

Annex C. Options for new playpark site, and associated funding for LPC capital projects.

References can be accessed through:

<https://www.leighvillage.org.uk/parish-council/documents/minutes/>

Reference B 1 – minutes of 20 Sept 2016 LPC meeting – para 7.

Reference B 2 – minutes of 15 November 2016 LPC meeting – para 10.

Reference B 3 – minutes of 17 January 2017 LPC meeting – para 12 and 13.

The eventual decision on where to re-site the playpark was anything but straightforward. Reference B 1 details the scale of the issue as seen in Sept 2016. As the single possible option identified at that stage (purchase of land to west of the Village Hall) generated considerable debate¹, residents were encouraged to attend the next LPC meeting at which a wider range of options could be considered. Details of that meeting are at Reference B 2; one key outcome was that the c.71 residents present were unanimous that they wished the playpark to endure. At this stage, siting the playpark on Village Hall land appeared to be a popular option.

LPC carried out risk assessments of the now four firm options, and at its January 2017 meeting (Reference B 3 – para 12) resolved to re-site the playpark via a lease on the Village Hall's wildflower meadow. This site easily scored best in the risk assessment, and also would be achievable at a fraction of the cost compared to the original sole option (purchase of land to the west of the Village Hall).

With the new location agreed, costings could then be properly refined. The eventual total funding required for Phase 1 and 2 (£21.1k + VAT) of the playpark project was generated by a combination of: fundraising; grants; and the setting aside a proportion of the precept for the past 4 years. In order to achieve this latter element, it was decided at the FY 2016-17 budget planning meeting to increase the precept (Reference B 3 – para 13); this had the effect of raising the Band D parish charge by £12.61 to £36.91pa in FY 2017-18 *et seq*. It was calculated that, within each year setting a balanced budget, this would allow LPC to set aside £4,000pa for the playpark project, and thus within 5-6 years establish a fund to cover the costs of Phase 1 and 2 of the playpark project.

However, due to determined fundraising efforts and the successful application for several grants, the sum required for Phase 1 and 2 of the playground project has been fully achieved within 3 years. This means that, with no material increase in the parish precept², for FY 2019-20 there is a c.£3k presently unallocated surplus that can be made available for other projects³.

¹ Due to the 2020 deadline for the move of the playpark, the parish precept would have needed to have been tripled for about three years if no other funding source (eg long term loan) was secured.

² Except for 2% for inflation.

³ The total number of projects currently under consideration by LPC is three. These are: Establishing a Village Green; Phase 3 of the playpark development (partially funded); and Phase 2 of a flood alleviation project (unfunded).