



NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET COMMITTEE

11 SEPTEMBER 2024

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE – HUW JONES

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected – Onllwyn and Seven Sisters

Community Councils Minor Projects Scheme – Application from Onllwyn Community Council

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Members' approval to provide a grant to Onllwyn Community Council under the Council's Community Councils Minor Projects Scheme.

Background

2. Neath Port Talbot Council has approved a Community Council Minor Projects Grants Scheme in order to assist Community Councils in undertaking minor capital projects. Approved grants are required to be claimed within two years of approval.
3. The Council has received an application for grant aid under the above mentioned scheme from Onllwyn Community Council.

This application is for grant assistance to develop an outdoor Pre-school/Early Years themed toddler/family area and playground adjacent to the 'Dovecote Day Nursery,' DOVE Workshop, Roman Road, Banwen.

“With the recent investment in ‘Teen’ play and Toddler/Junior play at nearby Banwen RFC, we now feel it appropriate to provide for the very young in a bespoke themed playground that celebrates the rurality and wildlife of Onllwyn.

The project has been designed to be inclusive and features all manner of play sculptures and play panels including dragonflies and ‘Pond Explorers,’ foxes, badgers, ladybirds, bees, hedgehogs and ‘Flower Explorer.’

New play apparatus will include; a Basket Swing, a Ground Trampoline, a Toddler Multi-Play Unit, an Agility Net, a Four Way See-Saw, ‘Bee’ Springy, an Agility Net and a ‘Whirlybob’ rotator. New park furniture will consist of x2 new recycled plastic benches and litter bins. Flat, level access will be created by installing a rubber stone path complete with buggy/pram parking area.

Given the environmental theme and the need to honour the countrified setting, the project includes also for more tree planting to soften the backdrop.

The intention is to create a family friendly environment and we have also allowed for a table with small benches where the children can sit to have their food and drink and mix with their peers.”

4. How will this project contribute to the Council’s four well-being objectives as set out in the 2022-2027 Corporate Plan?

“Our initial needs analysis and spatial mapping has revolved around the NPT Revised Local Development Plan (LDP), which computes the need for play, Public Open Space (POS), pitch and non-pitch provision. We have also taken advice from the Play Strategy Implementation Group and the Play Sufficiency Assessment. These point to an unmet demand or unsatisfied need for this type of play and learning space in Onllwyn.

The project aligns closely to two of the four NPTCBC Corporate Plan 2022-2027 outcomes:-

- 1. To ensure our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations**
- 2. To ensure all our communities are thriving and sustainable**

This project will provide not only opportunities for exercise and physical activity, but because of the tactile surfaces and educative elements, will be a resource for learning, improving motor skills and give toddlers a chance to interact with each other in a safe, secure, friendly environment.

The project will add to visits made to the DOVE and its Nursery and the footfall at the Café Sarn Helen.

The project will consolidate the position of DOVE in the community.

In turn the facility will be of appeal to all those arriving at Dovecote, those that leave the DOVE but wish to linger, have a chat and exchange experiences.

For the children, a dedicated playspace, and for the parents and grandparents an opportunity to socialise, mix and catch up on local news.

The estimated cost of the works overall is £91,490 plus recoverable VAT.

Onllwyn Community Council has made an application to the Maes Gwyn Wind Farm Fund, which is exclusive to the community of Onllwyn. Our bid has been tabled for consideration at the Assessment Panel scheduled for 25.09.24, and we expect to receive an outcome soon after.”

How will the balance of the project costs be financed?

The £14,000 requested from the Community Minor Projects grant would be used as match funding towards an application to the Maes Gwyn Wind Farm Fund in Onllwyn, valued at £71,490. The remaining £6,000 will be contributed from Onllwyn Community Council reserves.

What are the revenue implications?

The play area falls under the Community Council's All Risks Insurance policy and with the new equipment there will be no change to the custodianship or to the lines of responsibility.

The play area will continue to receive the annual RoSPA Service Engineer's Inspection which will yield a Report on the condition of the apparatus, fencing, furniture and any defects and probabilities of Risk.

The Community Council has a Maintenance budget which will address the servicing needs of wearing parts like shackles, bearings and bushes.

The equipment and safety surfacing carry extended warranties (5 to 25 years against structural failure) and it is envisaged there will be minimum maintenance in the formative years of the play area as construction is very robust (steel components, no wood).

Aggravated wear and tear will be minimal as 2 – 8 year olds create very little in the way of load bearing stress on the equipment (unlike more exuberant teens!!).

Proposal and Financial Impact

5. The application from Onllwyn Community Council complies with the conditions of grant and is entitled to grant support at 70% up to a maximum of £14,000 in accordance with the Minor Projects Grants Scheme and payment be made on receipt of paid invoices together with a copy bank statement.

Integrated Impact Assessment

6. There are no impacts in respect of the obligations to the Council under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No 1) Regulations 2015, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and support via this grant is a positive impact in respect of the Wellbeing and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Valleys Communities Impacts

7. Applications for grant are available to Community Councils across the county borough.

Workforce Impacts

8. There are no workforce impacts.

Legal Impacts

9. Grants are provided in line with the approved scheme criteria.

Risk Management Impacts

10. All grant applications are considered on their own merit and in line with the approved scheme criteria.

Consultation

11. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that Members approve a grant of 70% of actual costs up to a maximum of £14,000 to Onllwyn Community Council.

Reason for Proposed Decision

13. The decision is in compliance with the approved policy and to enable community improvements.

Implementation of Decision

14. The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in period.

List of Background Papers

15. Application from Onllwyn Community Council.

Officer Contact

16. Mr. H. Jones. – Director of Finance
Tel. 01639 763575 - email: h.jones@neath-porttalbot.gov.uk