

## **PLAYSPACE ROLLING PROGRAMME 2006/07 AND 2007/08**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' approval to the list of sites to be included in the rolling programme of play space refurbishment in 2006/07.
- 1.2 This report also seeks approval to the playspace rolling programme for 2007/08 to allow time for grant funding to be sought by the Parish Councils in line with the revised Playspace Policy, which is the subject of the previous item on this agenda.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 An annual programme for refurbishment of playspaces is included in the Council's Capital programme. This programme has been ongoing since 1999, and is ensuring that playspaces are kept safe and up to date in terms of play equipment.
- 2.2 The programme would normally replace two playspaces per year.
- 2.3 The programme in 2004/05 was used to replace six multi-play units at six different sites, due to the need to replace these units at the same time because they were at the end of their useful life, all having been installed in the late 1980s.

### **3 Programmes for 2006/07 and 2007/08**

- 3.1 In dealing with the problems at Sutton Court Drive as part of a Playspace Sub-Committee review in 2005/06, improvements were identified at Sutton Court Drive which impact on the 2006/07 programme. An enclosed ball game area to provide better protection to neighbouring properties is programmed costing a total of £35,000. Rochford Parish Council agreed to seek, and has now obtained grant funding in the sum of £17,500 as their contribution to this scheme. Therefore the remaining programme will be based on a total of £32,500, i.e. the £50,000 budget less the £17,500 for this project. It is important to agree this element of the programme to allow the work to progress and help reduce the nuisance being experienced by the neighbours of this playspace in particular.

3.2 Schemes identified for 2006/07 are as follows:-

<b>Site No.</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Reason</b>
RDC028	Sutton Court / Warwick Drive	Rochford	Ongoing project from 2005/06 playspace Sub Committee review of problems at this site  Grant funding for 50% of the works already obtained.
RDC 009	Doggetts Close	Rochford	Replace Arial Runway
RDC026	Sweyne Park	Rayleigh	Replace helter Skelter
RDC007	Clements Hall	Hawkwell	Replace junior multiplay unit

3.3 Sites identified for 2007/08 are as follows:

<b>Site No.</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Reason</b>
RDC005	Althorne Way	Canewdon	Replace Scales of Justice swing and Update Ariel Runway
RDC 017	Hockley Woods	Hockley	Additional Infant / Junior equipment
RDC003	Bedford Close	Rayleigh	Update / renew site
RDC024	Boston Avenue	Rayleigh	Re-fence Site and update equipmet

**Procurement**

- 3.4 As in previous years it is intended to procure these projects by providing the contractors with a list of requirements to be met, play value, age range, general indication of type of equipment, other technical requirements and budget and seek their proposed design within these constraints.
- 3.5 This has proved very successful, and has provided officers the opportunity to consider the various proposals and choose the best value and innovative design, whilst controlling the actual budget spend.

**4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Operationally play spaces are a high risk area of service that is managed by a very strict inspection and repair regime. All equipment is inspected twice weekly and minor repairs are carried out as required. An annual safety audit is carried out by an independent inspector to ensure that safety is paramount.
- 4.2 Should repairs take longer equipment is closed and taken out of service until totally safe again.
- 4.3 However equipment does reach the end of its useful life, and this programme ensures that equipment is replaced on a regular basis to ensure safety and keep playspaces up to date and provide good play provision.

**5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The provision of play equipment in playspaces is a positive means of encouraging children to play and through this learn positive society values.

**6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 A sum of £50,000 has been set aside in the Council's Capital budget for 2006/07 and this programme will be managed to keep within this budget.
- 6.2 The bidding for grant funding for up to 50% of the cost will enable the Council to increase the range of improvements across the District, and improve the scope of play for children.
- 6.3 As the range of funding available as part of the Government's targeting of the Youth Agenda becomes more clear then the Rolling Programme funding will provide the match funding often required as part of the bidding process.
- 6.4 New equipment will cost £168 per unit in inspection and minor maintenance costs per year. There is one new item in the programme for 2006/07, the ball games area at Sutton Court Drive.

**7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Council has a legal obligation to ensure facilities provided are safe. This rolling programme actively supports this obligation. Additional annual inspections are carried out by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) to support the inspection regime.

**8 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The parishes in which these playspaces are situated are listed in the site table in paragraph 3.2. Officers will work with the Parish Councils to identify and bid for grant funding to support and possibly increase the programme.

**9 RECOMMENDATION**

9.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) To agree the programme of playspace refurbishments for 2006/07 as set out in paragraph 3.2
- (2) To agree the programme of playspace refurbishments for 2007/08 as set out in paragraph 3.3, and for officers to work with the Parish Councils to seek Grant Funding to support the programme.

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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