

Title of Report:	Play Park Action Plan – Rugby Avenue
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development
Date of Meeting:	20th October 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee YES/NO	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2026-31)	
Strategic Theme	P1 Engaging and Communicating with our Customers P2 Empowering and Supporting our People
Outcome	Providing opportunities to influence council services Citizens with improved physical and mental health and wellbeing
Lead Officer	Head of Sport & Wellbeing

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	Unknown

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Officer time
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	
Staffing Costs	£1,200 (6 days of existing staff time averaged at £200 p.a.)

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	YES/NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	YES/NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Council approval to progress to Stage 1 of the Capital Project framework – Scoping, Feasibility & OBC, for a destination play park at Rugby Avenue in Coleraine.

2.0 **Background**

- 2.1 In October 2020 the Play Strategy for 2020-25 was adopted by Council with key recommendations summarised in an Action Plan designed to act as a tool to prioritise projects for future investment in fixed play. All proposed investments in play to be the subject of proportionate business cases and investment decision making in compliance with Council's capital project procedures and delegated approvals.
- 2.2 In February of 2024 a mid-term review of the strategy highlighted progress to date on the recommendations contained within the Action Plan and commentary where progress had yet to be made.
- 2.3 Recommendations within the mid-term Play review and approved by Council included;
- *The indicative provision suggested of £0.5m per year should be earmarked for planned preventative repair and maintenance of play parks within the Capital Programme;*
 - *The Mid Term update report should be used to revisit and inform Council's prioritised list of capital projects for play provision. The projects ... that have not been progressed could then be progressed to business case subject to affordability and Committee/Council approval;*
- 2.4 Officers have been progressing with preventative repair and maintenance of Council's play parks which fall within the capital programme allocation and inspection report recommendations for prioritisation.

3.0 **Next Steps**

- 3.1 There are recommendations within the strategy for future investment which officers feel now need to be considered based on destination play park provision in the town of Coleraine.
- *Enhancement of Existing Play Parks: Rugby Avenue, Coleraine to destination standard.*
- 3.2 **Enhancement of Existing Play Parks: Rugby Avenue, Coleraine to destination standard** – Rugby Avenue Play Park had been listed for improvement on the annual preventative and repair programme for 2025/26 and 26/27. Progress has been hindered to date due to a request by the Education Authority to seek additional land at Rugby Avenue for an extension to the Sandelford School. The land requested includes an area where the existing play park is located. In recent weeks the EA has confirmed its desire to progress with this request but as yet officers await formal confirmation before being able to bring a report back to Council for decision. Following discussion with council officers as to what an alternate layout at Rugby Avenue might look like if land was released, the EA has provided indicative plans (Annex A). These plans also reflect current strategic recommendations within the Play & Pitch Action plans including “develop a multi-sport synthetic training area at Rugby Avenue Playing Fields” and more recent feedback from consultation undertaken as part of the Coleraine Future Town Fund programme.

- 3.3 Contained within the EA draft plan is a destination / accessible play park space which is comparable in size with other accessible play parks in the borough and also includes Changing Places accommodation and additional parking spaces to meet the needs of disabled users. Early discussions with the EA acknowledge that the proximity of an accessible play park next to Sandelford would bring additional benefits to the pupils and increased car parking spaces might also allow for overflow parking for Sandelford staff during the week when public use of the wider Rugby Avenue site would be reduced. Such an arrangement would require consideration of a potential financial agreement between EA and Council in order for this to be facilitated.

4.0 Option(s)

- 4.1 **Enhancement of Rugby Avenue Play Park into a destination accessible play park** – while Council has yet to decide on the asset transfer of land at Rugby Avenue, officers would wish to consider 3 options for further development;
- Replacement of the existing play park “like for like” pending an outcome of the EA proposal and the play park having to be relocated. **OR**
 - Enhancement of the existing play park to a destination play park should the EA proposal fall. **OR**
 - Relocation of the play park to a new location at Rugby Avenue in the expectation that the EA proposal proceeds. This relocation to consider the area noted in Annex A as the best option.

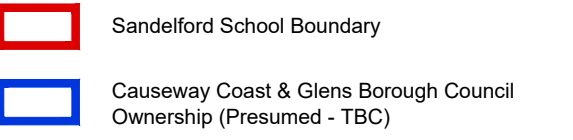
5.0 Affordability

- 5.1 Any further report on this project will include consideration of affordability within the Council's capital programme, external funding opportunities and further discussions with the EA on any financial agreement if land transfer for the extension of Sandelford School is approved by Council. For example;
- Play Parks has an annual capital allocation of £0.5m. If no external funding opportunities arise this project could be considered affordable within the current annual allocation – split over a two year period.
 - Officers have engaged with the Coleraine Future Town Fund team to highlight the strength of the project as a potential funding opportunity for the benefit of Coleraine Town, which reflects the strategic investment priority – “Health & Wellbeing for all”.
 - If the EA proposal is adopted by Council it is expected that some level of financial contribution will be received by Council to compensate for the loss of land and necessary reinstatement of a play park in an alternate location at the site.

6.0 Recommendation(s)

- 6.1 Members are asked to consider the content of this report and recommend to Full Council that officers progress work to Stage 1 of the Capital Project framework – Scoping, Feasibility & OBC, for a destination play park at Rugby Avenue in Coleraine.

Ref No: 577403



job title
Sandelford School

date
Feb 2026
scale

Drawing number
Sandelford-P-01D