

**CABINET**

Wednesday, 12 September 2018

**ROYAL GREEN PLAY PARK PHASE 2 (REP 1897)**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. To seek approval for an addition to the Capital Programme of £155,000 (ex VAT) to extend and improve the current Royal Green Play Space providing a modern and attractive toddler play area, complementing the junior play area already in situ and to also provide a small extension to the car park, making the play area a destination attraction.
2. This investment could see increased car park revenue of an estimated £21,937.85 per annum which is proposed to repay the capital expenditure required for the new play space over a number of years. An increase in the repair and maintenance budget (Waveney Norse) will be required to ensure that the new play space can be maintained to a good standard.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Kirkley
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Graham Catchpole Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships
<b>Supporting Officer:</b>	Kerry Blair Head of Operations 01502 523007 <a href="mailto:Kerry.blair@eastsoffolk.gov.uk">Kerry.blair@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</a>

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Waveney District Council (WDC) is committed to develop the amenity offer and attraction of Lowestoft's South Beach seafront for both residents and visitors to the town. This project aligns well with the work undertaken to date through the Lowestoft Seafront Vision which has been developed in collaboration with Wayne Hemmingway and also through a number of joint projects delivered with its leisure partner, Sentinel Leisure Trust (SLT).
- 1.2 The Lowestoft Seafront Vision, approved by Cabinet in November 2017 work has seen the development of a future, high-level visioning document for the Lowestoft south seafront area. The work, undertaken by Hemmingway Design, has been widely consulted on and has developed a set of principles for future development. Phase 2 of the Royal Plain play area meets a number of objectives, specifically provision of additional seafront amenities and provision for an active seafront.
- 1.3 In 2012, WDC completed a full play area evaluation, audit, review and action plan strategy for every play space in the district. This work highlighted both needs and gaps in provision as well as opportunities to enhance existing play spaces.
- 1.4 From the report, the Royal Green play space was highlighted as a space in need of renewing, improving and extending to accommodate both toddler and junior provision to become an attraction for young families within the South Lowestoft beach area.
- 1.5 Original plans were drawn up and costed which utilised loss of car park to extend the play space to accommodate the play space extension, which proposed a loss of circa 20 car park spaces.
- 1.6 In 2013/14 the first phase of this project was delivered by Waveney Norse (WN) – the replacement and renewal of the existing play space to provide a modern and attractive junior play space.
- 1.7 In 2015, SLT updated the Play Space Evaluation Report and Action Plan Strategy which noted the completion of the first phase and continued to highlight the need for good quality toddler play provision along the seafront. (please see Appendix A)
- 1.8 Through Waveney's partnership with SLT and WN a new project plan was established to deliver this improvement as part of the wider seafront improvement and visioning plans. The new project plan incorporates the development of a small car park extension alongside delivery of the toddler play provision, which would provide additional revenue that to repay the capital costs of the project rather than deliver a project that would cost both capital for delivery and loss of revenue through loss of car parking (removal of disabled bays to the South end of Royal Green)
- 1.9 A project steering group was established between the three organisations to develop designs, costs and this report for the Council to consider. (please see Appendix B)
- 1.10 The proposed plan would see the play space and car park extend onto to the Royal Green by approximately 18m was developed by the Council's partners (please see Appendix C).
- 1.11 A business case was also developed between the project steering group (WDC, WN and SLT) that utilised actual car park usage data over the past year and projected additional revenue generated by the potential increase of car parking by 20 spaces. (see Appendix D)

- 1.12 Through its Partnership Agreement with both WN and SLT, the WDC is able to utilise both or either partners Procurement processes to allow for greater more efficiency and flexibility providing best value can be evidenced.
- 1.13 SLT were asked to lead on the procurement element due to its previous knowledge and delivery of play space redevelopments and improvements supported by WN as the 'Lead Professional' overseeing technical areas and future works.
- 1.14 An Invitation to Quote (ITQ) was agreed and delivered by SLT and WN which split the proposed works into three areas; ground works and car park extension, play surface supply and install and play equipment supply and install.
- 1.15 As the project proposes to join both the existing and new play area extension together, the same play surfacing would be required. Only one supplier on the market provides this and as such this element was commissioned directly to this supplier.
- 1.16 The ground works and car park extension was specified and procured (to preferred supplier stage). Five suppliers were given the opportunity. Two declined, one was overpriced and two were close to the budget proposed for the works.
- 1.17 The play equipment element was specified utilising the Play Evaluation method in reverse to ensure that the new play space was of good quality and play offer, providing a range of themed play activities in keeping with the existing play space and surrounding area.
- 1.18 Seven companies were invited to design and quote for this element. One declined. All others were reviewed and scored utilising the agreed scoring methodologies within the ITQ documentation.
- 1.19 The preferred supplier recommended by the steering group for the play equipment element is Sutcliffe Play.
- 1.20 Both suppliers costs came within the steering group's initial budget – both sets of costs are fixed and guaranteed until December 2018.
- 1.21 Cabinet are asked now to agree the additional capital expenditure to deliver all elements of the project. This will enable the steering group to progress the project, to commence the planning consent phase and award the element contracts (dependant on obtaining planning consent).
- 1.22 It should be noted that planning permission would be required for both the play area and the car park extension. Initial discussions with planning and the Council's conservation officer have indicated that the planning committee will need to balance the benefit of the play provision against the detriment of an increase in parking spaces on the existing site.

