

TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, CORPORATE SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION
26 SEP 2014

Parks and Open Spaces Quality Improvement – Jocks Lane Recreation Ground

Director of Environment, Culture & Communities

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the allocation of funding to support quality improvements at Jocks Lane Recreation Ground (Binfield with Warfield and Priestwood and Garth).
- 1.2 This will be funded using financial contributions from developers which have been secured under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 1.3 If approved, the S106 monies will part-fund improvements being implemented by Bracknell Town Council.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That up to £44,297 of S106 contributions (as summarised in Annexe 1) are allocated to Bracknell Town Council as a grant to fund site works to improve recreational facilities at Jocks Lane Recreation Ground.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 Provision of and access to public open space is recognised as being a key contributor to well-being and quality of life. This includes being central to:
- Character of the built environment
 - Social functions; especially health, recreation and play, social inclusion, and community development
 - Environmental quality
 - Economic vitality
 - Sustainability

- 3.2 Medium Term Objective 3 for Bracknell Forest Council is to *Keep Bracknell Forest clean and green, including work to:*
- *maintain our open spaces to a high standard*
 - *complete the transformation of the grounds at South Hill Park*
 - *increase the amount of green space that is accessible to residents”*

Medium Term Objective 6 is to *Support opportunities for health and well being:*

- *support sports activities and facilities within the Borough*

- 3.3 Key objectives set out within the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (2012) are:

A. Provision:

Protect and establish public open space for recreation, play, sport, health, biodiversity, heritage and climate change adaption that is appropriate to need; strategically located; and adaptable to future requirements

B. Maintenance:

Provide safe and welcoming public open space; attain and improve quality standards

C. Use and Enjoyment:

Make sure public open space supports well-being; encourages participation; and facilitates social inclusion

3.4 Priorities as set out within this Strategy include:

1. Monitor and assess quality standards across parks and open spaces. Manage sites to a high standard; carry out improvement works to sustain and improve quality in line with the Bracknell Forest Council 'Plus One Principle' and relevant national guidance.

8. Enhance outdoor sport and play provision (including ancillary facilities).

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Allocation of this funding has been assessed alongside consideration of potential alternative schemes, including on sites directly managed by Bracknell Forest Council. This project will provide considerable recreational value within the locality and is considered to be worthy of this support.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5.1 This project will focus on improvements to children's play and outdoor sports at the Green Flag Award winning Jocks Lane Recreation Ground.

5.2 Total expenditure is estimated at approximately £110,000. Works relate specifically to:

- i) provision of a splash pad water play area and
- ii) surface improvements and lighting for tennis courts

5.3 The proposed splash pad will replace an old paddling pool which is poor condition and nearing the end of its serviceable life. This improvement will provide a cost effective, clean water system with a very high play value. Public consultation has been carried out by Bracknell Town Council as there have been concerns raised by some park users that the splash pad may be of lower play value than the paddling pool. Information provided by Bracknell Town Council indicates that 100 people have provided feedback with the majority (63%) indicating support. Experience from other parks with splash pads is that levels of public use and enjoyment are very high.

5.4 Recreational need for additional floodlit tennis courts within the borough has been identified through discussions with the Lawn Tennis Association and is considered particularly important to support and extend participation and performance levels within the sport. Jocks Lane Recreation Ground provides a key location to extend and develop opportunities for community tennis. The lighting of these courts is subject to securing planning permission. A full application is currently being considered (Planning Ref. 14/00120/FUL) with a decision due shortly. Having sought specialist advice on potential issues regarding light spill and disturbance to neighbouring properties, the case officer is minded to recommend approval; the indication being that this lighting will not have a detrimental impact on residential amenities of neighbouring properties or the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Should local ward members wish the application to go to committee rather than be determined through a delegated decision, then a decision on the planning application will need to be deferred until the October meeting of the Planning Committee.

