

Leisure & Recreation Committee

Report: Trowbridge Close Play Area Refurbishment

Date: 3rd September 2026

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1. Purpose of Report

To present Members with a proposal for the refurbishment of Trowbridge Close Play Area and seek the Committee's endorsement of the preferred scheme for referral to Full Council for approval.

2. Background

The existing play area contains a number of ageing items, including a trail unit and three springers. Refurbishment is proposed to replace this equipment, improve the range and play value of the site, and provide a more attractive and durable facility for local children.

A proposal and quotation have been obtained from a suitably experienced play-area contractor. The contractor's identity has been anonymised for the purposes of this report and is referred to as Bidder A.

3. Proposed Scheme

Bidder A has proposed removing the existing trail unit and three springers and installing:

- A junior timber clamber stack;
- A multi-user team swing;
- A maze rocker;
- A low-level rolling log;
- A pet maze play panel;
- A formula racing play panel;
- Grass-mat impact-absorbing surfacing; and
- An independent post-installation inspection.

The proposed equipment would provide a mixture of climbing, balancing, swinging, sensory, imaginative and social play opportunities. The scheme includes equipment suitable for different ages and abilities, including a team swing capable of being used by several children at the same time.

4. Materials and Durability

In most circumstances, officers would not ordinarily recommend timber equipment due to its greater susceptibility to deterioration where structural posts are installed directly into the ground.

However, the proposed combination of timber equipment with steel feet is considered appropriate for this location. The timber elements would fit well with the

character and setting of Trowbridge Close, while the steel feet would prevent the main timber supports from coming into direct contact with the ground.

This should reduce exposure to ground moisture and decay at the most vulnerable points, extend the anticipated service life of the equipment and reduce the likelihood of premature replacement. The steel feet are offered with a ten-year warranty.

The use of grass-mat surfacing would also retain the relatively natural appearance of the site while providing the necessary impact-absorbing surface beneath the equipment.

5. Financial Implications

Bidder A's quotation is summarised below:

Element	Cost
Preliminaries, fencing and plant	£1,032.52
Removal of existing equipment	£948.51
New play equipment and delivery	£14,215.73
Grass-mat safety surfacing	£3,301.49
Independent post-installation inspection	£494.58
Total	£19,992.83

It is proposed that the expenditure be allocated against the Council's existing Public Works Loan Board funding for play-area improvements.

Approx current PWLB balance - £105,000

As the use of the PWLB funding and approval of the expenditure require a decision by Full Council, the Leisure & Recreation Committee is being asked to endorse the proposal and recommend its approval to Full Council.

The quotation was dated July 2026 and was initially valid for 30 days. Confirmation will therefore be required from Bidder A that the quoted price remains available before the matter is presented to Full Council and an order is placed.

The contractor has indicated an anticipated lead time of approximately four to six weeks from receipt of the order and deposit. Any advance payment arrangements will need to comply with the Council's financial procedures and be agreed before appointment.

6. Project Delivery

Subject to approval by Full Council, officers will:

- Confirm the final price and anticipated delivery programme;
- Agree payment terms that comply with the Council's financial procedures;
- Complete the necessary procurement and financial checks;
- Place the order with the successful contractor;
- Agree site access, security and public communication arrangements; and
- Ensure that an independent post-installation inspection is completed before the refurbished play area is reopened.

7. Recommendation

The Leisure & Recreation Committee is asked to:

1. Endorse the proposed refurbishment of Trowbridge Close Play Area;
2. Endorse the proposed use of timber equipment with steel feet, recognising its suitability for the location and the increased protection against ground-level deterioration;
3. Recommend to Full Council that expenditure of up to £19,992.83 be approved and allocated against the Council's existing PWLB funding for play-area improvements.





