

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th NOVEMBER 2008

CAPITAL PROGRAMME INCREASE – LICKEY END RECREATION GROUND

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Deputy Head of Street Scene & Community
Non Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report requests members to agree to an increase in the Council's capital programme in relation to the above Recreation Ground improvements and play area refurbishment.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Executive Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1.1 Request Full Council to approve a £50,000 increase to the 2008/09 Capital Programme to be funded from the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) grant in respect of the play area refurbishment/enhancement at the above site, as highlighted in section 4.1 of this report.
- 2.1.2 Request Full Council to approve a £15,000 increase to the 2008/09 Capital Programme, to be funded from Capital Receipts to enhance the accessibility of the facilities at the above recreation ground, as highlighted in section 4.1 of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As elected members will be aware Bromsgrove District Council were instrumental in establishing the Worcestershire Play Partnership along with the County Council and the other five district authorities across Worcestershire. As part of the work of the partnership a County wide Play Strategy was produced along with a district level action plan to govern the development & delivery of the play services to ensure that they meet the partnerships priorities based on local need.
- 3.2 The structure, strategy and work of the group have been used by Play England as an example of best practice when working in a two tier authority setting. One of the benefits of the approach that has been adopted is that the partnership was invited to apply to the Department for Children, Schools

& Families (DCSF) for Play Pathfinder status, if successful this would mean an investment in Worcestershire of £2.5 million capital and £500,000 revenue funding linked to key projects including a new adventure play facilities.

- 3.3 Unfortunately the initial bid was unsuccessful although there is a subsequent bidding round commencing in September 2008 which the group are currently debating. Worcestershire was however, awarded Play Builder status which means the DCSF has provided £1 million pounds over a 3 year period to develop or enhance up to 25 play areas.
- 3.4 The funding stream will run from September 2008 to March 2009 and the following two financial years. However in order to qualify for the grant funding the Play Partnership had to demonstrate that it could deliver six play areas with in the first year that were innovative, challenging, accessible, include community involvement in their design, were sustainable and most importantly deliverable on time and with in budget.
- 3.5 In order to meet the funding criteria and the deadlines imposed by the DCSF the play partnership agreed that the first years funding round would be co-ordinated by each District Council as they were in a position to fully appreciate and understand the local context of the bids submitted. The District Council was charged with putting forward 3 play areas as potential projects which were vetted by a sub group of the partnership. Due to capacity issues with in the Parks Team and the current condition of some of our own play areas. Bromsgrove's bids were limited to sites which we operate and included Swans Length in Alvechurch, Shelley Close in Catshill, Aston Fields Recreation Ground and Lickey End Recreation Ground,
- 3.6 Following the vetting process the play partnership sub group supported the Lickey End Recreation Ground project due to the innovation that it had demonstrated with using natural play in an area that was semi rural/urban. The bid was also recommended to the partnership to go forward due to BDC's recent good record in delivering this type of project and the robust local consultation that is built into the design and build process we follow.
- 3.7 Members should also be aware that the Play Partnership has requested that the Council be on stand by for another project at short notice should colleagues with in Worcestershire be unable to deliver their own project with in the agreed time scales. As such we will be developing a second project concurrently should an opportunity become available and designs are being prepared. It is proposed at this stage that we will develop the Swans Length site in Alvechurch in order to complete the works on site and to complement the recent investment made to youth provision.
- 3.8 If the Council has to deliver this additional project a report will be presented to members to release additional funds required.

3.9 Officers are now in the final stages of processing the funding application in order to commit to the projects timescales and commence the on site preparations and delivery, subject to member approval.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Total cost of the project will be £65,000, which is based upon a:

- £50,000 play areas enhancement.
- £15,000 worth of infrastructure work to enhance the sites accessibility, car parking, ancillary facilities, signage and to develop the sites as a natural open space.

4.2 The cost of the is project will be met from a Capital grant from the DCSF for £50,000 to undertake the play area enhancement and a £15,000 investment from the Council's capital receipts.

4.3 All consultation, design and project management costs for this project will be met from existing resources.

4.4 All ongoing maintenance implications will be met from existing resources, a review of replacement requirements will be addressed as part of the medium term financial plan.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications contained with in this report as the installation with be covered by the Play Framework Contract which has vetted the contractors previously.

5.2 The funding agreement has been reviewed and does not give any cause for concern.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 The overall site improvements and the play area refurbishment will contribute to the Sense of Community and Well Being objective by enhancing the current level of provision provided to residents, increasing access to the site and by promoting additional use of the Recreation Ground.

6.2 The site improvements will also allow additional activities be undertaken at the venue to promote the Sense of Community priority for example increased sports & arts development delivery on site to bring different generation together. This was again featured in the initial bid and was viewed as a strong area of the bid as there were direct links to the Council's Priorities but also the Play Strategies Outcomes of "Increased opportunity to access and enjoy play" and Increased Inclusive Play Opportunities.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 There are no risks associated with this project over and above the normal process for installing a new play area which are based in Health & Safety Legislation. These implications have been reviewed and scrutinised within the play framework contract and an agreed approach developed in order to protect BDC's interests and to meet the funding criteria.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Increased quality of provision leading to higher customer satisfaction with the Council and its services.

8.2 Members should be aware that whilst the works are undertaken the play facilities and the site will be unavailable in order to complete the works. We will of course endeavour to minimise disruption and notify residents well in advance.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 During the consultation period officers will identify the needs of disabled and where possible the site will provide disabled play facilities. In addition the site access arrangements will be enhanced to support such usage.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The installation will be undertaken within the Council's Play Framework contract and as such has already been reviewed and accepted as promoting VFM and the effective use of resources.

10.2 The enhanced facilities will also contribute to higher resident satisfaction outturns as highlighted in section 8.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues – This project is covered by the play provision framework contract.
Personnel Implications - None
Governance/Performance Management - None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - None
Policy - None
Environmental - None

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12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	<u>Yes</u>
Executive Director (Services)	<u>Yes</u>
Assistant Chief Executive	<u>No</u>
Head of Service	<u>Yes</u>
Head of Financial Services	<u>Yes</u>
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	<u>Yes</u>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<u>No</u>
Corporate Procurement Team	<u>No</u>

13. WARDS AFFECTED

Linthurst

14. APPENDICES

None

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Worcestershire Play Strategy
Bromsgrove Play Action Plan
Play Builder Documentation - DCFS

CONTACT OFFICER

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