## **2 ASSET IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 Phases 1 and 2 of the seafront play space both have finite lifespans. General warranties indicate that the main structures of the play equipment are guaranteed for a period of between 7-20 years.
- 2.2 It is proposed that the steering group liaise with the Asset Management to ensure that future capital replacement plans consider and include the replacement of both areas in the future when they reach the end of its serviceable life.
- 2.3 In becoming a destination park on the seafront the play space will see significant use especially over the summer periods when visitor numbers are highest. It is proposed that the budget passed to WN to manage and maintain all WDC play areas is increased by

£2,000 per year to ensure that the new destination park has sufficient budget to replace parts and maintain its offer over its lifetime.

### **3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?**

3.1 The project supports several strands from the East Suffolk Business Plan including:

- Development of a destination attraction which will help to increase visitor numbers outside the main tourist season.
- Increasing participation in leisure activity and physical activity in young children
- Delivering greater financial sustainability for leisure services (developing new leisure streams, and increasing asset value
- Providing increased access to quality leisure, cultural facilities and activities which support and promote a healthier lifestyle

### **4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Costs for each element to deliver the project are;

- Ground works and car park extension = £70,000.00
- Play equipment supply and installation = £40,000.00
- Play surfacing = £30,000.00
- Total capital required (including a 10% contingency) = £154,000.00

4.2 The projected additional revenue generated from the new car parking spaces = £21,937.85 per annum

4.3 Replacement of both phase one and phase two play spaces at the end of their lifespan is estimated at £100,000.00 in approximately 20 years

4.4 Project delivery resource and support from SLT and WN is through existing partnership added value (in kind).

### **5 OTHER KEY ISSUES**

5.1 This report has been prepared having taken into account the results of an Equality Impact Assessment, a Sustainability Impact Assessment and a Partnership Impact Assessment.

5.2 It positively impacts centre on improving young people's health and well-being, improving the public realm and strengthening the tourism industry.

5.3 There are some negative impacts surround utilising some of the land on Royal Green to build the phase 2 and the creation of additional car parking. Lowestoft Tourism Group is against using land on Royal Green to facilitate the project. However, the project steering group continues to maintain dialogue with Lowestoft Tourism Group to allay any concerns they have surrounding the future use of Royal Green.

### **6 CONSULTATION**

6.1 The updated Play Evaluation and Action Plan Strategy 2015 was delivered to all ward councillors and Town / Parish Councils for consultation and comment before being passed through WDC Scrutiny and WDC Cabinet for adoption.

6.2 The project steering group has also consulted with Lowestoft Tourism Group, represented by Tony Gittens who was invited to attend a steering group meeting.

Lowestoft Tourism Group supports the projects to improve and extend the play space, but on the original plans of losing car park spaces to accommodate this extension. The Lowestoft Tourism Group strongly objects to the new proposal of the loss of 18m of green space on Royal Green. The steering group expects to receive strong objections from the group as such through the planning phase.

## **7 NEXT STEPS**

- 7.1 Once approved, the project steering group will initiate the planning consent phase and seek approval from WDC Planning to deliver the project.
- 7.2 The preferred contractors to deliver the various elements of the project will be notified of their success (subject to planning consent).
- 7.3 If planning consent is obtained, the elements of the project will be commissioned by Sentinel Leisure Trust, overseen and managed by Waveney Norse and recharged to Waveney District Council. This is to comply with the ITQ tendering process undertaken.
- 7.4 Project delivery will be managed through the existing governance processed with both Sentinel Leisure Trust and Waveney Norse, providing robust control, governance and full transparency.
- 7.5 Once completed, the project will be officially opened by representatives from WDC, WN and SLT.

## **8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 Do not deliver the project – this will not satisfy the Lowestoft Seafront Vision aspirations nor the recommendations from the Play Evaluation Report and Action Plan. It would see no toddler play provision provided along the South seafront area.
- 8.2 Revert back to the original plan, which would see a loss of car parking to accommodate the extension to the play area. This would see a projected loss of £21,937.85 per annum to WDC from the reduction of car parking spaces and a need to fund the project capital of circa £120,000.00 (ground works, play equipment and play surfacing). It would also require additional budget allocation each year to maintain the play space to a good standard.

## **9 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 To ensure delivery of the project in line with both Play Evaluation Strategy 2015 and the Lowestoft Seafront Vision, whilst providing additional revenue income to WDC to mitigate the initial capital costs, future capital replacement costs and additional revenue for repair and maintenance.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Cabinet approve a capital spend of £154,000.00 (ex VAT) to extend and provide a new toddler play space and car park extension at Royal Green.
2. That the planning application process is commenced for both the play area extension and the car park extension.
3. That Cabinet agree to increase the repair and maintenance budget by £2,000.00 per annum, to be provided to Waveney Norse through the existing partnership arrangements to ensure appropriate repair and maintenance is given to the project.

4. That Cabinet give delegated authority to the Head of Operations to oversee the commissioning and delivery of the project through Sentinel Leisure Trust and Waveney Norse through existing governance mechanisms.

#### APPENDICES

<b>Appendix A</b>	Play Evaluation Report and Action Plan – 2015 <b>This document is extremely large and has not been printed. A copy is on the Council's website or available on request.</b>
<b>Appendix B</b>	WDC Project PID Document
<b>Appendix C</b>	Proposed Plan
<b>Appendix D</b>	Budget workings for car park – additional revenue

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.