

## **Outdoor Gym for Ashill (Executive Decision)**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To request a grant towards the installation of a small outdoor gym on Ashill Playing Field.

### **Public Interest**

In response to public demand Ashill Parish Council want to install three pieces of outdoor gym equipment on their playing field.

### **Recommendation**

That Members support a grant of £5,167.50 to be awarded to the Parish Council towards their outdoor gym.

### **Background**

Ashill has an excellent playing field facility which is owned and managed by the parish council. The playing field is well used and already includes a tennis court, skate ramp, football pitch, play area and ball court.

A small group of residents approached the parish council with a suggestion to install the outdoor gym equipment because they felt it would benefit a sector of the community that were not currently being served by the playing field facilities, mainly adults that do not wish to take part in team games and particularly older residents that need to develop a more healthy lifestyle.

The group of residents have approached over 80 residents in the parish to establish their views and everyone has said they are supportive and would use the equipment to some extent.

### **Type of equipment proposed**

A small research team made up of 3 residents have explored the options to ascertain what outdoor gym equipment would be best for the village. They have picked the following three pieces of equipment:

- Lat pull down / Shoulder press - This provides 2 different exercises, toning muscles in the upper body. Lifting approximately 30% of the users body weight the machine works the shoulders and arms on one side and the arms and back on the other.
- Recumbent Bike – designed to give the user a cardiovascular workout and improve leg strength and muscle tone. It is ideal as a rehabilitation tool as it keeps the back in a fixed position whilst working the lower body.
- Stand-alone Oblique – this provides gentle cardio activity and helps tone the oblique muscles of the abdomen.

These three items have been chosen because they are easy for people to use, particularly older residents and between them they will provide a decent full body workout.

The group's decision was also informed by a visit to Hamilton Park in Taunton, where an outdoor gym has been in place for a few years. The group used the equipment at Hamilton Park and spoke to members of the public, including a 70 year old man who regularly uses the machines to exercise.

The equipment chosen is the same as that installed in the Taunton Parks, which is robust and meets the appropriate British Safety standard. Further advice was also sought from the relevant officer at Taunton Deane Borough Council with regard to use and ongoing maintenance. The group have also been advised to locate the items near each other so that people using the equipment with a friend can chat whilst exercising.

The parish council propose to locate the equipment close to the tennis courts which are floodlit. The floodlights will also illuminate the outdoor gym equipment which means it can be used in the darker evenings during autumn and winter.

Signage with instructions is provided with the equipment, but to further ensure people feel confident to use it, a local qualified athletics coach will provide some training sessions.

### **Benefit to the community**

The provision of free gym equipment on a public playing field will be beneficial for a number of reasons:

- Easy access to anyone who would not join a gym due to the cost or difficulties with transport.
- Provides an opportunity for gentle exercise outdoors, some people in the village have said that they have been advised by their doctor to develop a healthier lifestyle.
- Additional equipment at the playing field will make the facility more attractive to a wider range of people, as it gives an alternative reason for residents to visit and use the park.
- Gives parents a healthy activity to do whilst they are visiting the park with their children
- Could help with loneliness and mental health issues, as the equipment provides the opportunity for people to meet up with others in a non-threatening environment, whilst doing exercise.

The Parish Council are happy for people living in surrounding villages to use the equipment and will promote the facility through local parish magazines and posters on village notice boards and at the local doctors surgery. They also plan to have a launch event

### **Finance**

The cost of the project is outlined below:

<b>Item / activity</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
Lateral pull down / shoulder press	£3,386
Recumbent bike	£2,066

Oblique	£1,817
Signage with instructions on use	£496
Heras fencing, skip and post installation inspection	£1,090
Rhyno mulch surfacing	£1,480
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£10,335</b>

All the above costs include delivery and installation.

The Parish Council proposes to fund the scheme in the following way:

<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Parish council	Secured	£2,000
SCC Health & Wellbeing Budget (Cllr Vijeh)	Secured	£580
Awards for All grant	Pending	£2,587.50
SSDC	Awaiting decision	<b>£5,167.50</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£10,335.00</b>

The Neighbourhood Development Officer has assessed the grant application and has given it the following score.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Maximum score</b>	<b>Score</b>
A Eligibility	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Yes</b>
B Equalities Impact	7	4
C Need for Project	5	4
D Capacity of Organisation	15	13
E Financial need	7	4
F Innovation	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>28</b>

### **Financial Implications**

The grant of £5,167.50 can be found from Area West Capital budget.

### **Council Plan Implications**

Supporting this project helps address Focus 4 of the SSDC Council Plan:

- Health & Communities – providing free outdoor gym equipment is a good way to encourage residents to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

### **Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

Not applicable

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Rurally based residents, particularly those without use of a car and /or on a low income, find it difficult to access fitness facilities. Free outdoor gym equipment located on the village playing field will give more people the opportunity to take part in healthy activities.

**Background papers: Community grant criteria**

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