Briefing Note

Reeds Lane Play Area

For Community Engagement Committee on 11 June 2020 - Item 6.6

Introduction

This briefing note sets out the background to the redesign and replacement of the play equipment at Reeds Lane Recreation Ground (South), Sayers Common and recommends the next steps.

Background

A series of important decisions have already been made to agree the list of new play equipment to be installed at Reeds Lane Rec.

These included minutes from the following meetings:

- Reeds Lane Play Area Working Group On 8/11/18 the Working Group looked at consultation results and on 15/1/19 it looked at available funding. On 25/6/19 three designs were evaluated and the Sovereign design and costings were submitted to the Finance & Governance Committee, then Council for approval, including underwriting the full cost.

- Community Engagement Committee On 30/5/19 & 5/9/19 the Committee noted progress. On 6/2/20 the Committee noted the opportunity to resolve the drainage issues prior to the installation of the new play area.

- Finance & Governance Committee On 8/8/19 the Committee agreed to bridge the £8,201 funding gap, to be met by securing future S106 money. On 10/10/19 the Committee agreed the final £19,857 Sovereign Play Area Scheme.

- Estates & Facilities Management Committee On 29/10/19 the Committee agreed the addition of the need for strimmer guards which increased the cost to around £22,000. At its 5/3/20 meeting, the Committee agreed the following:

  The MSDC Drainage Engineer has been sent the plans of the play equipment and the layout of the recreation ground, to advise on possible drainage schemes. It is thought that the initial steps would be to obtain a quotation to clear the series of failed ditches that run across the northern and southern boundaries of the recreation ground. The next step after this would be to agree what surface should be used for the play equipment e.g will it remain grassed or replaced with a bound rubberised bark material, similar to South Avenue playground. Depending on what final surface material is to be used, this will determine what drainage solution is required. Proposals will be obtained and prepared to submit to MSDC once s106 funds are available from Kingsland Laines. Cllr Majsai requested that a piece of specialist disabled use play equipment be included in the design.

Section 106

Late on in 2019, the Parish Council was advised that an additional £110,000 could be available to spend on the Reeds Lane Recreation Ground play area on or before the first occupancy of the new, adjacent Kingsland Laines housing development, expected before August 2020.

The S106 would permit a larger/better quality list of play equipment but may also allow a comprehensive drainage solution to be installed to combat the yearly flooding of the site.

For amounts over £50,000 an application has to be made to the MSDC Cabinet Grants Panel, with fully costed plans. No retrospective payments can be made.

Play Equipment

Whilst the chosen list of play equipment is still felt to be fit for purpose, there has also been a request for more inclusive equipment to be included in the list. Examples of fully inclusive play equipment items and their costs have been received.

Drainage Specification

In order to understand precisely what drainage solution options there are for the site, we will require specialist advice either from a consultant or the MSDC expert if they are willing to give advice free or for a small fee. This would produce a specification that meets the needs of the site. An indicative quote received through the Sayers Common Society suggested a drainage scheme at a cost of £65,800.

The impact of the new development on further drainage issue at Reeds Lane may be hard to predict but a best guest will need to be established as we cannot wait another few years before that development is finished. In all likeliness there would only be further developments to consider.

Committee Responsibility

For clarification:

- The Community Engagement Committee is responsible for engaging the community in the project and to keep them updated.
- The Estates & Facilities Management Committee delivers the project and consults the Community Engagement Committee.
- The Finance & Governance Committee agrees the final budget and recommends the expenditure to Council.
- The Ward Councillors, Cllrs Jee and Sampson are to be kept fully informed at all times.

Next Steps

Agreeing these next steps mean the project can progress:

i. A specialist drainage surveyor assists the development of a specification
ii. Three quote for drainage schemes are sought
iii. Depending on the drainage costs three further play equipment quotes are sought
iv. The quotes and an application are submitted to MSDC to apply for the Section 106 funding
v. Once approved, the approved drainage and play equipment schemes are implemented.

Recommendation: The Committee supports the above next steps.