



Committee and Date:
Broseley and Barrow
Local Joint Committee
Date: 2 December
2009
Time: 7.00 pm

Item/Paper
7.1
Public

UPDATE ON LEISURE FUNDING AND FACILITIES

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1. Summary

This report provides the Committee with update information on leisure facilities and funding within the Broseley area including the proposals for the use of the grant of £5,000 to the Birchmeadow Centre.

2. Purpose of the Report

Members are asked to note the progress made to date in relation to leisure facilities in Broseley and consider the proposals of the Birchmeadow Centre Project Committee on the use of the £5,000 provisionally awarded by this Committee.

3. Birchmeadow Centre

3.1 Background

In August of this year Broseley Town Council were successful in being awarded **£48,000** from Shropshire Council's Community Fund towards an extension on the Birchmeadow Centre. The extension is to the front of the building and will add additional toilet, storage and changing facilities for Broseley Amateur Dramatics (Broads) and will also give improved access to the stage.

Broseley Town Council have now set up the Birchmeadow Centre Project Committee comprising of 4 Town Councillors, and 2 co-opted representatives from the Birchmeadow Management Committee and 2 co-opted members of the Broseley Partnership in order to progress the project. The Town Council members have been given delegated authority to spend the grant funding awarded for the development project without reference back to full Council in order to allow the project to progress swiftly. It is a requirement of the original grant that the project is completed within 12 months.

3.2 Funding

At a previous meeting of this Committee, members provisionally agreed to allocate **£5,000** of the budget this year to the Birchmeadow Centre project. This decision was subject to further information being sought on the specific use of this money in relation to the overall project.

The Birchmeadow Centre Project Committee has now begun to meet and has decided that their preferred use of this money would be to allocate it to the cost of project management of the scheme, thereby allowing most of the Community Fund award to be spent on the actual project.

They have agreed to appoint qualified architects to project manage and undertake the following aspects:

- Amend and resubmit plans
- Prepare appropriate documents for building regulations approval
- Liaise with local contractors, organise and manage the tender process
- Monitor and administer the project on site

4. Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

Earlier this year Broseley Partnership decided to move forward with a project to create a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) attached to the site of the Broseley C of E Primary School. This followed evidence obtained from the residents of Broseley that this type of facility was needed and a commitment from the former Bridgnorth District Council to provide **£140,000** of match funding to support an application to the Football Foundation.

There have been many months of volunteer meetings and negotiations to get to the stage of submission of this application which is nearing completion. Shropshire Council's Leisure and Property teams are now involved with the scheme and are assisting the MUGA Project Committee to produce a full and comprehensive application and to ensure that all of the relevant additional documents required such as the lease, a formal constitution, health and safety policies etc are produced and the relevant representatives from the community are involved. Broseley Town Council will be the responsible body and the MUGA Project Committee is now a formal sub Committee of Broseley Town Council.

We intend to keep the Local Joint Committee fully informed on the outcome of the application to the Football Foundation and the development of this project.

5. Birchmeadow Park

The Birchmeadow Park is run by the Birchmeadow Park Management Committee on which there are members of the Town Council, local PTA's, footballs clubs and Shropshire Council. After many discussions about ways to improve the park it was decided that a sub-committee would try and gain funding. After one year of hard work funding has been awarded from Shropshire Council, the DCSF Playbuilder Programme (ran by Shropshire Council), the Big Lottery Fund and Community Spaces. A total of **£120,000** has been raised to spend on improving the site over the next 12 months.

5.1 Improvement Plans

The vision to improve the park involves many grand plans for which lots of funding was needed. The main focus is on the play area. After years of use the existing play space is tired and in desperate need of repair. It was proposed that due to improvements taking place at the Birchmeadow Centre that the wider picture was seen and so the play area

is to be removed and a new one created on the opposite side of the top field, down from the Centre itself. This means any future extension will be complemented by the play area itself and give ease of access from the proposed café area.

The second part of the improvement plans is to encourage more people in to the woodland. Shropshire Council maintain the Birchmeadow Park. It has been decided that as part of the management plans, a woodland plan would be an easy way to encourage species to flourish. Currently the woodland has been trampled in various places meaning species succession has been hindered. A new informal path will be created around the woodland meaning access is easier from entrances off Cockshutt Lane, the car park and the area behind the piano seat. The path will be timber edged meaning that people will tend to stick to this rather than meander off. This will hopefully mean roots are not trampled and the woodland can be planted in to and managed appropriately.

The final part of the plans is to plant and landscape the park. The new play area will see wildflower meadows and sensory flowers allowing children to stimulate various senses encouraging their early years development. The mound where the play area currently exists will also be planted in to a community orchard and seating provided allowing people to look down on the park. There will also be an avenue of Birch trees planted on the park in order to bring the area back to how it used to look. All planting will be done through volunteer time and it is hoped to get the three primary schools, members of the community and Broseley in bloom involved in this. Details of these events will be publicised shortly throughout the town, in the schools and through local newspapers.

5.2 Community Spaces Funding

The grant from Community Spaces has allowed us to fund the removal of the old play area and reinstatement back to grass. It will also fund £30,000 of new toddler equipment and the resurfacing of the car park area behind the Birchmeadow Centre in order to tidy it up and make it easier for cars to use. The access path from the piano seat to Cockshutt Lane will also be funded through this grant.

5.3 Shropshire Council Funding

Shropshire Council as trustees of the Park has a duty to maintain this site. The Parks and Countryside Sites Team recognise the important role this park plays in encouraging people outdoors and developing a child's development through play to name just two advantages. Therefore, £60,000 has been allocated through the Playbuilder and Big Lottery play programmes to provide £50,000 of equipment for 8-13 year olds and an extra £10,000 towards toddler play. Children and Young peoples Services have also allocated £5000 towards any equipment that encourages language development in 0-4 year olds. A further £4000 has been allocated towards landscaping and planting costs throughout the entire park. Finally, £6000 has been awarded to extend the path in the woodland from the access path at Cockshutt Lane, over the mound leading out towards the car park.

An opening event will be held in July 2010 to mark the new features of the park and to encourage the entire community of Broseley to use it. Further details of this will be confirmed next year.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

That the Local Joint Committee approve the use of the grant in the sum of **£5,000** towards the cost of appointing architects to progress the Birchmeadow Centre project to its conclusion.

The Committee are also asked to note the excellent progress made on all of the schemes currently underway in Broseley and acknowledge the high level of commitment from both local volunteers and officers in moving these projects forward.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information) DCSF Design for Play Guidance;
Human Rights Act Appraisal There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.
Environmental Appraisal Not applicable
Risk Management Appraisal All funding applications are assessed against agreed criteria which will minimise any risks associated with these projects.
Community / Consultations Appraisal Decisions on allocation of funding from this committee are subject to approval by the Broseley and Barrow Local Joint Committee as representatives of the local community.
Cabinet Member Gwilym Butler
Local Members Jean Jones, Milner Whiteman
Appendices None