



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: HEALTH & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Date of Meeting: 1ST AUGUST 2005

Public

Key Decision: Yes/No

Recorded in Forward Plan:

No

Inside/Outside Policy Framework

Title: RESIDENTS PETITION - PLAY AREA BETWEEN BROAD STREET, PETTERIL STREET AND RIVER STREET

Report of: CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORT SERVICES

Report reference: CLS010/05

Summary: A petition has been received from residents of St Aidan's ward requesting installation of CCTV and upgrading of the play area at Broad Street. This report gives details for the petition together with officer comments.

Recommendations: The Executive are recommended to

- 1) Forward the CCTV installation request to the CCTV Working Group for assessment
- 2) Consider landscaping works as part of the flood recovery improvement works including a clean out and renewal of the bark areas.

Contact Officer: MARK BEVERIDGE

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1.0 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS**

1.1 Introduction

In accordance with the City Council's Standing Orders, this report has been prepared in response to the petition appended to this report.

The petitioners have requested funding for 3 areas of work following the January floods.

1. Installation of CCTV at the play area.
2. Landscape work to remove shrubs and creation of a mini football pitch.
3. Replacement of bark surfacing with a rubber wet pour safety surfacing.

2.0 Issues

2.1 CCTV

The cost of a CCTV camera is £25,000 fully installed plus annual revenue costs of £6,000. The rationale for such installations is based on a procedure set up by the CCTV Working Group as part of the Crime & Disorder reduction Partnership.

This group meets approximately 4 times per year and it is recommended the petition is forwarded to that group for consideration, using the assessment criteria established for CCTV requests.

2.2 Mini Football Pitch

It is not recommended that a grass pitch be made within the play area due to restricted space available and heavy wear it would sustain. A tarmac type surface has been costed at £15,000 plus fencing of 2.4m high to prevent balls easily leaving the area, at a further cost of £5,000.

This area would without floodlights be unavailable in the evenings for the winter months.

To create such an area is feasible but would be best incorporated into a complete refurbishment of the play area. However if required it would be possible to work with residents group and change the existing planting layout as part of the flood recovery works.

2.3 Removal of Bark

The installation of safety surfacing would entail a complete refurbishment of the site because the surface could not be laid under the existing equipment and requires ground preparation before the surface could be laid. The cost of refurbishment for the whole site would be approximately £130,000, the safety surface cost is £37,250 of that sum.

Currently the City Council does not possess a budget for such works. A play area improvement programme is currently being devised, which will set a time scale for a rolling programme of renewals and refurbishment. This programme is based on a points system, set against other play area, which has been calculated against certain criteria. This criteria being:-

- 1) Location
- 2) Suitability for children of all abilities
- 3) Risk Assessment
- 4) Attaining LEAP Standard

L.E.A.P (Local Equipped Area For Play) is the standard set by the national Playing Fields Association which play areas should achieve.

This programme has yet to be finalised prior to being considered by members, however, it is likely to be several years before extensive work is carried out at the site. It is suggested that the current bark areas be cleaned out and refilled with new bark to address some of the concerns expressed by the petitioners.

2.4 Conclusion

It is proposed that the anti-social behaviour issues are discussed with the CDRP for potential interventions, to help improve the quality of life for local residents.

Currently the Council has approximately 70 play areas with a variety of ages and conditions spread across the district. Relatively few have safety surfaces in place, although that is the desired target for all Council play areas. It is proposed that within existing budgets some remedial work can be carried out to help offset the impact of the January floods.

3.0 CONSULTATION

3.1 Consultation to Date.

PFH

3.2 Consultation proposed.

PFH, Ward Councillors, Local Residents Group.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive are recommended to:-

1.1 Forward the CCTV installation request to the CCTV Working Group for assessment

1.2 Consider landscaping works as part of the flood recovery improvement works including a clean out and renewal of the bark areas.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – Included within the body of the report.
- Financial – Currently there is no budget provision for refurbishment of the site. Any proposal would need to be considered alongside other priorities as part of the Council's budget process.
- Legal – Nil in the context of this report.
- Corporate – It is planned to bring a rolling programme of improvements to members for consideration.
- Risk Management – All play areas are subject to annual risk assessments.
- Equality Issues – Play areas provide an opportunity for children to develop skills as part of their development.

- Environmental – The play area is bounded on all sides by residential properties and as such provides one of the few “open” spaces in the area.
- Crime and Disorder – As with any open space, play areas can be subject to acts of disorder. However the City Council has a rolling maintenance and inspection programme which seeks to resolve such problems.

29 June 2005

Dear Mr Watson,

PETITION FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS IN ST AIDANS WARD

Please find enclosed a petition from local residents to upgrade the play park area between Broad Street, Petteril Street and River Street.

As the play park was flooded on 8 January 2005, please could you ask for funding on our behalf for this scheme from the Flood Recovery Fund as well as from Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council. In particular, we are asking for funding to:

1. Install CCTV to help prevent vandalism and discourage truants from local schools going there.
2. Remove shrubs surrounding the large rectangle area which is currently lying dormant and instead, fully utilise the area by making it into a mini football pitch. The shrubs are just getting trampled on by the children playing.
3. Replace the bark surfacing (where currently broken glass and cats and dogs urine/faeces are deposited) surrounding the play equipment with rubber safety surfacing as this will make it safer and healthier for young children playing there.

Local residents are very concerned for the health and safety of children playing in this park as the park was never properly cleaned out after it was flooded and a couple of days ago the City Council sent their staff to remove Deadly Nightshade from the area where the shrubs are planted. We believe that to have the play park upgraded would help to lift the morale of the families in this area as well as make it a cleaner, safer and more enjoyable park for young children to play in.

Yours sincerely,