

## **POOLES LANE, HULLBRIDGE - PROPOSED EXTENSION TO PLAYSACE**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' agreement to an extension to the Pooles Lane playspace on the Recreation Ground work to be funded by Hullbridge Parish Council (HPC) and Grants, to provide space for additional infant and junior equipment.
- 1.2 The report also seeks Members agreement to the terms and conditions for the acceptance of equipment, paid for through grants obtained by HPC and their own funding.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 A report was submitted to Community Services Committee in September 2002, presenting a petition from residents in Hullbridge, seeking more infant/junior play equipment in the play space in Pooles Lane recreation ground.
- 2.2 Minute 393/02 resolved that the Parish be invited to consider purchasing two additional items of toddler equipment for the Pooles Lane, Hullbridge playspace, to be maintained by the District Council.

### **3 PROPOSAL BY HULLBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL**

- 3.1 Following the petition, the Parish Council and a voluntary group set about identifying needs and means of funding an extension to the playspace and provision of extra equipment.
- 3.2 A proposal has now been forwarded to Rochford District Council (RDC) from HPC, providing funding for an expansion of the playspace and provision of additional equipment on District Council land. The proposal submitted by the Parish is included as Appendix A.
- 3.3 This proposal is that the Parish will fund the additional works, subject to the District agreeing to the expansion and providing the maintenance of the equipment under the existing Grounds Maintenance contract.

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**Discussion and Background on the Proposal**

- 3.4 This describes the process that has gone on since the presentation of the petition to Members in 2002, and demonstrates strong commitment on behalf of the Community, to further develop the existing facilities in the playspace.
- 3.5 Discussion has been ongoing with officers at RDC on the technical requirements for equipment and the space provided, to ensure that the proposal would be acceptable on technical grounds. It has been made clear that formal agreement would be required from the District Council for the expansion on the Recreation Ground.
- 3.6 The fencing contractor is acceptable to the District Council.
- 3.7 Equipment supplied by HAGS is acceptable to the District Council and should conform to all necessary British and European safety standards. This is a reputable company who have tendered for playspace equipment for RDC in the past.
- 3.8 The proposed layout has been provided to the District Council and will need to meet all the safety requirements that would be applied to a playspace.
- 3.9 Finance, installation costs and purchase will be managed by the Parish Council.
- 3.10 Inspection, maintenance, responsibility for dismantling, disposal, and reinstatement at end of the equipment's useful life is a more contentious area. The Parish is proposing that the gift of the equipment and fencing is made subject to the District Council taking on the long term maintenance and disposal at the end of it's useful life.
- 3.11 The cost of maintaining equipment for phase 1 would be 2 x £284 for two pieces of equipment per year, under the current grounds maintenance contract, phase 2 would cost £1704 per year for four extra pieces of equipment. Although there is a five year guarantee from the manufacturer, this only covers wear and tear and not general maintenance and inspection.
- 3.12 The increase in size of the playspace would not affect any other use of the recreation ground.
- 3.13 Pooles Lane playspace was considered during the Play Space Sub-Committee's review of playspaces as a strategic playspace which provided local usage and also attracted visitors to the District due to its location.

**4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Following the petition from residents in Hullbridge, much work has been carried out to raise and secure funding for this additional equipment. The

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District Council would create a reputational risk should it not support this project.

- 4.2 Inspection and maintenance, if agreed, would be carried out under the current programme of inspection and risk management, including the annual inspection carried out independently by the National Playing Fields Association.

## **5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Good play facilities are recognised as providing young people with a safe means of using their energy in a positive way.

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 As this proposal is building onto an existing playspace, there are no environmental issues arising.

## **7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The proposal would require the District Council to incur an inspection and routine maintenance cost of £568 per year, in addition to existing costs for this playspace. There is currently no budget allocation for this growth.
- 7.2 This cost would grow when phase 2 was implemented and the number of items of equipment increased to six, at an annual cost of £1,704 per annum. No timescale is given for the phase 2 implementation.
- 7.3 In terms of the life expectancy of the equipment, most equipment will last a minimum of ten years, possibly up to 15.

## **8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 By accepting the proposal, the District Council would take on the legal responsibility for the equipment.

## **9 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 This proposal would demonstrate a good degree of partnership working with the Parish if agreed.

## **10 RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) To agree the use of additional Rochford District Council land to expand the playspace, with equipment funded through the Parish Council and Grants they have secured.

- (2) To accept the additional maintenance costs as set out in the report and include these in future budget estimates.

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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APPENDIX A

HULLBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

PROPOSAL TO EXTEND AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT TO THE  
POOLES LANE PLAY SPACE

**1. Background**

In 2002 residents in Hullbridge identified and highlighted a need for more up to date and socially relevant play equipment in the Pooles Lane play space. A request was forwarded to Rochford District Council (RDC) and a voluntary group called Friends of Fun For Our Young (FFOY) commenced fund raising and consulted local residents on their preferences. A great deal of time was spent by the group in looking at different play equipment, raising funds at local events, applying for grants and this was supported by the Parish Council that has budgeted and ring-fenced its own funds since 2003.

It was initially intended to raise funds for the whole project and then request approval from RDC and if received, carry out the project in one phase. However, Local Network Fund awarded a £7000.00 grant, providing it was spent by 31 August 2005. An extension to this time limit has been requested and a response is awaited but due to this it is proposed the project is completed in two phases. First phase would be to extend the fencing and provide two items of equipment. Second phase would go ahead when all the necessary funds have been raised.

**2. Fencing:** a quotation has been received from Gatecraft Fencing Services Ltd to extend the play space by 207 sq M. The playspace would be extended by this amount eastwards. It is understood from Rochford District Council's Principal Engineer that this contractor would meet with RDC requirements.

**3. Equipment:** quotation for the play equipment has been submitted by HAGS, which again it is understood from the District Council's Principal Engineer, is a recognised supplier of play equipment.

**4. Layout:** it is understood that RDC already has in its possession the proposed layout of the equipment and the type of new equipment.

**5. Finance**

The following is a breakdown of finance currently available:

Funds raised by Friends of Fun for our Young	1606.40
Grant received	7000.00
Funds ring-fenced by Hullbridge Parish Council	<u>16622.00</u>

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Total available to date		25228.40
Additional grant application (awaiting response)	<u>5000.00</u>	
	30228.40	

**Anticipated costs of proposal:**

**Phase 1**

Extension of fencing	2148.20	
Provision/installation of two items of equipment		
Mobilus	6307.00	
Triangle Games Panel	<u>1087.00</u>	9542.20

**Phase 2**

Provision/installation of four items of equipment		
Oita Unit with Tornado		
Turtle 11		
Pirouette		
Tumle Spring		<u>20489.00</u>
		30031.20

**6. Inspection, maintenance, responsibility for dismantling, disposal and reinstatement at end of equipments' useful life:** it is understood the RDC Playspace sub-committee has recognised the Pooles Lane play space as an area where not only local residents are users but also visitors from throughout the districts and beyond. The provision of this extension and equipment is a considerable contribution from Hullbridge Parish Council and Friends of Fun For Our Young to the district and is therefore deemed by this Council as a gift. It is requested that Rochford District Council adopts the additional equipment and includes it with the responsibilities for the existing equipment. It should be noted there is a 5year manufacturer's guarantee.