

PETITION FOR LIGHTING AT EASTCOTE BOWLING CLUB

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services
Officer Contact	Stuart Hunt, Residents Services
Papers with report	None.

HEADLINES

Summary	This report concerns a valid petition received signed by 63 residents requesting lighting to be installed in Cavendish Park leading from the car park to the bowls club.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: Our People; Our Natural Environment; Strong financial management.
Financial Cost	Estimated costs would be £15,000 to deliver the petitioners' requests.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents', Education and Environmental Services
Relevant Ward(s)	Cavendish

RECOMMENDATION

Meeting with the Petitioners, the Cabinet Member:

1. Listens to their request for lighting to be introduced in Cavendish Park;
2. Notes that the Council, in common with most similar authorities, does not as a general rule introduce artificial lighting into its parks and open spaces, but it is prepared to consider individual cases on their merits;
3. Notes that any measures introduced into one of the Council's green spaces must be acceptable in type, form and layout;
4. Decides whether to grant this request for lighting for the Bowls Club to facilitate their social events, weighing up the justification given for this proposal against the cost to install and the utility & future maintenance costs; and
5. Subject to (4) instructs officers to investigate suitable funding opportunities.

Reasons for recommendations

To allow the Cabinet Member to discuss with petitioners their concerns and, if appropriate, add aspects of their request for further investigation.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Options will be discussed with the petitioners.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. A valid petition was received containing 63 signatures of residents requesting the installation of lighting from Cavendish Car Park to the Bowls Club. Though the club play Bowls during the day, the request for lighting is to enable the clubhouse to be utilised for events, which sometimes finish after dark.
2. The petitioners have raised concerns over the darkness of the footpath to the club. They have raised that they have a number of very elderly and vulnerable club members who find it extremely unsafe. The petitioners have also raised concerns over the personal safety of their members.
3. Cavendish Park is a green space which is owned and maintained by the Council. The Bowls Clubhouse is owned by the Council but is leased to Eastcote Bowls Club. The park is situated off Field End Road, and is immediately adjacent to The Cavendish and the neighbouring tennis courts. The park is open dawn to dusk and has no locked gates.
4. An estimated cost to provide lighting is £15,000, and this would require ongoing utility costs and future maintenance costs.
5. The Cabinet Member may be aware that as a general policy, the Council, in common with many other local authorities, does not have a policy that encourages the widespread introduction of artificial street lighting into green spaces and parks. This can be for a number of reasons including all or some of the following:
 - Artificial lighting can interfere with the visual amenity of the green space - in other words, it introduces something with an 'urban' character into a place which is essentially intended to be more natural;
 - Lighting can have a detrimental effect on the local nature of the scheme, impacting night-dwelling invertebrates and other wildlife, some of which is protected by legal statute;
 - The introduction of lighting brings with it considerable cost and disruption at the installation stage, and an ongoing cost to run and maintain (however, the modern equipment adopted by the Council is far more energy-efficient than older lighting infrastructure);
 - There is a risk that lighting overspill might generate 'light pollution' in nearby homes;

6. Notwithstanding the above, the Council has sensitively introduced some limited lighting in some of its green spaces where appropriate, with each case considered on its own merits and subject to the availability of suitable funding.
7. The Cabinet Member will be aware that although the Council's Chrysalis fund has been used successfully to support such features in parks as new play areas and outdoor gyms, the Council does not use this funding stream to finance lighting in any of its parks.

Financial Implications

This petition requests the installation of lighting at the footpath leading from Cavendish Car Park to the bowls club. The estimated cost of the works including materials, labour, and 10% contingency is £15,000. If the proposal is approved a funding source would need to be identified to cover the costs. There would also be ongoing maintenance and electricity costs which would need to be met from the Highways and Street Lighting budget.

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The Petition Hearing will allow for consideration of petitioners' concerns with the required lighting and possible options.

Consultation carried out or required

None at this stage.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the recommendations to this report and concurs with the financial implications as set out.

Legal

Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received