

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 20th July 2016
IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH ROOM, SCAITCLIFFE HOUSE,
ORMEROD STREET, ACCRINGTON**

Minute 9 – Rhyddings Park Heritage Lottery Bid

The Leader of the Council submitted an update report on the situation regarding the Heritage Lottery Bid for Rhyddings Park, Oswaldtwistle. In January 2016 the Council had been informed that the Bid to carry out refurbishment works at the Park had been successful. In late January 2016, a petition had been started on Facebook due to some local opposition to one element of the Park's refurbishment, the removal of the sequoia tree to facilitate the landscape improvements to the Rhyddings Street entrance of the Park. It had been agreed that an independent arboricultural consultant's report would be commissioned in respect of the tree and the issue opened up for debate at Full Council. At a meeting of the Council held on 7th July 2016, an advisory vote had been taken and it was resolved that it be recommended to Cabinet that the sequoia tree should not be removed but should be retained as part of the refurbishment. The Leader of the Council indicated that the long-term future of the tree and the Park in general had been considered and recommended Cabinet to agree that the sequoia tree be removed and the landscape plan as originally agreed by the National Heritage Lottery Board be continued with. Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

At the discretion of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Peter Britcliffe (Oswaldtwistle St. Andrew's Ward Councillor) spoke on behalf of residents in favour of the tree being retained.

Reasons for Decision

1. In 2012 the Council's Parks and Cemetery Service started working with Friends of Rhyddings Park to explore the possibility of applying for Parks for People funding administered via the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The outcome of a consultation with Friends of Rhyddings Park was that local residents wished to see various refurbishment works carried out and on 3rd December 2013, Cabinet agreed for the Council to work towards securing Heritage Lottery funding for the Park. In early January 2016, the Council was informed that the Council's bid had been successful. The refurbishment works that the funding would allow for was set out in Paragraph 3.6 of the report and revenue funding would also be made available to employ two staff to facilitate audience development and improved horticultural skills within the Park.

2. In January 2016, a petition had been started on Facebook due to some local opposition to the removal of the sequoia tree to facilitate the landscape improvements to the Park. Following an independent arboricultural consultant's report the issue had been debated at Full Council which had made a recommendation to Cabinet that the tree should be retained. The options available

and the long-term future of the sequoia tree and Park in general had since been considered.

There were no alternative options for consideration or reasons for rejection.

(1) That the contents of the report be noted;

(2) That bearing in mind the long-term future of the sequoia tree and Park in general, the tree be removed and the landscape plan as originally agreed by the National Heritage Lottery Board be continued with.