

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

1st December 2010

Improvements to Laurel Grove / Beech Road Play Area and Recreation Ground

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Michael Webb
Relevant Head of Service	John Godwin
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report requests Members to approve the improvements and enhancement of Laurel Grove/Beech Road Recreation Ground play and ancillary facilities funded from £51,000 Section 106 Monies.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.2. Cabinet are requested to recommend to full Council that the above scheme be included to the forward Capital Programme for 2010/2011 and request officer to undertake the work require before the “claw back” point is reached.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In recent years investment has been made into larger recreation grounds such as King George Recreation Ground and Charford Recreation Ground to create larger strategic locations of multi functioning open space / parks to benefit the whole community.

Laurel Grove/Beech Road Sidemoor, is a large recreation area that runs from Laurel Grove/Beech Road to Broad Street and services a large section of the local community to the East of Broad Street. In 2004 a small junior, fenced play provision was installed to support the older toddler area that was already on site. There is also a set of basketball posts and hard standing area with in the recreation ground.

- 3.2 The toddler play area and small scale basketball provision lacks innovation, does not challenge users imagination, has low play value and is coming to the end of its useful life. This has a detrimental affect on the aesthetics of this recreation ground and has a subsequent impact upon the local area and resident satisfaction.
- 3.3 This project would support our policy to provide larger, higher quality facilities in strategic locations and move away from low quality, small facilities which experience limited use. These Improvements enhance community cohesion bringing local residents together in one area and also by involving the community with designs and proposals will provide residents with a sense of belonging and contribution to their local area.

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3.4 The recent PPG17 survey covering provision for Children and Young People shows that Bromsgrove Central area received the lowest score for quality of play provision for children. The analysis suggests that enhancing the quality of existing play areas is considered to be as important as increasing the quantity. However, the quantitative standard when broken down by Ward level has identified Sidemoor with a shortfall in provision of children's play facilities.

3.5 The PPG17 report also sets out provision standards for access which is essential for maximising usage of the sites as well as providing opportunities for people to use the site. It is recommended that the standard for provision for children is a 10 minute walk time.

This site is accessible from multi access points from the top of Holly Road / Laurel Grove and surrounding area and from Broad Street at the bottom of the site.

3.6 Officers have been reviewing the current 106 budget allocations and available budgets in line with the up coming revisions to the County Play Strategy and PPG17 quantitative and qualitative assessment of the District facilities. During this review the monies outlined have been identified as unallocated and a claw back period is in place that will see part of the monies returned to the developer should it not be used on or before December 2010. There is also a restriction on development of play provision which stipulates that any facilities provided must be within a 2km radius of the development (All Saint's Road).

3.7 Officers have sought a suitable local scheme in line with Corporate Objectives & Priorities, the principles of the Play Strategy and the restraints identified in section 3.5. The current provision at Laurel Grove / Beech Road is in need of qualitative and quantitative improvements and as such this scheme is considered to be the most appropriate. This is further supported given the condition of the equipment on site and the need to consider replacement/enhancement of the area in the near future.

3.8 By increasing the quality of the provision in Sidemoor through this scheme and recent improvement at King George Recreation Ground, BDC will be able to consider in the future the potential to rationalise other play areas. For example the small and badly located Silverdale Close play area and return them to either POS or potential look at using them as investment locations. This play area is within a 5 minute walking distance from Laurel Grove/Beech Road Play area and has several issues that would need to be considered as part of a future review.

4. KEY ISSUES

The key issues within this report are as follows:

- 4.1 By including the enhancement scheme within the capital programme the potential for claw back of the 106 funding is removed.
- 4.2 The current toddler facility and basketball posts are coming to the end of their useful life and this funding will allow their replacement at no direct cost to BDC.
- 4.3 The completion of the works in Sidemoor will although a formal review of play areas sites to be undertaken based on known situations rather than indicative ideas. This will lead to effective rationalisation and potential budget savings in the future.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The £51,000 section 106 monies are in place and available for use at Laurel Grove/Beech Road and as the site is already within the Council's portfolio of play areas there are no additional maintenance or inspections cost involved.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications contained within this report.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This scheme would support the County Play Strategy Objectives and Principles and those of the BDC Play Action Plan.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The scheme will support the following objectives:
 - Objective One - Improvement and Value for Money, reducing the ongoing impact on maintenance relating to age of equipment and by responding to the qualitative aspects of PPG17 in relation to Young persons facilities.
 - Objective Two - One community, by working and engaging with local people to seek their needs and requests and enhancing resident feedback following PPG17 assessment.

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9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Risk assessments will be managed via project management of the scheme and external / independent risk inspection / assessment of the facility will be carried out and recorded as part of our normal assessments of new facilities.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct customer implications as this is an existing site and facility.

- 10.2 Possible customer implications with the removal of the Silverdale site.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The proposals will ensure multi age ranges within the local community are provided for at this site.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 The proposed scheme will reduce officer time for re-active works to monitor and replace / update old items of equipment.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

- 13.1 Reduction in the poor condition hard standing pad at the lower area of the site and increase grassed areas for amenity purpose.

- 13.2 Inclusion of tree planting along the pathway running through the site and additional supporting shrub planting.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 None.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 None.

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

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16.1 None.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 None directly contained within this report.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 None.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 Liaison to be held with the local community using 3 options / proposals to discuss and reflect wishes of the local people. This will be carried out in the form of an open morning event to welcome all residents to view proposals – this would include residents Silverdale Residents.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

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21. **WARDS AFFECTED**

Sidemoor

22. **APPENDICES**

23. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

24. **KEY**

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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