



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

Council

Date: 26th April 2021

Title: Parson's Close Recreation Ground – Adventure Playground

Purpose of the Report: To approve the submission of an application to the United Kingdom Debt Management Office for a Public Work Loan for £300,000 for the delivery of an inclusive adventure playground for Parson's Close Recreation Ground and to also approve the submission a planning application to Central Bedfordshire 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 £300,000 to be met through the United Kingdom Debt Management Office via a Public Work Loan – with repayments embedded within the current budgets.
Human Resources		None
Operational/Service delivery		None
Procedural/Legal		Given the location of the park within the Leighton Buzzard Conservation Area, a planning application will need to be made for the taller items, which would fall outside the

		parameters of permitted development.
Risk/Health and Safety		None

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 To note the report.

1.2 To endorse the recommendation made by the Policy and Finance Committee at its meeting held 19th April 2021 to approve the submission of a £300,000 application to the United Kingdom Debt Management Office for a Public Work Loan application.

1.3 To approve the submission of a planning application to Central Bedfordshire Council for elements of the scheme which fall outside the permitted development definition.

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. THE 10 PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGNING SUCCESSFUL PLAY SPACES

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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

- 5.3 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 Only Full Council has the authority to approve this level of expenditure and can approve that the Council enters a Public Work Loan application.
- 7.2 Recommendation 1.2 requests that Council endorses the recommendation made by the Policy and Finance Committee that an application be made for a Public Work Loan for the sum of £300,000.
- 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. PLANNING PERMISSION

- 8.1 By virtue of their height, several items will require planning permission as they are above the permitted development threshold as well as recognising the location of the park within the Leighton Buzzard Conservation Area. The anticipated cost in submitting the planning application will be met from existing revenue budgets.

End.