

WEST BYFLEET RECREATION GROUND – CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA – CONSULTATION OUTCOME

Executive Summary

On 28 June 2018 the Executive tasked Officers with undertaking a public consultation offering two options to improve play provision at West Byfleet Recreation Ground. Option A to undertake some improvements to the existing play area, including a small extension, and Option B to design and build a new, larger play area at an alternative location on site.

This public consultation ran from 23 July to 24 August 2018 and the results of this consultation are as follows:

- Option A (Extend and refurbish existing) – 1101 votes
- Option B (Create a larger play area in a new location) – 24 votes

Given the clear preference from the majority of respondents to the public consultation, it is recommended that the Executive agrees to proceed with Option A.

If the Executive resolves to proceed with Option A, the intention would be to aim to implement this project by early Spring 2019.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- (i) Proposals to extend and refurbish the existing play area at West Byfleet Recreation Ground (Option A) be implemented; and
- (ii) Officers be authorised to finalise the details of the scheme in consultation with the Portfolio Holder with a view to the scheme being completed by early Spring 2019.

Reasons for Decision

Reason: To improve play provision in accordance with the clearly expressed preference of those responding to the public consultation exercise.

The Executive has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

West Byfleet Recreation Ground – Children’s Play Area – Consultation Outcome

Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Douglas Spinks, Deputy Chief Executive
Email: douglas.spinks@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3440

Contact Person: Arran Henderson, Green Spaces Development Officer
Email: arran.henderson@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3669
Geoff McManus, Assistant Director (Place)
Email: geoff.mcmanus@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3707

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Colin Kemp
Email: cllrcolin.kemp@woking.gov.uk

Shadow Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ian Eastwood
Email: cllrian.eastwood@woking.gov.uk

Date Published: 5 September 2018

West Byfleet Recreation Ground – Children’s Play Area – Consultation Outcome

1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 On 11 February 2016 Council approved funding of £35,000 to replace a junior multi-play unit at West Byfleet play area that had reached the end of its usable life and needed to be removed for health and safety reasons.
- 1.2 This item had been retained during the last refurbishment in 2009, following comments received during the public consultation for this project suggesting that some existing items were retained in favour of extending the play area.
- 1.3 Following an approach from two local parents about raising additional external funding to enable further improvements to the play area, they applied to the Surrey County Council Community Improvement Fund, who awarded £25,000 towards additional improvements at West Byfleet play area on 9 November 2016.
- 1.4 Officers considered proposals for these improvements in consultation with local parents but have not implemented them following an Officer discussion about an alternative approach.
- 1.5 In recognition of West Byfleet as the second largest centre in the Borough, and with the planned residential developments at Broadoaks and in West Byfleet Centre; Officers considered that it may be more appropriate to build a larger play facility with an investment requirement of circa £300,000, on a different part of the Recreation Ground.
- 1.6 At the meeting of the Executive on 28 June 2018, Members were presented with two alternative proposals; one to provide the replacement junior multi-play, along with a small extension to the existing play area as originally proposed, and the other, to provide a larger play area at an alternative location.
- 1.7 The Executive agreed that the options should be put to local residents and instructed Officers to undertake a public consultation to take place over the summer, and to report back to the Executive on 13 September 2018.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 The public consultation presented two options and asked the public to vote for their preferred option. These options were:
 - Option A – 1,485 square metres

Extend the existing play area, replace the climbing frame and see-saw, refurbish the remaining equipment and install additional play equipment in the extended play area. Project budget: £60,000.
 - Option B – 2,140 square metres

Create a larger play area in an alternative location featuring inclusive play equipment suitable for all ages with appropriate surface for year-round use and secure gated entrance. If this option is selected, a separate consultation on the design and equipment proposals would be conducted. Project budget: £300,000.
- 2.2 A consultation leaflet was produced (see Appendix A) and an electronic response form containing the same information was available online via the Council’s website.
- 2.3 The public consultation opened on 23 July and closed 24 August 2018.

