



REPORT TO:	BOSTON TOWN AREA COMMITTEE (BTAC)
DATE:	8 FEBRUARY 2024
SUBJECT:	GREEN FLAG AWARD
PURPOSE:	TO CONSIDER THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTAIN A GREEN FLAG AWARD FOR CENTRAL PARK
KEY DECISION:	NO
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR BROUGHTON – PORTFOLIO HOLDER, TOWN CENTRES
REPORT OF:	PHIL PERRY, AD – LEISURE & CULTURE
REPORT AUTHOR:	PHIL PERRY, AD – LEISURE & CULTURE
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	BTAC WARDS
EXEMPT REPORT?	NO

SUMMARY

BTAC develops a work programme each year to deliver the services it is responsible for, and at its 27 July 23 meeting, a request was tabled that the committee consider a report in respect of the Green Flag Award. BTAC further agreed for such a report to come before its meeting scheduled for 8 February 2024, for consideration.

The purpose and aims of a Green Flag are to ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live. To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve. To establish standards of good management. To promote and share good practice amongst the green space sector. To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.

This report outlines the requirements needed to achieve a Green Flag Award.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That BTAC considers the merits for pursuing a Green Flag Award and feeds back the Committee's thoughts regarding aspiring to achieving Green Flag Status at Central Park.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

BTAC requested a report at its 27 July 23 meeting, to consider the Green Flag Award scheme.

BTAC supports the key delivery of services within Central Park and the Committee's view is therefore sought in seeking to attain Green Flag status, given the implications associated with pursuing a work programme that intends to achieve such an accreditation.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) develops a work programme each year to deliver the services it is responsible for, and at its 27 July 23 meeting, a request was tabled that the committee consider a report in respect of the Green Flag Award. BTAC further agreed that the report was to come before its meeting scheduled for 8th February 2024, for consideration.
- 1.2 The Green Flag award scheme is managed by Keep Britain Tidy, and is a process of external accreditation intended to encourage the delivery of well managed public parks. Parks are judged against predetermined standards, to determine whether they meet the standard required for the award, and the right to fly the Green Flag.
- 1.3 At the 25th October 23 Cabinet meeting, a report was tabled to agree a Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan covering the period 2023-2027, entitled, "A Town Centre for Everyone". The Strategy contains four themes of; clean and safe, open for business, culture, heritage & events and transformation, and was approved at the meeting. It also has seventy three actions, three of which are associated with the BTAC work programme. The first two, to install changing place toilets and redevelop an area of the Central park play area, have both subsequently been completed, and the third is to attain a Green Flag standard for Central Park.
- 1.4 BTAC has recently undertaken a number of projects in partnership with external organisations and funders, within Central Park for the benefit of residents. Projects in recent years, have included the provision of a skate park, Multi Use Games Area, outdoor gym and sports equipment, a new garden and arts instillation, CCTV cameras, a changing Place Facility and redesigned and refurbished play facilities. The Park is also due to have footway improvements undertaken in March 2024, and it hosts many of BTAC's own annual

events programme, as well as supporting events delivered by organisations outside the Council.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The Green Flag award scheme is a process of external accreditation intended to encourage the delivery of well managed public parks. The Green Flag Award® scheme describes itself as an award that: -

‘Recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world’

- 2.2 The purpose and aims of a Green Flag are to ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live. To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve. To establish standards of good management. To promote and share good practice amongst the green space sector. To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.
- 2.3 The Green Flag Award® website lists a number of benefits from the status of being affiliated with a prestigious awards programme, these include:
- Winners receive a Green Flag Award Flag, a plaque to promote the status, template press releases throughout the year and the opportunity to use the Green Flag Award® logos on publicity and marketing materials, vehicles and uniforms.
 - The Award being a source of civic achievement and providing communities with a great sense of civic pride.
 - Demonstrating to the local community that a clear improvement has been made to a site, which along with engaging more with the local community can have a knock on effect to the regeneration of an area.
 - The Award can support tourism, attracting new and repeat visitors to the town.
 - Having a Green Flag Award can be a lever for obtaining external funding through improvement grants from organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, and is a means of maximising revenue opportunities from within the site.
 - Every winner having their own dedicated page on the Green Flag Award® website. This is fully customisable and a whole range of content can be included, such as a description of the park/green space, contact information website address, facilities and events.
- 2.4 To achieve a Green Flag Award, BTAC would need to demonstrate that it has a clear plan of what it aims to achieve, why, and who it serves. The judges will expect to see a clear management strategy that both demonstrates that the Park is well maintained, and that there are plans for the future, showing continual improvement.
- 2.5 Judging is undertaken via two stages, the first being a desk assessment and a key component of the criteria above is the development and implementation of a park management plan, that details where we are now, where we want to get to, how are we

