

## Leisure & Amenities Committee

### Play Area Renewal

<b>1</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>
1.1	To propose options for play renewal priorities in 2022-23.
<b>2</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
2.1	Residents in West Swindon are well served by a wide choice of local play areas. The Parish Council has 20 play areas some of which have multiple parts on the site e.g. toddler play area, youth play area, kickabout.
2.2	<p>Considerations for renewal and refurbishment include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life span of existing equipment</li> <li>• Play value</li> <li>• Likelihood of ongoing and future repairs</li> <li>• Local needs</li> </ul>
2.3	The Parish Council has already completed significant refurbishment on 11 out of 20 play areas. The programme has been proposed on the basis of maintenance and repair required for those sites alongside the play value. There are a small number of play areas that require consideration for a significant refurbishment over the next 12-24 months.
<b>3</b>	<b>PLAY REFURBISHMENT PROPOSALS</b>
3.1	<p><b>Shaw Ridge Play Area:</b> The landscaping on Shaw Ridge has typically made Shaw Ridge play area a challenge. The equipment at the top by the footpath can get very muddy due to poor drainage and presence of natural springs.</p> <p>Remedial work has been undertaken on the climbing wall this year. The swing, slide, spinner and fitness equipment are generally functional. The equipment on the stepped areas (roundabout &amp; surfboard) have a deteriorating surface and the timber surrounds are rotten. The play area and fitness equipment is very popular, particularly with walkers and families on the school run.</p> <p><u>Considerations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaw Ridge Play Area is a equally positioned between Eastleaze field, Tumpy Field and Camden Close play areas.</li> <li>• The current position may be advantageous as it sits at a cross-section of pathways but it may not be the most cost effective place for a new play area.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is typically wet so grounds work and drainage would be need to be part of the design. Grounds work from previous equipment remains on the site and might require removal.</li> <li>• A rubber mulch surface would be recommended – these considerations would make the overall design costly.</li> <li>• The Committee could propose replacement of the stepped areas as a part refurbishment.</li> <li>• The play area could be reduced in size with one or two feature pieces rather than multiple elements.</li> </ul>
3.3	<p><b>Plattes Close</b></p> <p>Plattes Close toddler play area has pieces of equipment that are all nearing the end of repairable life. This includes the train engine and carriage and the swing. This play area also has been plagued with anti social behaviour from older youths congregating in the toddler space.</p> <p><u>Considerations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This play area is very close to residential properties. It could be removed altogether. Tumpy field and Elm Ridge play areas are a short walk away.</li> <li>• The play area could be reduced in size with one or two feature pieces rather than multiple elements.</li> <li>• Any new play area pieces would need to design out opportunities for older young people to congregate.</li> </ul>
3.4	<p><b>Bess Road</b></p> <p>We have had local resident requests for a refurbishment of the Bess Road kickabout space. This is concrete area with a single goal end. The surface is breaking up in places but is still useable. There is space to install a double ended kickabout area which would open up opportunities for team game play. The other play elements at Bess Road are in general good order.</p> <p><u>Considerations</u></p> <p>This play area is close to residential properties so encouraging greater use of ball games might create a noise concern. There is room for a good sized well fitted kickabout area in a neighbourhood where there are few alternatives.</p>
3.5	<p><b>Whitehill Park</b></p> <p>Whitehill Park is a very popular play area in the warmer months as it is close proximity to a school. Residents also have Shelfinch and Bloomsbury play areas nearby. There is a mix of equipment at Whitehill park from different installations. The newer equipment is showing greater signs of wear than the older pieces.</p>

	<p><u>Considerations</u></p> <p>This play area is functional however there are single pieces that need attention. As equipment has a mixed life span on this site, it would make sense to replace individual pieces over time. The double swing is ready to be replaced currently.</p> <p>The multi-play unit could be the next item for replacement.</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>
4.1	West Swindon Parish Council must maintain its play areas. Given the number of play areas within the Parish, there could be a strategy to rationalize the number of play areas over time as they cease to be maintainable, however, public opinion is usually quite vocal against losing a play area.
<b>5.</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
5.1	The annual Play Renewal Budget has been set at £91,000. Play refurbishments vary in cost and mostly depend on whether grounds works or new flooring is required.
5.2	Expectations on likely costs for the play areas proposed are as follows  Shaw Ridge: c. £40-90,000 depending on the scale and size. Plattes Close c. £30,000 for similar sized full replacement Bess Road c. £16,000 resurfacing + £20-25,000 new goal ends Whitehill Park c. £15-£20,000 for a multi play unit depending on size
<b>6</b>	<b>FINANCIAL &amp; OTHER IMPLICATIONS</b>
6.1	The Parish Council has budgeted for play renewal. Over time all play areas age and deteriorate and demographics may change. The play area sites identified in this report are those that require a decision on the future maintenance and refurbishment over the next 12-24 months based on the current condition.
<b>7.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
7.1	That the Committee notes the information in this report.
7.2	That the Committee considers a recommendation that determines how the Play Renewal budget will be allocated in 2022-23.

Paula Harrison,  
Parish Manager