

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

24

Report of Corporate Director for
Place

to
Cabinet

on
22 September 2015

Report prepared by: Ian Brown Parks Management Officer

Southchurch Park Bowls Pavilion

Place Scrutiny Committee
Executive Councillor: Councillor Graham Longley
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To introduce the proposal to work with an established bowls club, Southchurch Park Bowls Club, to develop a new pavilion to replace the existing one in the park.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Cabinet agree in principle to develop a proposal for Southchurch Park Bowls Club to demolish the existing pavilion and commission a new, larger facility in Southchurch Park.**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet authorise the publication of notice of the intention to dispose of public open space in accordance with the statutory procedures of the Local Government Act 1972 S.123 (2).**
- 2.3 **The proposed development will require external funding, existing £20,000 of financial support from the Council, detailed planning permission and the agreement of a formal lease demonstrating compliance with the Local Government Act 1972 S. 123 (2A).**

3. Background

- 3.1 Southchurch Park is a local park of 12.5 hectares situated in the Thorpe Ward. The park currently holds Green Flag status. There is a significant emphasis on sports provision with the park containing a bowling green, two cricket pitches, two football pitches, two tennis courts, and a basketball/multi use games area. The park also features a rose garden, playground, petanque terrain, café and model boating lake.

- 3.2 Southchurch Park Bowls Club (BC) has been in existence since 1931, the same year the current pavilion was built. The club currently has 35 members.
- 3.3 The building was last surveyed approximately three years ago at which time repair costs were estimated to be in the region of £20,000. It offers only the most basic facilities of a small communal area and kitchen. Toilets are housed in a separate out building.
- 3.4 The club has created a special committee to develop the project, carried out detailed research, taken advice on funding opportunities and outlined their proposals to the authority.
- 3.5 The new pavilion would be an 'off-the shelf' timber design, larger than the existing building, created and installed by the company Passmores, an established company in this area. The building has been costed at £44,000 exclusive of VAT. This figure does not include costs for demolition, footings or the 'final fix'. The club have identified a source of potential funding through Sport England's Inspired Facilities scheme. The scheme can provide funding of up to £75,000 to clubs and community organisations. Clubs are not required to provide match funding. The club intends to create opportunities for the wider community to use the pavilion; a strategy which would help to satisfy funding requirements and provide a sustainable income.
- 3.6 The building would be occupied under the terms of a formal lease. It will be necessary to agree Heads of Terms with the club prior to any funding bid being submitted to Sport England or any other funding body.
- 3.7 Final designs for the building will be completed to seek final approval through the planning process.

4. Other Options

- 4.1 The existing provision could continue to be provided direct by the authority, however building repairs are required at significant cost and ongoing maintenance will continue to be the responsibility of the Council.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposal offers the opportunity to improve the level of facilities available in the park and offer year round use to the club and the local community.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- Healthy – Promote healthy and active lifestyles for all
- Prosperous – Ensure continued regeneration of the town through a culture led agenda

- Excellent – Enable communities to be self-sufficient and foster pride in the town
- Excellent – Promote and lead an entrepreneurial, creative and innovative approach to the development of the town

6.2 Financial Implications

6.2.1 The Club is seeking to fund the building costs by submitting a funding application for £75,000 to Sport England's Inspired Facilities scheme. This is unlikely to cover the entire project costs. The club are currently researching likely costs to construct the footings and have asked the Council to consider funding the demolition costs.

6.2.2 The current repairs required to the old timber pavilion are the responsibility of the Council and estimated to cost in excess of £20,000 and capital funding will be required to undertake these works. It is suggested that capital expenditure would be best allocated to assist, if required, to support the completion of a new pavilion with the future maintenance liabilities being the responsibility of the Bowls Club. The indicative sum of £20,000 could be met from the existing capital pump priming budget in the Department for Place of £353,000

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 The proposal is subject to the Local Government Act 1972 Act. Section 123(2) of the Act requires Council to publish notices on the proposed disposal of open space.

6.3.2 The Local Government Act 1972 under Section 123 (2A) requires that the Council obtains best consideration on the disposal.

6.3.3 The proposal is also subject to the requirement to obtain planning permission for the pavilion.

6.4 People Implications

6.4.1 There are no people implications.

6.5 Property Implications

6.5.1 It will be necessary to agree a lease setting out the basis of occupation, rents and responsibilities.

6.6 Consultation

6.6.1 Consultation is being undertaken with Ward Members and will also form part of the planning application process.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7.1 The Pavilion will be required to meet all current accessibility standards.

6.8 Risk Assessment

6.8.1 The principle risk is that the Club will be unable to secure the necessary funding for the project.

6.8.2 There is a further risk that the Club and the Council will be unable to agree the terms of the lease which would prevent the development of the project.

6.9 Value for Money

6.9.1 The project represent value for money by providing a new facility at limited cost to the council which would be leased under a full repair and maintenance agreement, providing an income while avoiding future costs to the council.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 The proposed year round operation of the pavilion will provide improved community safety by increasing activity during the winter months increasing the levels of self-surveillance.

6.11 Environmental Impact

6.11.1 The building will be required to conform to planning regulations and Environment Agency guideline for construction within a flood zone.

7. Background Papers

7.1 No background papers are included in this report.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Pavilion Location Plan

8.2 Appendix 2 – Pavilion Drawing by Passmores