

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Down's Committee

19th November 2012

Report of: Tracey Morgan

Title: Downs Children's Playground

Ward: Clifton

Officer Presenting Report: Parks Youth and Play Officer

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RECOMMENDATION

That the Downs committee accept the design for the children's playground as recommended by the sub group selected to comment on its development. Moreover that the committee accepts the 50% grant up to the value of £70,000 offered via the Parks Capital Stimulus Fund for the development of the playground.

The Downs committee accepts the responsibility of finding £70,000 as match funding to Parks Capital Stimulation Fund allowing for the work to move forward.

Summary

The Downs committee agree with the current draft as the design to go to public consultation.

The Downs committee seek funding/sponsorship to assist with the £70,000 match funding.

There is no ongoing revenue costs to this Committee

The significant issues in the report are:

The offer of a 50% grant for the renewal of the playground up to £70,000

Policy

1. The development and management of children play spaces within the Parks and Green Space Strategy.

Consultation

2. Internal

Downs Sub Committee Steering Group
Downs Ranger,
Estates Business Manager
Parks Estates, Play, Cemeteries and Crematoria, Manager

3. External

None

Context

4. The existing children's playground is coming to the end of its designed life. It is currently in a safe condition but its decay will accelerate over the coming months/years.
5. The Downs Committee has responded to the playgrounds need by appointing a designer to create a new play space. The first draft was then given to the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife project to act as a sub group to develop the draft so it met the standards expected of a Downs project.
6. The cost of a new playground is likely to be in the range of £140,000 and outside of the gift of a single budget in the current climate.
7. The Parks Capital Stimulus Fund has awarded the Downs committee 50% of the playground costs up to the maximum of £70,000 on the condition that the Downs committee fund or attract funding/sponsorship for the remaining £70,000.
8. Further conditions of the Parks Capital Stimulus Fund are that the capital project must be completed by the end of March 2014. Further more to allow for programming of works and the possibility of a complex consultation process the decision of if the Downs Committee will find or attract funding needs to be known by 31st December 2012. If the committee's agreement is given to what value needs to be known.
9. If the committee agree to proceed with this project past the designer's current brief the Parks Project Team will assume all further design, procurement and project management costs.

Proposal

10. The Committee accepts the 50% grant from the Parks Capital Stimulus Fund and gives the project over to the Parks Project team to bring to fruition.

Other Options Considered

11. A reduced value scheme or to turn down the grant offer and look for 100% funding elsewhere.

Risk Assessment

12. As the playground ages it presents more unexpected risk from decay. Some parts of the current site have outlived its designed lifespan and removal will soon be the only option. Not attempting to renew this play site will mean its removal and loss of resource.

Public Sector Equality Duties

13. Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
 - i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

14. The re-development of a children's playground is addressing an equality issue as children are considered to be at risk of discrimination. Moreover any development would take into consideration access issues and ensure that disabled children and carers can take part in playground activities and make use of the resource. An equalities impact assessment has not been carried out, as this is an early proposal.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

The Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861 provides that the Downs should remain as a place for the resort and recreation of the citizens of Bristol, and that a committee should be appointed to manage them. The recommendations of this report are within the powers conferred by this statute.

Financial

(a) Revenue

There is no revenue provision to match fund the grant from the Parks Capital Stimulus Fund. Therefore the £70,000 will need to be met from reserves. The reserve currently stands at £152,856 so this will leave a balance going forward of £82,856.

(b) Capital

The contribution from the Downs Committee could be capitalised. It is estimated that the play equipment will have a useful life of 10 years. Assuming it is capitalised over this period, the annual capital financing cost @ 4.5% (revenue cost) to the Downs will be £8,900. Again there is no budgetary provision for this additional expenditure, which would need to be met from reserves or the sourcing of additional income.

Financial advice provided by Tony Whitlock – Principal Account

Land

Personnel

None.

Appendices: None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None.