



### **Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks)**

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**Time and Date**

9.00 am on Friday, 16th January, 2015

**Place**

Committee Room 2 - Council House

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**Public Business**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
  - (a) To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2014
  - (b) Matters Arising
4. **Juniper Drive Play Area Petition - Request that children's play equipment in the park is replaced with updated equipment following consultation with local residents.** (Pages 7 - 12)

Report of the Executive Director of Place

To consider the above e-petition, bearing 115 e-signatures which has been submitted by Councillor Julia Lepoidevin, a Woodlands Ward Councillor, who lives in the vicinity of Juniper Drive and has been invited to the meeting for the consideration of this item.
5. **Outstanding Issues**

There are no outstanding issues
6. **Any Other Items of Public Business**

Any other items of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

**Private Business**

Nil

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Chris West, Executive Director, Resources, Council House Coventry

Thursday, 8 January 2015

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Gurdip Paddan

Membership: Councillors A Khan (Cabinet Member) and D Skinner (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting OR if you would like this information in another format or language please contact us.

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**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks)**  
**held at 9.00 am on Tuesday, 9 September 2014**

Present:

Members:                                   Councillor A Khan (Chair)  
  Councillor D Skinner (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members:                        Councillor A Andrews (for item 4)

Employees (by Directorate):

C Edwards, People Directorate  
U Patel, Resources Directorate  
A Walster, Place Directorate

## **Public Business**

### **1. Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **2. Declarations of Interests**

There were no Declarations of Interests.

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the Joint Cabinet Members (Business, Enterprise and Employment) and (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks) meeting held on 23 July 2014 were noted as a true record.

### **4. War Memorial Park Water Feature e-Petition - Request to remove the new charge for children using the water feature**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director, Place which provided a response to an e-petition organised by Councillor Andrews, an Earlsdon Ward Councillor, with 100 e-signatures, requesting the removal of the new charge for children using the water feature.

The report explained that the charges for the use of the Water Feature in the War memorial park had been considered and approved on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014. The Water Feature was opened in 2005 and had been free to use since that time and operated for 77 days of the year; subject to weather conditions.

The report outlined the two options available; firstly, to retain the charge as previously approved or alternatively, to reconsider whether, given the relatively small amount of income anticipated to be recovered, the charge for children to use the water feature should be withdrawn.

In considering these options, it was worth noting that excluding maintenance and replacement costs, the facility cost approximately £17,000 to operate annually. The proposed usage charge of £1.00 per child per day was estimated to recover £5,000 to help meet the overall running costs of this facility.

It was acknowledged that while only a small element of the operating costs was estimated to be recovered, it provided an opportunity to recover some of the costs incurred.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks) approves that in consideration of the low level of income anticipated to be achieved and the impact this charge may have on families, the charge for children to use the water feature be withdrawn.**

## 5. A Vision for Allesley Park Walled Garden

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director, Place which sought approval for the adoption of “A Vision of Allesley Park Walled Garden” as a framework for the future development and management of the Walled garden.

Allesley Hall Park is one of the Area Parks within the City with a rich history and the Council is supported in its management and ongoing maintenance by very enthusiastic local people who are members of the Allesley Park Residents Association, Allesley Park Walled Garden Group and the Friends of Allesley Park. The park is under the control of the Parks Service within the Place Directorate.

All these groups have been working over the past three years with City Council officers on a Visioning document for the Walled Garden, an integral and historical element of this well used park. The report sought approval to adopt the document as a framework for the future development of the Walled Garden and to submit an external funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for Stage 1 of the restoration works.

For a number of years, residents and groups that use Allesley Park have taken a keen interest in the management of the park. In 2000, the Council adopted a “Proposal for the Walled Garden”, which permitted the newly formed Allesley Park Walled Garden Group to lease part of the garden in order to lay it out as it may have looked when the garden was first built in c1786.

