

Council Prioritised Play Park Projects	10th October 2017
To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Decision	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health
Lead Officer	Head of Sport & Wellbeing
Cost: (If applicable)	N/A

The purpose of this report is to consider the next steps in relation to the proposed play parks in Aghadowey and Limavady.

Background

On 28th February 2017 Council agreed to prioritise a list of 10 capital projects. In compliance with stage one of the Council's four-stage capital project management process, (attached at Appendix 1) the next stage for each project will be the development of an outline business case (OBC).

Two of these projects relate to play parks as follows:

- Priority 1: Limavady Accessible Play Park
- Priority 7 (shared): Aghadowey Play Park

Concurrent with this capital planning process Council has commissioned Playboard to undertake a Play Audit and Play Strategy (including investment priorities) for the Borough. This work is approaching the end of the audit phase and Council will soon have the opportunity to set some population and spatial parameters for the future investment priorities for play facilities in the form of a Play Investment Strategy. In the absence of these agreed parameters and a Play Investment Strategy there is a policy gap that will have a negative impact (to different extents) on the need sections of the business cases for these two projects.

Limavady Accessible Play Park

The emerging findings from the Play Audit show that Limavady has a population of 12,047 individuals residing within 4,766 households. At present fixed play provision is primarily located to the north-west of the town at Alexander Road, Blackburn Path and Roe Mill Road and is rated low to fair in terms of play value.

In addition to the quality issues identified with the existing fixed play areas, the review of underlying population undertaken as part of the audit process has identified a need for additional fixed play provision within Limavady town. Assessment of radial coverage from existing fixed play provision shows that approximately 632 children and young people (aged 0 to 14 years) reside outside the catchment areas, primarily within the south east area of the town.

Application of any of the proposed population and spatial parameters for the prioritisation of play provision identify a clear residual, proven need for investment in additional fixed play infrastructure in Limavady town. The draft report recommends that Council should initiate a land search to identify potential sites for the development of a new, high value play area within Limavady with a focus on the identified gap areas [south east of the town]. Dependent on the final location and designation of the play area (local or destination scale) additional fixed play provision [or upgrades] may be required within the wider Limavady area.

The draft report recommends that prior to any action being taken by Council additional localised community consultation should take place to ensure that communities have an opportunity to make their views known on the recommendation or to put forward an alternative proposal.

It is therefore apparent that, even in light of an incomplete Play Strategy, a need can be clearly articulated for a new play park facility in Limavady. It should be noted that consultation undertaken as part of the play strategy development process has identified a particular need for inclusive fixed play provision within the Limavady area. This need should be taken into consideration in any future fixed play development.

Aghadowey Play Park

The townland of Aghadowey has a predominantly dispersed rural population base with no significant settlement formations.

The overall small area which contains Aghadowey townland has 99 children and young people aged 0 to 14 residing within it, however a significant proportion reside outside of the townland area.

From the work undertaken to date on the Play Audit and Strategy, and based on proposed population and spatial parameters there is little proven need for a fixed play facility within Aghadowey townland. Following discussion at DEA workshops undertaken as part of the play strategy process, PlayBoard have agreed to conduct a more detailed analysis of the Aghadowey area to include consideration of fixed play provision within the wider locale and its impact on the townland alongside review of consultation responses to identify if a need has been identified at community level.

The Council's future decision on play investment criteria within a Play Strategy will have a strong influence on the prospect of an identification of need that could withstand business case scrutiny. Based on this, the Council's completion and endorsement of a Play Strategy is critical to the development of a robust business case appraisal for this project.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

1. Accept the convincing evidence from the Draft Play Audit and Strategy work that there is need for a new play park in Limavady and commission officers to undertake the necessary options appraisals and consultations for the completion of an OBC.
2. Agree to delay the development of an OBC for a possible play park in Aghadowey until the Council has agreed a Play Strategy and associated investment priorities.

Key Decision Points

Note - Process must always be proportional to the value of the Project

Stage 1 -
Scoping, Feasibility
& OBC

Stage 2 -
Procurement & FBC

Stage 3 -
Construction Contract
Management

Stage 4 -
Operations Contract
Management

- **Approval Gateway for Stage (1) work:** to undertake proportional Scoping, Feasibility and OBC Work (£ usually circa 1% total capital cost estimate and less for very large projects)
- **Approval Gateway for Stage (2) work:** approve OBC, complete Procurement to Final Tender Report and produce Final Business Case (£ usually circa 2% - 3% of total capital cost estimate and less for very large projects)
- **Approval Gateway for Stage (3) work:** approve / appoint winning tenderer, sign contract and manage construction (£ up to 110% of total capital cost estimate)
- **Approval Gateway for Stage (4) work:** approve handover of asset into service and manage operations.
- **Approval Gateway for Stage (5) work:** Benefits Realisation & Ongoing monitoring and reporting