
Report To: Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee

Date: 14 October 2024

Contact Officer: Paula Harrison

Subject: Play Options Update

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee with information to consider for future play options for Shaw Ridge Linear Park

2. PLAY SPACES

- 2.1 West Swindon Parish Council maintains 21 play areas and skatepark/wheels track. Within some play areas there are two to three sites including toddler play, youth play and ball play/kickabouts. All of the play areas provide a mix of equipment types and all could be considered to be typical in terms of types of equipment on offer.
- 2.2 Key considerations for the refurbishment and replacement of play equipment has been suitability for the space, ease of maintenance and repair, resistance to vandalism, accessibility and play value. The budget will be the key restriction for the scope of refurbishment. For the Shaw Ridge site, a key variable could be to change the play surface, review the location and focus on natural materials. Earlier discussions have highlighted existing considerations regarding volume of materials underground and presence of natural springs.
- 2.3 Interesting seating and different play materials can make a difference.

3. SHAW RIDGE LINEAR PARK

- 3.1 This Committee has expressed interest in looking at alternative models for play for Shaw Ridge play area which is in the mid section of the park. The existing play area has a basket swing, slide, rotator, climbing rock, tyre swing, surf springers and roundabout. There is also some gym equipment.
- 3.1 Often, non traditional play areas are created within new development projects or commercial settings. To choose something different, the Council could consider a different type of surface covering e.g. sand/carpet, different play materials e.g. wood/stone/sand and non traditional play equipment. Natural play types are an option and would be different to other play areas in West Swindon. Examples are

St Michaels Park, Cirencester *Touchwood Play*



Cherry Lane Adventure Park *Timotay Playscapes*



Chorleywood Parish Council *Wildwood UK*



Denewood Academy – SEN Playground – *ESP Play*



Playquest Adventure Play



4. PLAY TENDER PROCESS:

- 4.1 It is common practice to agree a budget and to circulate the proposal for a play area on Contract Finder. Play companies will respond accordingly. The benefit of setting a budget is that it creates a realistic submission on a comparable basis to consider. The preferred supplier will be based on a scoring system judging reliability, suitability and play value.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- 5.1 The Parish Council's play budget is £81,000 per annum. In 2023/24, there was a £31,965.00 underspend which has been allocated in 2024/25 for play maintenance. It is possible to consider combining two year's budgets e.g. 2024/25 and 2025/26.

6. RECOMMENDATION:

- 6.1 It is recommended that Councillors consider the information in this report and agree the next steps for Shaw Ridge Play Area

Paula Harrison Parish Manager/Clerk