

Subject: Mile Oak Improvements - Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on the 23rd October 2014

Date of Meeting: 25 November 2014

Report of: Monitoring Officer

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee:
To receive the item referred from the Council for consideration:

Recommendation:

- (1) That the committee be requested to consider having an Improvement Plan for the Mile Oak Recreation Ground play area drawn up in consultation with users of the play area that will demonstrate how investment and refurbishment will be undertaken; and
- (2) That in regard to 2.2 above, the proposals for the Improvement Plan are reported to the committee without undue delay.

COUNCIL

**4.30 pm 23 October 2014
COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillors Fitch (Chair), Barnett, Bennett, Bowden, Brown, Buckley, Carden, Cobb (Deputy Chair), Daniel, Davey, Deane, Duncan, Gilbey, Hamilton, Hawtree, Hyde, Janio, Jarrett, A Kitcat, J Kitcat, Lepper, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Marsh, Meadows, Mears, Mitchell, Morgan, A Norman, K Norman, Peltzer Dunn, Phillips, Pidgeon, Pissaridou, Powell, Robins, Rufus, Shanks, Simson, Smith, Summers, Sykes, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wakefield, Wealls, Wells, West and Wilson.

PART ONE**30. (b) MILE OAK IMPROVEMENTS**

- 30.1. The Mayor stated that the council's petition scheme provided that where a petition secured 1,250 or more signatures it could be debated at a Council meeting. He had been notified of one such petition which had sufficient signatures to warrant a debate and therefore would call on the lead petitioner to present their petition before opening the matter up for debate.
- 30.2. The Mayor noted that there was an amendment from the Labour & Co-operative Group to the recommendation contained in the covering report on the petition, which Councillor Carden would move during the debate.
- 30.3. The Mayor then called on Ms. Soanes to present the petition concerning the need for improvements to the Mile Oak Recreation ground.
- 30.4. Ms. Soanes thanked the Mayor and stated that the petition signed by 1,388 people called on the council to provide suitable and safe lay equipment for young people in the Mile Oak recreation ground so that it was comparable with other play areas in parks across the city. The current provision of equipment was not suitable and was in need of replacement to enable local families to enjoy the park as they had previously to its refurbishment in 2010 which had resulted in the loss of equipment and space.
- 30.5. Councillor Carden then moved an amendment to the recommendation in the report, requesting that the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee should give consideration to having an Improvement Plan for the Mile Oak Recreation Ground and that a report should be brought to the committee without undue delay.
- 30.6. Councillor Robins formally seconded the amendment and suggested that it was time for the council to give the residents of Mile Oak something back and to meet with the users of the park and agree a workable improvement plan.
- 30.7. Councillor West note the comments and stated that he applauded the energy of the action group in bringing the petition forward and noted that the refurbished play area was an early example of the use of play-builder finding that had been available at the time. He also noted that officers had met with the users and he had visited the park recently and that there was a need to recognise that the previously available government funding for improvements to parks across the city was no longer available. The need for improvements and maintenance of parks across the city was recognised and at the last meeting of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee it was agreed to review the Open Spaces Strategy. This work was underway and until it was completed it was going to be difficult to identify any funds or programme for the improvement to parks in the city.
- 30.8. Councillor West stated that he would welcome users of the Mile Oak Recreation Ground meeting with officers to develop an action plan that identified what was needed to improve the play area and even identify potential sources of funding outside of the council which might contribute to the overall improvement plan.

- 30.9. Councillor Hawtree welcomed the initiative of bringing forward the petition and hoped that the group would take up the offer to work with officers and look at how outside funding might be obtained for improvement works to the play area. He fully supported their efforts and hoped that they would continue with their campaign.
- 30.10. Councillor Janio noted that the funding provided in 2010 had not been sufficient to cover the costs of improvements to all parks and that additional funding had been found by the council to ensure improvement across the city could be undertaken. He also noted that the use of the funding had been restricted in regard to the type of provision that should be made and suggested that if outside support could not be found then it would be unlikely that sufficient resources would be available to meet the demands for improvements across the city.
- 30.11. Councillor West noted the comments and thanked the residents for attending the meeting and raising the issue. He stated that there was a need to review the provision across all the open spaces in the city and to take a strategic approach, which meant that the request had to be put in context of the council's financial position. He accepted the amendment that had been put forward but stressed that there was a need to recognise how it would fit into the larger picture but was hoped that an improvement plan could be developed on that basis.
- 30.12. The Mayor noted that an amendment to the recommendation in the report had been moved and put it to the vote which was carried. He then put the recommendations as amended to the vote which were also carried.
- 30.13. **RESOLVED:**
- (3) That the petition be noted and referred to the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee for consideration; and
 - (4) That the committee be requested to consider having an Improvement Plan for the Mile Oak Recreation Ground play area drawn up in consultation with users of the play area that will demonstrate how investment and refurbishment will be undertaken; and
 - (5) That in regard to 2.2 above, the proposals for the Improvement Plan are reported to the committee without undue delay.

