

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 19 June 2025

Report Title

Children's Playgrounds Programme Phase Two

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Assistant Director Approving Submission of the Report

Polly Hamilton, Assistant Director, Culture, Sport & Tourism

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report details the proposed allocation of capital funding from phase two of the Children's Playgrounds Programme. This phase enables the next five children's playgrounds to be replaced, to the value of £536k, along with an additional £50k Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Ward funding. It also seeks approval to consult with stakeholders (including residents, children and young people and Ward Members) on the detailed designs and plans for each of these play areas.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The proposed sites for phase two of the Children's Playgrounds Programme are endorsed, along with the allocation of £586k.
2. Consultation takes place with stakeholders (including residents, children and young people and Ward Members) on the detailed designs and plans for each of these play areas

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1a Equalities Impact Screening Part A
Appendix 1b Equalities Impact Assessment Part B
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 Inventory of Play Parks

Background Papers

[Children's Playground Programme Phase one officer decision](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Children's Playgrounds Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 Green Spaces manages 37 play areas, and four skate parks. Whilst there is a modest budget to inspect and maintain play areas to keep them safe for users, there is no budget for cyclical replacement of play areas.
- 1.2 The Service historically use a mixture of external funding opportunities and section 106 developer contributions to replace play areas which have reached the end of their operational lifespan, but this type of funding is usually geographically explicit. Some play areas that need to be renewed or replaced are well in excess of their expected operational lifespan but there is no foreseeable funding opportunity to replace them.
- 1.3 At the Council meeting of 28th February 2024, a £919,000 Capital budget allocation was approved for a three-year period from 2024 to 2027 to improve play provision at Thrybergh Country Park, Rother Valley Country Park and at least six additional play areas, which would otherwise not be funded for refurbishment or replacement.
- 1.4 In addition to the improved play provision at Rother Valley Country Park and Thrybergh Country Park, Chestnut Grove was identified as the third play area to be included in phase one.
- 1.5 This report details the next five of the children's playgrounds to be replaced as part of phase two of the programme to the value of £586k which is made up of £536k funding from the approved Capital Improvement Programme and £50k CIL Ward funding to be used for Wath Skate Park.
- 1.6 It also seeks approval to consult with stakeholders (including children and young people, residents and Ward Members) on the detailed designs and plans for each of these play areas.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 All Green Spaces with equipped play sites were assessed for investment through the children's playground programme.
- 2.2 The inventory of Green Spaces play facilities (attached at Appendix 3) was considered and prioritised to identify the next five sites for redevelopment from the funding available through the children's playground programme. These five sites are:
 - Wath Skate Park
 - Rosehill Victoria Park, Rawmarsh
 - Cherry Tree Park, Maltby
 - Ferham Park
 - Packman Way, West Melton
 - *Old Hall, Kimberworth

*The Old Hall Playground is held in reserve should there be enough budget left out of contingency from other play areas, or should Packman Way prove unviable due to excessive cost. The Packman Way playground is built on a former landfill site, specialist investigation is required to determine the level of ground contaminants and subsequent civil works necessary to be able to develop this site.

2.3 Whilst a significant number of sites need investment, prioritisation for works was based on factors such as:

- the current condition of the sites
- prior investments, and known future investments
- geographical spread
- local need

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Options considered were:

- Support the proposal
- Do not support the proposal

3.2 Do not support the proposal:

This is rejected on the grounds that the capital investment needs to be spent promptly in order to avoid increased costs. Not investing would also mean that the funding allocated within the capital programme cannot be spent and residents in the neighbourhoods proposed to benefit from improved playgrounds would have to live with the current substandard play facilities.

3.3 Support the proposal:

The full list of play areas considered is supplied at Appendix 3. A range of play areas was considered for the second phase, however, the play areas for redevelopment were selected on the basis of their best fit with the following criteria:

- no other funding opportunities available
- in areas close to or within deprived communities
- currently either in poor cosmetic state or have lost equipment through damage or wear that cannot be replaced or repaired through available revenue budgets.

offering a geographical spread of investment

3.4 It is recommended that equipment at the following play areas are replaced through this programme:

- Wath Skate Park
- Rosehill Victoria Park, Rawmarsh
- Cherry Tree Park, Maltby
- Ferham Park
- Packman Road, West Melton

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Leader and Deputy Leader have been consulted during the identification of the recommended sites.
- 4.2 Further consultation is planned with Ward Members of the respective sites selected, residents, and children and young people. This will include children and young people with disabilities.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 It is anticipated that the programme will run from December 2025, with the first play area becoming operational, and will be completed in March 2027 with the final play areas being in place.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (Chloe Parker, Head of Finance and Karen Middlebrook, Head of Procurement)

- 6.1 The projects included within this ODR are funded from a combination of approved Capital Funding of £536k from the Children's Playground Programme and in respect of the Wath Skate Park, £50k funding from CIL Ward funding. There will be a revenue saving on repairs and maintenance from this capital funding over the medium term. These savings will be redirected to the repair and maintenance of existing playgrounds across the Borough.

All procurement activity detailed in this report must be procured in compliance with the relevant legislation, dependent on the route to market selected (Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contracts Regulations 2015) as well as the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules. Consideration must be given to the prioritisation of these projects on the forward procurement plan.

7. Legal Advice and Implications (Lesley Tattersall, Property Team Manager (acting))

- 7.1 This report and its recommendations are in line with existing authorities and the Council's constitution. There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications (Rebecca Price, HR Business Partner)

- 8.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 Children having access to safe outdoor space is important for their physical and emotional wellbeing. It is also important that spaces are within local

communities to reduce cost for families in travelling to locations. It is positive that steps are being undertaken to upkeep play areas.

- 9.2 The closure of a play area for any significant period of time, especially during finer weather, will have an impact on children who would usually access the resource however it is anticipated that this can be mitigated against with good communication from the outset with the community local to the play area, as well as advanced engagement with the Outreach and Engagement Teams who will be able to consider any alternatives to their resources to support the closure of the play area, ensuring little impact on children.
- 9.3 With sufficient notice and information of when the work is planned to take place, wider services will be able to consider additional support.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The proposals will positively benefit the development of children within the communities where they are located. Although equipment is required to 'stretch' children to help them develop it is recognised that accessibility for all children is not the same and some equipment will be provided for those children with specific accessibility needs.
- 10.2 The adopted Green Spaces Strategy sets out that all homes should ideally be within 400m (a five-minute walk) of an equipped play area. It is also incumbent that these play areas should be safe, inviting, with good play value and include equipment for children and young people of varying ages and abilities.
- 10.3 A Part A – Equality Screening Assessment and Part B – Equality Analysis have both been completed and are attached as appendices 1a and 1b.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment has been completed for this programme and can be found at Appendix 2.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1. All play areas contained within this report are within Council ownership and therefore there are no implications for partners as part of this programme.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The potential for inflationary increases in the provision of equipment over the installation period. For this reason, a contingency fund has been identified which, if not required will be used to improve a further play area as part of the programme. This will increase the number of play areas for the whole scheme from eight to nine.

14. Accountable Officers

Zoe Oxley, Head of Business Operations & Transformation

Jon Hinchliffe, Parks & Open Spaces Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.

Report Author: Zoe Oxley, Head of Operations & Business Transformation

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