- 5.5 This project has been identified following on from consultation on the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy. The process for this included a Decision made on 21 May 2012 by the Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services & Public Protection to consult on the allocation of S106 developer contributions to carry out site quality improvements. The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy was subsequently approved on 25th October 2012 (work programme reference 1036768).
- 5.6 £245,000 of s106 contributions has previously been approved and allocated to Phase 1. This relates to sites managed directly by Bracknell Forest Council with improvement works currently being implemented in accordance with the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Greenspace Quality Improvement Executive Member Decision dated 25 October 2012 (as referenced in 5.5 above).
- 5.7 Improvement works at Jocks Lane Recreation Ground form part of Phase 2 for which £75,000 has been included within the 2014/15 capital programme.
- 5.8 S106 funding is secured in accordance with adopted planning policy. Of particular significance is Limiting the Impact of Development Supplementary Planning Document (ref. Chapter 4 Open Space and Outdoor Recreational Facilities) and the 'Plus One' principle whereby works are prioritised towards improving quality as initially audited in 2006. Core quality criteria have recently been reviewed and are defined within the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy (2012).
- 5.9 In addition to being secured to fund quality improvements, there is a requirement that developer contributions are allocated to open spaces capable of serving the development from which the contribution was paid. This means that available funding needs to be allocated to a site within close proximity of the contributing development. The contributions to be allocated are summarised in Annexe 1; with the planned improvements being of direct benefit to residents from these developments.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 Nothing to add to this report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There is funding for this scheme within the £75,000 Section 106 monies approved within the Environment, Culture & Communities 2014/15 capital programme.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 An EIA was completed for The Parks and Open Space Strategy in September 2012 and the EIA for the Parks and Countryside service was updated in August 2013. This project supports key actions to promote equality of opportunity and deliver positive impacts.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 S106 contributions will need to be refunded should they not be allocated in accordance with the respective legal agreement. Future revenue costs associated with this project will be met by the Town Council.

Head of Spatial Policy

- 6.5 Combines S106 funds from 3 contributing sites (listed in Annexe 1) all within ³/₄[*three-quarters*] km. of the Jocks Lane Recreation Ground. Funding improvements to local open space and outdoor recreational facilities is in line with the terms under which these S106 payments were secured by Planning, to offset the impact of new housing. These S106 sums can be passed to others to use on purposes for which they were secured.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Parish and Town Councillors, local residents, park users

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Representative users groups and parish and town councils via the Local Countryside Access Forum and the Parish, Parks and Public Realm Forum.

Bracknell Town Council has collated park user data from on-site interviews, Facebook and via email.

Public consultation of floodlighting has also been carried out as part of the Planning process.

Representations Received

- 7.3 Bracknell Town Council has advised that whilst there have been concerns raised about changes to the existing paddling pool, the majority of park users are supportive, with 63% of public responses being in-favour of the splash pad.

Some concern has been raised about potential impact on neighbouring properties from providing floodlights for the tennis courts.

Background Papers

The Bracknell Forest Parks & Open Spaces Strategy (2012)

Contact for further information

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ANNEXE 1

YN CODE	PLANNING REF.	PLANNING SITE NAME	PARISH	WARD	AMOUNT AVAILABLE	AMOUNT TO BE ALLOCATED	DESCRIPTION
YN349	04/01203	Land at St Chad, Cassares & Ossington	Bracknell	Priestwood and Garth	£ 33,857.00	£ 33,857.00	The sum of Thirty Three Thousand and Six Hundred Pounds (£33,600) and the Additional Sum towards the cost of providing, expanding or improving open space, and/or outdoor recreational facilities (which may include the acquisition and/or improvement of land and/or buildings and/or carrying out or assisting in the carrying out of nature/landscaping conservation projects) within 3 kilometres of the Site.
YN377	09/00328	1 Wilders Close	Bracknell	Priestwood and Garth	£ 2,020.00	£ 2,020.00	Not to commence the Development without first paying to the Council the sum of £2,000.00 and the Additional Sum towards the cost of providing, expanding or improving open space, and/or outdoor recreational facilities (which may include the acquisition and/or improvement of land and/or buildings and/or carrying out or assisting in the carrying out of nature/landscaping conservation projects) within 3 kilometres of the Site.
YN387	05/01081	Two Orchards, Wokingham Rd	Bracknell	Priestwood and Garth	£ 8,420.00	£ 8,420.00	Not to Commence the Development without first paying to the Council the sum of EIGHT THOUSAND POUNDS (£8,000.00) and the Additional Sum towards the cost of providing, expanding or improving open space, and/or outdoor recreational facilities (which may include the acquisition and/or improvement of land and/or buildings and/or carrying out or assisting in the carrying out of nature/landscaping conservation projects) within 3 kilometres of the Site.
Total:					£ 44,297.00	£ 44,297.00	