going to get there and how we know we have met our aims and objectives. There are also a number of research documents, policies and strategies to reference, including: -

- Analysis of users
- Links to wider strategies
- Facilities maintenance & safety
- Risk Assessments for staff and users
- Noise & Pollution assessments.
- Dog management strategy
- Management of litter, waste & antisocial behaviour.
- Equipment maintenance schedules.
- Conservation Management Plan.
- Marketing Plan.
- Grounds Maintenance schedule & chemical use strategy.

2.6 Step two of the judging process involves a site assessment, in order to measure how well a site is managed. Applications for the Green Flag Award are assessed against 27 separate assessment criteria, under the following 8 themes: -

- 1 A Welcoming Place
- 2 Healthy, Safe and Secure
- 3 Well Maintained and Clean
- 4 Environmental Management
- 5 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage
- 6 Community Involvement
- 7 Marketing and Communication
- 8 Management

Please see Appendix A, which provides more detail on the standards required to be met to acquire Green Flag status.

2.7 The complete Green Flag Awards guidance manual entitled 'Raising the standard' is appended for reference, as Appendix B. Parks awarded the Green Flag status will also be subject to mystery shopping exercises, and if a site receives a red grading the authority would be asked to suspend the flag being flown, until the issues identified have been addressed.

2.8 To apply for an award, an initial site description, contact details and publicity information would need to be supplied along with a management plan and purchase order. Finance considerations include a £350 registration fee, and costs associated with developing and implementing a 5 year management/investment plan, updated annually.

2.9 Whilst there is an administration fee of £350, to register for an Award, there is an expectation that BTAC would need to undertake additional work to meet the criteria and standards set by the Award. To undertake this work, there will be a requirement for Members, Officers and Partners to initially dedicate time to develop a management plan with actions to demonstrate continual improvements for the Park.

- 2.10 Applications for a Green Flag Award need to be submitted by 31st January annually, with Award winners announced each July.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 BTAC develops a work programme each year to develop and deliver the services it is responsible for, and at its 27 July 23 meeting, a request was tabled that the committee consider a report in respect of the Green Flag Award. BTAC further agreed for such a report to come before its meeting scheduled for 8 February 2024, for consideration.
- 3.2 The purpose and aims of a Green Flag are to ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live, and to this end the report recommends that BTAC consider the merits for pursuing a Green Flag Award. In doing so it is important that any such approach includes developing a cost and resources plan to understand the full financial implications with pursuing such a course of action and a management plan that supports the development of the park irrespective of whether an application for Green Flag status is made in the future.
- 3.3 Should BTAC support the pursuance of Green Flag Status for Central Park at this stage (without pre-determining a decision to submit an application), the next steps would be to: -
1. Set up a BTAC Working Group.
 2. Agree the outline and scope of the Project: -
 - What are we trying to achieve?
 - How will we achieve it?
 - How will we know if we are achieving it?
 3. Widen the Working Group membership to include partners and stakeholders.
 4. Set up consultation exercises with residents, visitors and users of the Park.
 5. Prepare a Management Plan and associated policies and protocols as noted in 2.5 above.
 6. Prepare an Action Plan including indicative costs.
 7. Prepare a Final report to BTAC for a decision on an application for a Green Flag Award.
- The Working Group would also report back to BTAC regularly on progress.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The project is initially a BTAC/Boston Town Centre focussed project, but will also act as a pilot for prospective future applications across the wider Partnership.