The report outlined two options for consideration:

- (i) To leave the management of the garden as it is. This would mean having a quarter of the garden managed (under lease) by the Walled Garden Group with the remainder of the garden managed in an ad-hoc basis by the Friends of Allesley Park, apart from essential work such as grass-mowing which would be carried out by the City Council. This lack of formal management for three quarters of the garden has already proved to be undesirable as it causes friction between the two groups. This was not the recommended option.

- (ii) Adopting the vision for the walled Garden which has been agreed by all parties as a workable management framework. By adopting the Vision, the groups would work in partnership with the City Council to deliver the actions outlined in the Vision including seeking external funding to deliver the new proposal. The report recommended that this option be approved so that the Vision document is adopted, allowing external funding to be sought so this Vision becomes a reality.

Almost four years of consultation and discussion have been undertaken during the development of the Vision document. The consultation was led by the City Council and involved the Allesley Park Residents Association, the Friends of Allesley Park and the Allesley Park Walled Garden Group. The groups carried out consultation with the wider public through questionnaires, distributed within 0.5 miles of the park and via events where members of the public have had the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

The Vision document, as attached in Appendix 1 of the report, was overwhelmingly agreed by all parties as a framework for the future development of the Walled Garden.

If approved, it was proposed to submit an external funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund when the next application window opens in February 2015. Other action plan elements within the Visioning Document would be delivered as resources, both financial and personnel permit.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks):**

- 1. Approves the adoption of “Vision of Allesley Park Walled Garden” as a framework for the future development and management of the Walled Garden.**
- 2. Agrees to the submission of an external funding application (first-round) to the Heritage Lottery Fund for c£480,000.**
- 3. That if successful at the first-round stage, requests that a further report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the proposed project, financial implications and to seek approval to enter into a contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund for the funding offered to deliver this proposed project.**

**6. Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

**7. Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 9.35 am)



7<sup>th</sup> January 2015

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks - Councillor A Khan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Executive Director of Place

**Ward(s) affected:**

**Woodlands**

**Title:**

Juniper Drive Play Area Petition – Request that children’s play equipment in the park is replaced with updated equipment following consultation with local residents.

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

This report relates to an e-petition organised by Councillor Julia Lepoidevin, a Woodlands Ward Councillor, signed by 115 residents who lives in the vicinity of Juniper Drive.

The petition reads:

“We are calling on the Council to update and replace play equipment in the park area Juniper Drive/Woodridge Avenue, after consultation with local residents. There has been no update of this equipment for a number of years.”

This play site includes a number of items of play equipment designed to cater for the younger age group as well as some informal sports provision such as a goal post and basketball hoop. There are also a number of infrastructural elements associated with the play area including fencing, tarmac paths and safer surfacing. The park is under the control of the Parks Service within the Place Directorate

Play facilities in the City are inspected on a weekly basis and repairs/replacements are undertaken as and when necessary to maintain the equipment in a safe and usable condition.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks is recommended to:

1. Note that adequate play provision is located in Allesley Park just 600 metres from Juniper Drive

2. Agree that updating and replacing the play equipment at Juniper Drive is unsustainable in the present financial climate
3. Agree that the play equipment, apart from the basketball hoop and goal, be removed from Juniper Drive and that any serviceable items be reused where practicable and that the area be reinstated to grass

**List of Appendices included:**

N/A

**Other useful background papers:**

Report to Cabinet Member on the 8 April 2014 entitled: Allesley Park Play Area

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel, or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No



