

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL
Special Environment Committee
6 February 2024
Decision Report

Results of the Consultation Exercise carried out regarding a new Play Park in Axwell Drive

Recommendation

Committee consider the results and comments received from the Consultation Exercise and RESOLVE:

- **where the new park will be located**
- **to note that additional costs will be incurred if the existing area is the preferred option regarding:**
 - a) a longer footpath being installed.**
 - b) Officers further evaluate options to reduce potential waterlogged areas.**

Ward

Cowpen

Risk Management

There is budget provision, in the Play Area programme, for this facility to be refurbished in 2024/25. Additional costs of towards £13k may be incurred if the existing location is the preferred location. A Consultation Exercise has been carried out to obtain views as to its location. NCC have given authority for the new Play Area to be either extended in its current location or in the new location should the Council make such a decision.

Objectives

To promote the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community. One way this can be done is by the provision of Play/Sports Areas to create a facility for children/teenagers, up to mid-teens, to both learn and play within a secure environment.

Report

At a previous meeting of this Committee, it was brought to the attention of Members, that there were issues with the parts of the current park being subject to the ground being waterlogged. It was recommended that the new park be relocated where the land was slightly higher. It was agreed that a consultation exercise be carried out to get the views of users and residents.

The consultation document, Appendix A, was delivered to houses facing the play area on, Axwell Drive, Gareston Close and Brierley Close on the 18 December 2023 with a closing date of the 15 January 2024, as well as being on Facebook and our web site.

The question asked was "if residents prefer the current location compared to it been relocated to a new area" on the basis that "we believe the new area would be less prone to flooding and being waterlogged".

The Council received 28 responses of which 21 preferred the current location, i.e. that is the potentially damper area.

There were 13 comments received, see Appendix B. Comment 1 is for the relocation and comments 2 to 13 against the relocation.

Should the Committee agree that the new play area be constructed on its existing site then additional costs of some £3.2K will be needed to install a longer footpath from Axwell Drive to the area itself. This would be the only footpath to the play area. See Appendix C.

If indeed the existing area was preferred, the Council could remove a banked area within the site, and although cannot be guaranteed, may result in reducing the waterlogged area when rain conditions exist. This could cost between £7k and £10k.

Irrespective of location the type of equipment to be installed will be that of a more inclusive nature to allow greater choice for all users.

Malcolm Wilkinson

Deputy Town Clerk

22 January 2024