Benefits would include providing communities with a sense of civic pride, whilst demonstrating that a clear improvement has been made to a site, which can have a knock on effect to the regeneration of an area. An Award can support tourism, attracting new and repeat visitors, and can be a lever for obtaining external funding through improvement grants from organisations.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1.1 A Green Flag Award supports the sub-region's strategic priorities for Growth & Prosperity, Healthy Lives, Safe & Resilient Communities and Environment.

5.2 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.2.1 A Green Flag Award supports Boston Borough Council's priority to be People focussed, making Boston a place where people want to live, and a memorable place to visit.

5.3 STAFFING

- 5.3.1 Development of a Management Plan will require officer resources.

5.4 WORKFORCE CAPACITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.4.1 Development of a Management Plan will require officer resources.

5.5 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.5.1 None

5.6 DATA PROTECTION

- 5.6.1 None

5.7 FINANCIAL

- 5.7.1 There is an administration fee of £350, to register for an Award, and there is also an expectation that BTAC would need to develop a management plan for the Park and undertake additional work to meet the criteria and standards set by the Award. This financial resources required are unknown at present, and would be worked up through the development of the Management Plan and associated action plan over the 2024/25 financial year.

5.8 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.8.1 None

5.9 STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

- 5.9.1 No consultation undertaken to date, consultation with stakeholders, residents and users would be undertaken within the project programme.

5.10 REPUTATION

5.10.1 A Green Flag Award would boost the Boston's reputation nationally.

5.11 CONTRACTS

5.11.1 None

5.12 CRIME AND DISORDER

5.12.1 A well-managed park will support the feeling of being safe in this important public open space.

5.13 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

5.13.1 In seeking to acquire green flag status, the management plan will have a focus on all users and potential users' needs being considered/accommodated

5.14 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

5.14.1 The park provides an important green space/green/"lung" for exercise, activity and supporting mental health as well as physical well-being.

5.15. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.15.1 Activities that are included within this suggested project will seek to support the local authority's climate change ambitions and will review current policies associated with maintenance practices.

6.0 LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

MISSIONS	
This paper contributes to the following Missions outlined in the Government's Levelling Up White paper.	
Health	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.
Wellbeing	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
Pride in Place	By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.

7.0 ACRONYMS

BTAC – Boston Town Area Committee

8.0 APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
APPENDIX A	The Green Flag Standards
APPENDIX B	The Green Flag Awards guidance manual entitled 'Raising the standard'

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

10.0 CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

REPORT APPROVAL	
Report author:	Phil Perry, AD – Leisure & Culture phil.perry@boston.gov.uk
Signed off by:	John Leach, DCX – Communities john.leach@boston.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	Cllr Dale Broughton, Portfolio Holder, Town Centres dale.broughton@boston.gov.uk

CHECKLIST - DELETE BEFORE SUBMISSION TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

S151 Officer consulted on financial implications:	Yes
Monitoring Officer consulted on legal and constitutional implications:	Yes
Portfolio Holder consulted:	Yes
BTAC Chair/Ward Member consulted:	Yes

FINANCE PROFORMA

PROFORMA FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELEASE OF RESOURCES
(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)

FROM: Caroline Thacker-Smith (Business Partner - PSPSL)

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED

REPORT: Green Flag
REPORT DATE: 08.02.2024

OPTION 1	£ Year 1 2020/21	£ Year 2 2021/22	£ Year 3 2022/23	£ Year 4 2023/24	£ Year 5 2024/25
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Revenue

Green flag registration
fee

350.00

Future spend
unknown

Total Revenue Cost

350.00

Funding required:

Total capital cost £

Considered by:

BTAC

Date:

08.02.2024

Revenue cost £350.00

Enter Council or
Cabinet/Executive here

Financial Services Comments

The only financial costs know currently is £350, the Management plan has not been developed or agreed at this stage. Therefore, there is no outline what is required to ensure the park meets their requirements, and how much these works will cost.

Risk

That the cost of the works required will exceed the current BTAC reserve levels.

Procurement

n/a

Value for Money Efficiency

This FP is valid for 3 months from FP date	If this FP is no longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.