



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

Policy and Finance Committee

Date: 19th April 2021

Title: Parson's Close Recreation Ground – Adventure Playground

Purpose of the Report: To review funding options to be considered for the delivery of an inclusive adventure playground for Parson's Close Recreation Ground and make a recommendation to Council.

Contact Officer: Ian Haynes – Head of Grounds and Environmental Services

Corporate Objective/s		Objective 43 - To consider the development of the playground in Parson's Close Recreation Ground to incorporate an adventure play area.
Implications:		
Financial	√	That the capital cost of £297,947.00 to be met through the United Kingdom Debt Management Office via a Public Work Loan – with possible repayments embedded within the current budget or from Town Council held reserves.
Human Resources		None
Operational/Service delivery		None
Procedural/Legal		None
Risk/Health and Safety		None

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 To note the report.

1.2 To consider the funding options to deliver this £297,947.00 project.

- 1.3 To approved funding through the United Kingdom Debt Management Office via a Public Work Loan application and make a recommendation to Council to endorsed said application.

Or

- 1.4 To approve funding from Town Council held reserves and make a recommendation to Council to endorse the release of monies to self-fund this project.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town Council's Five-Year Plan for the period of 2019-2024, includes the delivery of an adventure playground.
- 2.2 This Council has already delivered objective 42 - To install a Changing Pod facility in Parson's Close Recreation Ground to meet requirements of additional needs. These two projects go hand in hand and will complement each other perfectly.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Parson's Close Recreation Ground is considered to be the best location for this project as the refurbishment of the playground within Parson's Close is currently not included within the Town Council's rolling play area improvement programme, due to the size and limited funds available to make an inventive improvement.
- 3.2 It is believed that an inclusive adventure playground for Parson's Close Recreation Ground, will meet the needs of local families and will further enhance Parson's Close as a free to use destination park.
- 3.3 It is considered by Officers that an inclusive play space will help deliver playful opportunities for all abilities by giving families the opportunity to spend quality leisure time together in their own community. It would be Officer's intention to work with local community groups and the chosen specialist supplier to deliver an inclusive play structure that will allow all children to play together at height!

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is the Town Council's intention that this play space will create something truly special for our local families and will complement the recent additions to Parson's Close.
- 4.2 To ensure that time wasn't wasted on engaging with suppliers who haven't the skills or experience in the delivery of a truly inclusive play space, it was previously agreed by the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee that

tenders be limited to inclusive play companies with the experience of having delivered at least 5 similar styled projects.

5. RECEIVED TENDERS

5.1 The Town Council received three tenders, and all received tenders have been evaluated to ensure that their submission is valid. The below table in 5.2 highlights the amount each supplier tendered, their score based on the considered play value of the scheme and the preferred supplier status.

5.2

	Supplier A	Supplier B	Supplier C
Amount of tender	£291,736.45	£299,973.50	£297,947.00
Play value score out of ten	5/10	8/10	10/10
Preferred status	3 rd	2 nd	1 st

5.3 The 10 principles for designing successful play spaces remain key to ensuring that not only will this project exceed the expectations of the public but will also achieve best value.

5.4 The 10 principles for creating a successful play space:

1. are 'bespoke'
2. are well located
3. make use of natural elements
4. provide a wide range of play experiences
5. are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children
6. meet community needs
7. allow children of different ages to play together
8. build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge
9. are sustainable and appropriately maintained
10. allow for change and evolution

5.5 The evaluation of the designs has been undertaken solely on the potential play value and whether the supplier has met the brief in the creation of a truly inclusive play space.

5.6 To ensure that this ambitious project meets the needs of its future users, Officers have shared the preferred design with key partners who are knowledgeable about children with additional needs and have received very positive feedback.

6. PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR POTENTIAL DELIVERY

- 6.1 The programme of works (POW) is attached. Please note that this is a non-contractual reference point in respects of how the potential contract could be delivered. The attached POW has a comprehensive sequence of events highlighting the critical path, which the overall duration of the programme is dependant.
- 6.2 The proposed construction phase is not due to start until October 2021 avoiding our most busy times of the year. Please note Parson's Close Recreation Ground will be without a playground during the 2021 October half-term. This is considered acceptable due to the length of the construction phase.
- 6.3 We will ensure that we promote our other high quality play spaces during the construction phase.

7. FUNDING

- 7.1 The Grounds and Environmental Services committee does not have the authority to approve this level of expenditure, nor can it enter into a Public Work Loan application without full council approval. Therefore, the committee is asked to make a recommendation to the Policy and Finance committee to consider how this project will be funded, then the Policy and Finance committee is asked to consider making a final recommendation to Council.
- 7.2 Recommendation 1.4 asks the Policy and Finance Committee that it considers the funding options to deliver this £297,947.00 project be it through a Public Work Loan or from Town Council held reserves. Currently, the 5 Year Financial Plan assumes that the project is to be met in its entirety from external funding. Whilst it is identified as a project commitment within the 5 Year Plan Projects list, the assumed funding of £300,000 is shown as a borrowing (Public Works Loan) within the said table. Accordingly the decision to draw down from council reserves will mean reprofiling of the 5 Year Plan with delivery dates for certain projects having to be delayed.
- 7.3 The funding via a Public Work Loan would cost the Town Council circa £21,879.60 in interest payments (£300,000 over 9 ½ not over 10 years) representing £2,187.96 of interest per year for 10 years (calculation undertaken 4th March 2021).

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Should Members be minded, it is recommended that the Policy and Finance Committee carefully considers the options available in terms of meeting the capital project costs of £297,947.00.

End.