West Byfleet Recreation Ground – Children’s Play Area – Consultation Outcome

- 2.4 This consultation was advertised via press release, on the Council’s website and social media, mail out to local properties, on site engagement at West Byfleet LIVE, and distributed to local community organisations.
- 2.5 During the course of the public consultation some local residents set up a ‘Save West Byfleet Recreation Ground’ campaign, encouraging people to vote for Option A. This was widely publicised on social media. A copy of a flyer distributed by residents as part of this campaign is attached at Appendix B.

3.0 Feedback

- 3.1 Well over a thousand responses were received, mainly online. The results are as follows:

Option A (Extend and refurbish existing) – 1101 votes

Option B (Create a larger play area in a new location) – 24 votes

- 3.2 In summary, the most common comments related to Option A included:

- Not wanting a pub built on the recreation ground and associated loss of green space, including a lot of criticism that the consultation did not present the options fairly / did not mention the pub
- Better located where it is next to the school
- Do not want Option B as located close to the road, referencing road safety, pollution and noise
- Asking why the difference in budget / why not £300k for Option A
- Without more information about implications of each options can only vote Option A
- Option B too expensive and better spent on other things

- 3.3 There were not many comments from those voting for Option B, though a few said they would prefer a new, larger play area, as well as comments both in favour of the potential for a pub restaurant to boost local economy and against it, and a preference for the location nearer the shops / centre of West Byfleet.

- 3.4 A full list of all comments received is set out in Appendix C to this report. Due to its size the document can be viewed online. (Printed copies are available in the Members’ Lounge).

4.0 Implications

Financial

- 4.1 If Members agree to proceed with Option A, the existing budget of £60,000 is already secured and identified in the Investment Programme.
- 4.2 However, the recently agreed timescale extension to the £25,000 provided through the Surrey County Council Community Infrastructure Fund states that this proportion must be spent by 28 February 2019. This will be achieved.

Human Resource/Training and Development

- 4.3 There are no human resource / training and development implications arising from this report.

West Byfleet Recreation Ground – Children’s Play Area – Consultation Outcome

Community Safety

- 4.4 As Option A would see the play area remain in its existing location, there would be no new community safety implications

Risk Management

- 4.5 Suppliers will be required to provide proposals that comply with British and European play safety standards and would also be designed to reduce other local risks that may be associated with such a facility.

Sustainability

- 4.6 The design brief will highlight the importance of using equipment that will be robust and easy to maintain. This will be considered as part of the selection process for the preferred supplier, as will any guarantees offered on the durability of their equipment.
- 4.7 However, it is also worth noting that the existing play area currently contains relatively new equipment installed in 2011, but also some retained from an older scheme. Option A will provide some new equipment, which could last for 20+ years, though existing equipment from 2009 and the few remaining older items that would be retained may need replacing sooner, as could some of the existing surfacing. Therefore, partial refurbishment of this play area may be required again in the not too distant future.

Equalities

- 4.8 The design brief will ask suppliers to consider accessibility and inclusive design where appropriate within their proposal, and will be considered as part of the selection process.
- 4.9 The only minor implication with Option A is that it proposes an extension into the adjacent grass area, which during very wet weather may not always be completely accessible.

Safeguarding

- 4.10 As Option A would see the play area remain in its existing location, there would be no new safeguarding implications.

5.0 Conclusions and next steps

- 5.1 Given the clear preference from the majority of respondents to the public consultation, it is recommended that the Executive agrees for Officers to proceed with Option A.
- 5.2 If the Executive approves the recommendation to proceed with Option A, Officers will work with the Portfolio Holder and the two parents who obtained the additional external funding to agree the project brief and select a preferred supplier.
- 5.3 Once a preferred supplier has been selected, the intention would be to give a short window of opportunity for the public to make any detailed comments on the proposals before they are finalised by Officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
- 5.4 The intention is to aim to implement the scheme by early Spring 2019.

REPORT ENDS