

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

EXECUTIVE

29 MARCH 2004

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

FOR ACTION

NAME OF WARD
MAPESBURY

REPORT TITLE : Mapesbury Dell Doorstep Green

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report seeks Members consent to enter into a deed of covenant with the Countryside Agency

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

Members agree:

- 2.1 That provided the Countryside Agency makes a grant of £55,000 to the Council towards the Mapesbury Dell project the Council enters into a deed of covenant in favour of the Countryside Agency for a period of 80 years to use Mapesbury Dell and the Park as open space and not to dispose of them without the consent of the Countryside Agency
- 2.2 That the sum of £50k is allocated to the scheme as match funding.
- 2.3 That Executive agrees to utilise £32k of the £480k Parks Improvement Programme capital Budget approved at the Council on 1st March 2004 for Mapesbury Dell.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council already has identified the sum of £8k from S106 Monies. Monies will be made available from Brent Park Service building maintenance revenue budget 2004-05 of £10k and Brent Park Service Parks Improvement Programme capital budget 2004-05 of £32k, totalling a financial commitment to the scheme of £50k
- 3.2 £55k has already been agreed towards this scheme from New Opportunities Fund [NOF] Doorstep green project. This is administered by the Countryside Agency.

- 3.3 A grant of £62k has been granted from the Living Spaces Fund, which is administered through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [ODPM]
- 3.4 Revenue grounds maintenance costs to this site will not be affected as the new design and site layout has been designed to ensure low maintenance costs.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Brent Parks Service staff will undertake responsibility for managing and letting the landscaping contracts and will supervise these works within existing resources.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Mapesbury Dell is situated in an area of recognised open space deficiency [UDP ref map OS1].
- 5.2 Brent Council Parks Strategy has identified this site as in need of priority improvements [BPS ref BVR12]

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council has the power under Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.
- 6.2 The effect of the Covenant is that the Council cannot sell the Dell and the Park or use them for any other purpose without the consent of the Countryside Agency within a period of 80 years.

7.0 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications.

8.0 DETAIL

- 8.1 The Countryside Agency together with the New Opportunities Fund launched the Doorsteps green initiative recently with the aim of helping up to 200 communities to create new green space or to revitalise old ones. Community groups and local authorities were invited to make applications for grant funding from them in this respect.
- 8.2 The Council with a local community group called the Mapesbury Conservation Area Trust [MCAT] saw this as an opportunity to revitalise the open space known as Mapesbury Dell and the Children's park. , The trust was established to seek specific

improvements to the Mapesbury Dell with support from Brent Parks Service [BPS] staff.

- 8.3 The Mapesbury Dell site is in an area of recognised open space deficiency and is situated within walking distance of Cricklewood Broadway. The site has been specifically identified within the Authorities Parks Strategy as a priority site in need of urgent attention.
- 8.4 The site is poorly laid out, has failing infrastructure and is underused. The entrance to the open space is unwelcoming, badly lit and unattractive. Tree and shrub plantings on site are poorly located, block site lines, contribute to a sense of neglect and contribute to a fear of crime.
- 8.5 The improvement scheme devised in conjunction with local residents will be used as a model to seek other open space improvements across Brent. Local residents have committed considerable time and effort to ensuring the success of this project and the scheme would not have been a success without them.
- 8.6 A project plan was therefore devised to carry out certain works totalling £164,600 on the open space see [Appendix 1]. An application was subsequently made to the Countryside Agency last year by the Council for grant funding in respect of these works.
- 8.7 A start up grant of £3k was awarded to MCAT to undertake and prepare detailed site plans including provision for local consultation.
- 8.8 The Countryside Agency informed the Council of the success of the application on 5th December 2003 and agreed to make a grant of £55,000 towards the cost of the project. The grant is subject to numerous conditions chief of which are that the Council provides a match funding of £50,000 towards the project and the Council enters into a covenant with the Countryside Agency agreeing for a period of 80 years not to dispose of the open space without the consent of the Countryside Agency.
- 8.9 The Living Spaces fund confirmed grant approval to a value of £62k on 17th February 2004. This brings a total of £107k available from grant funding for improvement works to Mapesbury Dell.
- 8.10 The Dell and the Park is currently maintained by BPS, future site maintenance will be undertaken by BPS.
- 8.11 The site is in need of urgent attention to paths, fencing, soft landscape features and furniture. BPS has committed from its 2004-05 budget £42k comprising £10k from BPS building repairs budget [revenue] and £32k from the BPS playground improvements budget [capital]. These monies need to be spent on site to make the site safe and to repair/replace existing play equipment and park furniture.
- 8.12 The improvement works will be undertaken during the 2004-05 period a detailed specification, drawings and contract details are being compiled and the tendering process can start by April 2004. Providing that all works go to plan and that the weather is reasonable works should be completed by late summer 2004.

- 8.13 The Dell and the Park are currently used and laid out as an open space and they are unlikely to be used for any other purpose in the future. As such your officers do not believe that the proposed covenant is onerous and they recommend that the Council enters into the covenant

9.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Details of Documents:

- 9.1 The Brent Unitary Development Plan
- 9.2 Brent Parks Strategy and Improvement Plan
- 9.3 Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Shaun Faulkner, Brent Parks Service, 660 Harrow Rd, Sudbury, Middlesex, HA02HB, Telephone: 0208 937 5619.

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