

Committee: COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item

Date: March 13, 2008

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Title: GREENWAYS PLAY AREA

Author: Gaynor Bradley, Leisure & Community
Development Manager, 01799 510348

Item for decision

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on recent developments regarding the Greenways Play area and to seek approval to undertake a formal survey of the residents in the area regarding the reinstatement of a play area.

Recommendations

- 2 That Members agree to a residents' survey being carried out to determine whether or not the majority of residents wish to see a play area reinstated or not.

Background Papers

- 3 Letters received from a local resident.

Impact

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Communication/Consultation	Important to ensure the local community is in favour of the reinstatement of the play area.
Community Safety	Lack of a play area appears to have improved community safety. It is possible that a community safety issue could be created by reintroducing the play area.
Equalities	None
Finance	None
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	None
Ward-specific impacts	Saffron Walden Shire Ward
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

- 5 A report was submitted to the Community Committee in June 2007 informing Members that the play area at Greenways had been closed due to health & safety reasons and that the equipment would be removed. It sought approval to transfer the land to the Saffron Walden Town Council (See Appendix 1)
- 6 Members approved that the land should be leased to the Saffron Walden Town Council and that the reinstated play area would become the responsibility of the Town Council. Approval was also given to the sum of £20,000 being passed to the Town Council for the installation of the play area as this would have been the sum that was contained in the original Section 106 Agreement. The play area with the sum of £20,000 would have transferred to the Saffron Walden Town Council when it was constructed had there not been a dispute at that time.
- 7 Additionally, the Committee subsequently endorsed the Uttlesford Play Strategy application to the Big Lottery seeking approximately £200,000 for seven portfolio projects which included the Greenways play area.
- 8 The Uttlesford Play Strategy application was approved and there is now £20,000 available for the development of the play area.
- 9 A previous Committee report suggested that officers undertake a consultation exercise to establish if the play area was required by local residents. Members took the view that district should not lose any play areas and that the play area should be reinstated without going through a consultation process.
- 10 However, a resident of Greenways has written to the District Council outlining some of the problems that occurred when the play area was in situ and requesting that another play area is not constructed on that particular site. (See resident's letter at Appendix 2)
- 11 The resident states that the neighbours have been consulted and that the majority of residents either do not want to see the play area reinstated or have no particular views. Whilst it was very proactive of the resident concerned to undertake a survey, officers are concerned that residents might have found it difficult to respond to a neighbour taking the stance that the play area should not be reinstated. Therefore, with Members' approval, it is proposed to undertake a formal consultation exercise within Greenways to establish the way forward.
- 12 With regard to the Big Lottery funding of £20,000 that is available for this project, officers have consulted with Lottery representatives to establish what would happen if the play area was not reinstated. The response is that it will probably be possible to divert this funding into one of the other capital projects so it is unlikely that Uttlesford will lose the funding.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the consultation outcome determines that it would not be a good idea to reinstate the play area.	2	Children living in Greenways would not have a play area within the housing estate.	It would be possible for children to access the play area in Golden Acre.

Uttlesford District Council- Local Land Charges

MAP REFERENCE: TL5437SW SCALE: 1:1250

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LOCATION PLAN FOR SEARCH:

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01799 521524 Mobile 07970 234521

Ms Gaynor Bradley
Community & Leisure Manager
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER



5 February 2008

Re: Greenways play area

Dear Ms Bradley,

Further to my letter dated 28 January 2008, I would like to let you know the feelings of the Greenways residents concerning the possible re-introduction of a play area on the Greenways green.

Last weekend, I went round to each of the 25 Greenways houses and asked each household their opinion. The result was as follows:

- Against a play area – 12
- For a play area – 5
- For a play area if under 5s only – 2
- 50/50 couldn't decide – 2
- Out (on several occasions) – 3
- Empty – 1

As you can see, virtually 50% are against the re-introduction of a play area with another 2 households only favouring one which was for under 5 year olds.

I have enclosed a photocopy of the petition that I prepared with the signatures, names and house numbers of those who are opposed to any re-introduction of a play area.

I sincerely hope that this, together with my previous letters to you, will emphasise the strength of feelings here in Greenways. A play area of any description would be unwelcome in Greenways for all the reasons already stated in previous correspondence. We wish to remain a quiet, respectable, law-abiding residential area. Please keep it that way.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Dwyer". Below the signature is the printed name "Jim Dwyer".

Jim Dwyer

Are you in favour of a Greenways Play Area?					
Signature	Name	Number	Yes	No	Comments
<i>E. Toynnton</i>	E TOYNTON	25	-	NO	An area for Under Fives is acceptable if maintained regularly.
<i>P.S. Toynnton</i>	P.S. TOYNTON	25	-	NO	_____
<i>M.C. Foot</i>	M. C. FOOT	23	-	NO	_____
<i>H.P. Foot</i>	H. P. FOOT	23	-	NO	_____
<i>T.A. Collins</i>	T.A. COLLINS	13	-	NO	_____
<i>G. Skingthorpe</i>	G. SKINGTHORPE	9	-	NO	_____
<i>J. Dwyer</i>	J. DWYER	14	-	NO	_____
<i>P. Smith</i>	P. SMITH	14	-	NO	_____
<i>A. Boatman</i>	A BOATMAN	10	-	NO	_____
<i>K.A. Chapman</i>	K. A. CHAPMAN	12	-	NO	_____
<i>W.J. Rose</i>	W. J. ROSE	8	-	NO	Area for under 5s only - not youths
<i>G. Boatman</i>	G BOATMAN	10	-	NO	_____
<i>A. Mather</i>	A. MATHER	35	-	NO	_____
<i>M. Bevan</i>	M. BEVAN	17	-	NO	Attracts inappropriate troublesome youths

Are you in favour of a Greenways Play Area?					
Signature	Name	Number	Yes	No	Comments
<i>A. Weller</i>	MR A. WELLER	6	-	NO	_____
<i>M. S. Sakobras</i>	MR S SAKOBRAS	3	-	NO	SPOILT BY OLDER YOUTHS.

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28 January 2008

Re: Greenways play area

Dear Ms Bradley,

I wanted to keep in touch with you regarding the above. We are currently enjoying a period where there have been no disturbances whatsoever from teenagers/youths and our Neighbourhood Watch committee has nothing to report.

The reason for this? There is no play area on the Greenways Green which attracts teenagers and youths of all ages, some of whom want to cause trouble.

The majority of Greenways residents are very anxious not to return to these times when police would have to be called in, there were various reports of gardens being broken into, gangs of youths calling at doors, faces appearing at windows after dark, vandalism in the play area, stolen milk, constant noise, litter, aggressive/intimidating behaviour etc etc etc.

We are sincerely hoping that these instances will help you appreciate the situation and that you will not inflict another play area on the peace-loving residents of Greenways.

Yours sincerely

Jim Dwyer