## **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 Juniper Drive Play Area is located in the west of the City and contains a number of items of equipment designed to be appropriate for the younger age group aged 4 to 7 years. These play items include rockers, swings and slide. In addition the play site also includes items for informal sports play this includes a goal post and basketball hoop. Infrastructural elements associated with the play site include metal fencing, tarmac footpaths and safer surfacing.
- 1.2 The park is under the control of the Parks Service within the Place Directorate. Play facilities in the City are inspected on a weekly basis and repairs/replacements are undertaken as and when necessary to maintain the equipment and associated infrastructural features in a safe and usable condition. Recent inspections have found that most of the equipment was nearing the end of its practicable life, some items are showing signs of wear and tear, an element of vandalism with dog damage is evident on the swing seats and the stainless steel slide chute which was stolen earlier in the year, has not been replaced. Repairs would also be necessary to the fencing and safer surfacing within the next 12 months.
- 1.3 Juniper Drive Play Area is located just 600 metres from Allesley Park which is the Area Park for the west of the city and as such has benefitted from significant investment in recent years has also been awarded a Green Flag (a national standard for parks) annually for the past four years with support from residents and the Friends Group. Juniper Drive and Woodridge Avenue fall well within the catchment area of the Allesley Parks' play area.
- 1.4 In 2008 major improvements to the play area in Allesley Park were completed with the provision of new equipment and associated "safer" surfacing material. This new facility caters for children aged between 7-13 years. The play area also has provision for the 4 to 7 age group although this area is older it is perfectly serviceable and has been maintained in a good and usable condition with no safety issues. This play area has a fenced area containing fixed steel equipment which provides a range of play experiences including swinging, rotating, climbing and sliding, as well as opportunities for creative play. The equipment has recently been sanded down and re-painted presenting a high visual impact. In addition this play area will benefit from the installation of new safer surfacing in the coming months.
- 1.5 When external or internal inspections are undertaken, consideration is also given to the serviceable life expectancy of the facility, usually on an item by item basis as not all equipment needs to be replaced at the same time. In these cases, recommendations are made as to what items should be considered for replacement or improvement and the works are then included in the play area maintenance programme.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 Subject to a decision by Council the Parks Service operational budget will be reduced by £1m from 2015/16. As part of its financial strategy the service will be reviewing the replacement of play equipment as and when its practicable life ends. This review will be on an item by item and site by site basis and will take into consideration cost, remaining equipment and location to other play areas.
- 2.2 Juniper Drive falls within the catchment area of Allesley Park. A full refurbishment of this play area would cost approximately £29,400 to complete and is not considered to be appropriate or sustainable under the Council's present economic circumstances.

- 2.3 It is recommended that Juniper Drive play area be removed and the area reinstated. Recent safety inspections of the equipment at this site have indicated that the majority of the items are reaching the end of their serviceable lifespan. If removed, some items could be re-used for spares to extend the serviceable life of other play items elsewhere in the city. The goal posts and basketball hoop could however remain in situ. The cost of removing the equipment and infrastructural elements and ground reinstatement would be approximately £13,500 to be met from the parks revenue budget.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

No consultation has taken place on this issue

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 To be agreed subject to approval of a recommendation within this report

### **5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The cost of removing the existing items of equipment, safer surfacing, fencing and subsequent reinstatement of the area would be approximately £13,500.

These one off works, if approved, could be funded from the Parks and Open Spaces revenue budget and given the likely reduction in the Parks service operational budget would remove any on-going liability relating to the existing equipment.

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

No legal implications associated with this matter.

### **6. Other implications**

None

#### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

N/A

#### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

The continued programme of play area and equipment safety inspection will ensure that facilities are maintained in a safe and usable condition.

#### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

It is the Council's responsibility to ensure facilities are maintained in a safe condition

#### **6.4 Equalities / EIA Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

The Service will continue to provide a level of provision which will ensure that all children within the City have access to park play facilities.

## 6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

Continued provision of safe, attractive and stimulating play environments.

## 6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

### Report author(s):

**Name and job title: Graham Hood, Head of Streetpride and Greenspace**

**Directorate: Place**

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Ces Edwards	Head of Parks and Greenspaces	Place	15.12.14	15.12.14
Jas Bilen	HR Manager	Resources	15.12.14	16.12.14
Gurdip Paddan,	Governance Services Officer	Resources	15.12.14	17.12.14
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Finance: Phil Helm	Finance Manager, City Services & Development	Resources	15.12.14	15.12.14
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Councillor Abdul Khan	Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks)		17.12.14	17.12.14

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### Appendices

None

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