
PLAYSPACE ROLLING PROGRAMME 2003/2004

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with details of the Playspace Rolling Programme for 2003/4.
- 1.2 Prior to refurbishment of the identified playspaces, Rochford District Council will seek the view of each of the Parish Councils on whether they would be prepared to consider transfer of the playspace to them for management and maintenance purposes.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A survey of all playspaces was carried out in July 2002, and has now been updated to re-prioritise the list of playspaces. A summary of this update is appended.
- 2.2 In the mid 1980's, eight large wooden multiplay units were installed at eight different sites. These units are approaching the end of their useful life and the programme has been affected by the need to deal with these in particular. Sites with these multi-play units have increased health and safety issues and hence these sites have risen up the priority list.
- 2.3 The proposal sites for the 2003/4 programme are for Great Wakering High Street and Ashingdon Road, Rochford.

3 PROGRAMME FOR 2003/4

3.1 First Priority – High Street, Great Wakering

- 3.1.1 This site was identified as the next priority in July 2002. Further deterioration of the multi-play unit requires that this be replaced or requires more maintenance. There is an opportunity to provide skateboarding facilities at this location, which would address the needs of the older age group. This would require increased maintenance of the infant play equipment at this stage, and reconsideration of Great Wakering Playspace in the future year.
- 3.1.2 In 2002/3 Great Wakering Parish Council contacted Officers with regard to provision of skateboarding facilities on the Recreation Ground. With the priority now on Great Wakering, there is an opportunity to consider whether skateboarding should be provided at this location, with a potential contribution

from Great Wakering Parish Council of between £5-10,000, depending on the size of facility that is developed.

- 3.1.3 Should skateboarding be the chosen option, then a public consultation will be required to be undertaken by Rochford District Council and Great Wakering Parish Council on the additional facility on the Recreation Ground. Consultation will be undertaken when the nature of the existing equipment is substantially changed.

3.2 Ashingdon Road, Rochford

- 3.2.1 This is a multi-age playspace. Some of the equipment has already had to be removed due to advanced state of deterioration. Other equipment is severely worn and there are health and safety issues that need to be addressed.
- 3.2.2 Requests were received for skateboarding in Ashingdon and this issue was considered by Ashingdon Parish Council in 2002. However, following public consultation, the Parish Council decided not to pursue this option and in the circumstances, it is felt it would not be opportune to reconsider this as a replacement for all or part of the play equipment.

4 REFURBISHMENT STANDARDS

- 4.1 All new equipment will now be constructed in steel to prevent the problems that have been occurring with arson attempts on wooden equipment. All equipment is manufactured to current British and European Standards and has the relevant safety surface and appropriate safe spacing. All playspaces are fenced with galvanised hoop topped fencing and self-closing gates to keep dogs out.

5 PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

- 5.1 In 2002, as part of the procurement of playspaces, it was decided to try a different approach in seeking competitive tenders from contractors. A brief was prepared that defined the relative play value, age range, type of equipment and location. Tenderers were asked to provide a design to meet the budget that had been set. This process fits in with the Procurement Strategy produced and agreed in 2001, by reducing the risk of cost overrun, by defining the budget and optimising the use of staff resources, using the expertise of the tenderers to design the schemes.
- 5.2 The results for 2002 were very encouraging, with all manufacturers supplying very detailed, competitive schemes to the value indicated. This meant that selection of a scheme was based on the quality of proposal, rather than on cost. This approach also ensured that the very best design skills were provided to these schemes, and was in accordance with the Council's Procurement Strategy dated October 2001.

- 5.3 It is proposed that a similar approach be used for the 2003/4 programme, with the cost of each scheme being set at £25,000. Should skateboarding be the chosen option for Great Wakering, then the tender figure would include the Parish Council's contribution.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The provision of play equipment can contribute to the reduction in crime and disorder issues.
- 6.2 All playspaces require an element of passive surveillance / regular passer-by etc. to improve the security of children using the playspaces.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Refurbishment of a playspace does improve the local environment of the area and contributes to the well-being of families within the area, by providing safe areas of play.
- 7.2 It encourages children and young people into the experience of quality play areas and also contributes to improved health and quality of life issues.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 A sum of £50,000 has been set aside in the Capital Programme as part of the Rolling Programme on Playspace Refurbishment. The limit for the tenders will be set at this figure.
- 8.2 Provision of fencing and maintenance of playspaces is funded through revenue programmes and not the capital programme.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Council has a legal obligation when providing play facilities to ensure they are in a safe condition. This rolling programme contributes to providing safe playspaces. As a back up to the normal inspection and maintenance of playspaces, a risk assessment is carried out annually by the National Playing Fields Association on all playspaces.

10 PARISH IMPLCIATIONS

- 10.1 Before refurbishment of the playspaces, the Parish Councils will be invited to take on the management and maintenance of the playspace within their Parish. In this case, this will be Great Wakering and Ashingdon Parish Councils.
- 10.2 Should Members so decide, it is felt that Great Wakering Parish Council should also be approached to see whether they are prepared to contribute towards the cost of provision of skateboarding in the High Street, Great Wakering, as skateboarding facilities generally are more expensive than other play equipment.

