

## Yateley Green Pond – Aquatic Management and Habitat Improvement Works

### Background

Yateley Town Council has agreed Yateley Green Pond should be managed as a dedicated wildlife pond to support biodiversity. Further habitat improvement works are required to address aquatic vegetation, remove selected growth, improve ecological conditions and support the pond's long-term management as a wildlife habitat.

### Proposed Works

Aquamaintain Ltd has provided a quotation for specialist pond management works using a Truxor amphibious tool carrier and associated plant. The quoted scope includes removal of lilies and selected areas of bulrush, removal of willow from the perimeter of the island, licensed removal of arisings, fish removal from Yateley Green Pond using seine netting and electrofishing, and submission of the Environment Agency consent application required for the fish removal element.

### Quotation Summary

| Item                                          | Description                                                                                                                                                             | Net cost          |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Labour</b>                                 | Removal of lilies and selected bulrush using a Truxor amphibious tool carrier; removal of willow from the island perimeter; arisings removed by licensed waste carrier. | £9,750.00         |
| <b>Plant mobilisation, fuel and insurance</b> | Truxor, 3T excavator, 3T dumper and delivery.                                                                                                                           | £2,750.00         |
| <b>Site security and welfare</b>              | Welfare van, site loo and Heras security fencing.                                                                                                                       | £1,000.00         |
| <b>Fish removal</b>                           | Removal of fish using seine netting and electrofishing, including Environment Agency consent application.                                                               | £1,500.00         |
| <b>Waste disposal</b>                         | Disposal of removed vegetation and associated arisings.                                                                                                                 | £3,600.00         |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>Subtotal £18,600.00 plus VAT of £3,720.00</b>                                                                                                                        | <b>£22,320.00</b> |

### Procurement and Standing Orders

The Council's Standing Orders allow non-statutory standing orders, except those incorporating mandatory statutory or legal requirements, to be suspended by resolution in relation to consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting. Standing Orders also provide that motions may be moved without written notice to suspend a particular standing order, provided it does not reflect a mandatory statutory or legal requirement.

The Standing Orders further recognise that financial regulations should include arrangements for contracts with an estimated value below £30,000, or where special circumstances apply, to be exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise. The Aquamaintain quote is below £30,000 net and relates to specialist aquatic and fisheries work requiring appropriate equipment, experience, waste handling and regulatory consent. On that basis, Council may resolve to suspend the relevant non-statutory procurement Standing Orders for this item only and accept a single specialist quotation, provided members are satisfied that the decision is justified, proportionate and properly recorded.

## Rationale for Appointing a Single Specialist Supplier

The work is specialist because it requires amphibious aquatic vegetation equipment capable of operating in sensitive pond margins, fisheries removal techniques including seine netting and electrofishing, licensed waste removal, site security arrangements and relevant consent processes. The use of a Truxor amphibious tool carrier is suited to wetland and pond management where access, water depth, vegetation removal and protection of sensitive habitats are material considerations.

Appointing Aquamaintain Ltd on the basis of the quotation would allow the works to be progressed in a timely manner, by a local company that we know and are confident of their ability to undertake the work.

## Additional Background

No significant management works have been undertaken to Yateley Green Pond since 2016. As part of the Council's objective to manage the pond as a dedicated wildlife habitat, the proposed works represent a substantial restoration and habitat management exercise to address the build-up of aquatic vegetation and maintain a healthy ecological balance within the pond.

The contractor has confirmed that fish currently within the pond will be removed and rehomed as part of the project using specialist fisheries techniques, including seine netting and electrofishing, subject to the necessary Environment Agency consent.

Members should note that the removal of water lilies and selected areas of bulrush will not be a one-off requirement. To maintain the pond in an appropriate condition for wildlife and prevent excessive encroachment of vegetation, similar maintenance works are likely to be required approximately every five years.

## Cost

The total value of the quotation is £22,320.00 including VAT, made up of a net cost of £18,600.00 and VAT of £3,720.00.

There is currently no budget provision for these works within the approved budget. Consequently, if approved, the expenditure would need to be funded from the Council's General Reserve.

## Recommendation

It is recommended that Council:

1. Approves the aquatic management and habitat improvement works at Yateley Green Pond.
2. Notes that the quoted cost is £18,600.00 plus VAT of £3,720.00, giving a total of £22,320.00.
3. Notes that no budget provision exists for these works and that the expenditure will therefore be met from the General Reserve.
4. Notes that no significant pond management works have been carried out since 2016 and that ongoing maintenance of water lilies and bulrushes is likely to be required approximately every five years to maintain the pond's ecological condition.
5. Notes that fish removed from the pond as part of the works will be rehomed by the contractor, subject to the necessary regulatory approvals.
6. Resolves, for this agenda item only, to suspend the relevant non-statutory Standing Orders relating to the requirement to seek multiple quotations or undertake a wider procurement exercise, on the grounds that the works are specialist aquatic and fisheries management works and special circumstances apply.
7. Authorises officers to accept the quotation from Aquamaintain Ltd and instruct the works, subject to confirmation of budget provision, necessary consents, insurance, risk assessments, method statements and suitable arrangements for waste disposal and site security.
8. Requires that the decision and reasons for suspension of Standing Orders are recorded in the minutes.