats Community Library is also supportive.

Current Position

5. Keats House has a number of issues which impact negatively on the visitor experience and cause barriers to access, namely:
 - The main, step-free visitor entrance to the garden floods in wet weather and is unwelcoming and poorly signed;
 - There is no external lighting at the front of Keats House so visitors coming on winter evenings or attending evening events have difficulty navigating their way to the entrance at the back of the house;
 - The toilets are in need of refurbishment.
6. Keats House has obtained external funding which will cover the majority of costs for a project to rectify these issues.
7. There are two phases to the project:
 - Phase 1 – design, costing, consultation and obtaining necessary permissions for the project
 - Phase 2 – delivery of works
8. A competitive tender process has been carried out to identify an architect to carry out Phase 1, with support from Procurement and City Surveyors. Approval has been requested from Camden to spend the first tranche of funding so the architect can be formally appointed. This is subject to approval of a Gateway 1 and 2 report by the Corporate Projects Board and Projects Sub Committee.
9. The project is being managed by the Principal Curator of Keats House with support from City Surveyors.
10. Design and works are expected to be carried out from September 2017 – March 2018.

Options

11. Because the value of the project is over £50,000 it has to go through the City of London Corporation Gateway process. Approval is requested from the Culture Heritage and Libraries Committee to allow the project to proceed through the gateway process.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The project supports the delivery of the Keats House Forward Plan. In particular it supports objective 4: To care for and improve access to our Grade I listed building and collection.

Implications

13. This is an excellent opportunity to improve the facilities at Keats House through the investment of external grant funding.

Conclusion

14. This project will significantly improve access and visitor facilities at Keats House, and is to be primarily funded through an external grant. Approval is sought to enable it to proceed through the Gateway process.

Appendices

- None

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