11 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) That priority be given to Great Wakering and Ashingdon play areas for the 2003/4 Rolling Programme.
 - (2) That, subject to Members' views, the play area at Great Wakering should incorporate skateboarding, and the Parish Council should be approached to see whether they are prepared to contribute to the scheme and carry out the necessary public consultation.
 - (3) That, prior to refurbishment, Officers seek Parish Councils' views on taking on the transfer of the playspace to the Parish Council.
 - (4) That, dependent on the responses to (2) and (3) above, Officers report back to this Committee at the first available date outlining the way forward. (CD(F&ES))

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Background Papers:

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APPENDIX

PLAYSPACE SITE VISIT SURVEY
JULY 2002 - REVISED MAY 2003

Site	Survey	Priority
	<p align="center">Annual Risk Assessment by NPFA</p> <p align="center"><i>Majority sites fenced. Signage, general maintenance and woodchips etc. picked up by Parks Officer/Serviceteam Grounds Maintenance</i></p>	<p align="center">High Medium Low</p>
Seaview Drive Gt.Wakering	Metal unit/timber structure – o.k.. No space for other equipment but could consider springy. Fairly quiet although ball games a problem – signage could be improved – no seat.	L
Morrins Close Gt. Wakering	Youth playspace. Basketball. Goal post for 5-a-side installed in 2002. Buffer zone in place with planting growing well. Built in 2001	L
Glebe Close Gt.Wakering	Toddler playspace. Planting along fence trimmed regularly, seat and bins – locked by residents. Built in 2001	L
Conway Avenue Gt. Wakering	Toddler playspace – additional springy could be provided. Seat/bin in place. Locked at night (some problems with locking times)	L
High Street Gt. Wakering	Kicking wall, basketball area,. Multi-activity kit – section missing multiplay / damaged surface area – needs replacement. Springy ok. Rubber surface replaced 2001 damaged.	H (1)
Barling Lt.Wakering	Generally toddler – multiplay, swings, springy. Restained/repainted in 2002. Bin/seat.	L
Warwick Drive Rochford	Teenage & toddler. Teenshelter, basketball. Social problems.. Additional works required to prevent football within the playspace as this is a nuisance to the neighbours.	L
Doggetts Rochford	All new kit in 2000/1– good site – mixed usage – 5-11years. Some tree planting.	L
Ashingdon Rd. Rochford	Cantilever swing removed due to rot. Multiplay needs replacement, roundabout wearing out – possible finger trap, safety issues on swing – needs general refurbishment.	H (2)
Rowan Way Canewdon	No fence – one swing only. Playspace provided at Althorne Way Recreation Ground.	L

Site	Survey	Priority High Medium Low
Althorne Way Canewdon	Skateboard park. Toddler unit refurbished 2001. Woodchip replaced, aerial runway and swings. 2 new seats .	L
Clements Hall Hawkwell	Swings need rubber surface when refurbished. Generally toddler usage. Seats/bins. Has space for more equipment, generally good condition..	L
Hawkwell Common Hawkwell	Multiplay replaced Well used site Complete refurbishment 2002/03.	L
Betts Wood Hockley	Aerial runway – some rot starting and wear on net. Needs new fence to front.	M
Hockley Woods Hockley	Pathway needs improvement. Play equipment replaced in 2002/03	L
Pooles Lane Hullbridge	Skateboard and new 5-a-side / basketball. Playspace repainted – possible springy's / picnic tables – liaising with Parish. Well used.	L
Rawreth Lane Rawreth	Re-painted 2002, fencing renewed, unit retained. Possible seat/bin. Possible additional trees.	L
Sweyne Park Rayleigh	Fencing ok – gate spring needs adjustment. Land drainage completed. Repainted 2002, toddler, junior & senior areas and kicking wall. Access pathway needs to be in stone possibly extending to kicking wall.	L
Causton Way Rayleigh	Repainted meets requirements – gate locked 7pm/dusk by local resident.	L
Fairview Rayleigh	Basketball, repainted playspace with new fencing. Multikit/roundabout need upgrading within next 2 years. Swings need safety surface upgrading in near future. Picnic area tables/seats need replacement.	M-H (4)

Site	Survey	Priority High, Med, Low
Hartford Close Rayleigh	Wetpour repaired. Kit good repainted – new 3 years. Adjacent green space totally fenced.	L
Boston Avenue Rayleigh	Fencing needs replacement. – too low. Recently repainted, needs new safety surface in future. Possible springy and seat.	M
St. John Fisher Rayleigh	Repainted recently – fencing – gate post leaning and bent railing. Needs refurbishment within 5 years. Minor safety surface issues.	L
Elsenham Court Rayleigh	Upgraded 2001/02	L
Fyfield Path Rayleigh	Upgraded 2001/02	L
Bedford Close Rayleigh	History of social problems area fenced. Roundabout replaced in 2002.	L
Grove Road Rayleigh	Social problems - arson wooden units. Nuisance being monitored.. New fencing installed, 2002/3. Repainted existing equipment short term. Equipment needs upgrading but await monitoring reports and reconsider next year.	M – H (3)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME WORKS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

GREAT WAKERING

ASHINGDON