

Trowbridge Close Play Area Refurbishment

Committee: Full Council

Date: 30th Sept 2026

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1. Purpose of Report

To present Members with two quotations for the refurbishment of Trowbridge Close Play Area and seek approval to appoint Bidder B.

The item is a recommendation from the L&R committee meeting held 3rd Sept 2026.

2. Background

The existing play area contains several limited and aging 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.

The Council's annual inspection identified the site as presenting an overall moderate risk, reinforcing the need to plan for the replacement of ageing equipment.

Two quotations have now been obtained from suitably experienced play-area contractors. The contractors' identities have been anonymised for the purposes of this report and are referred to as Bidder A and Bidder B.





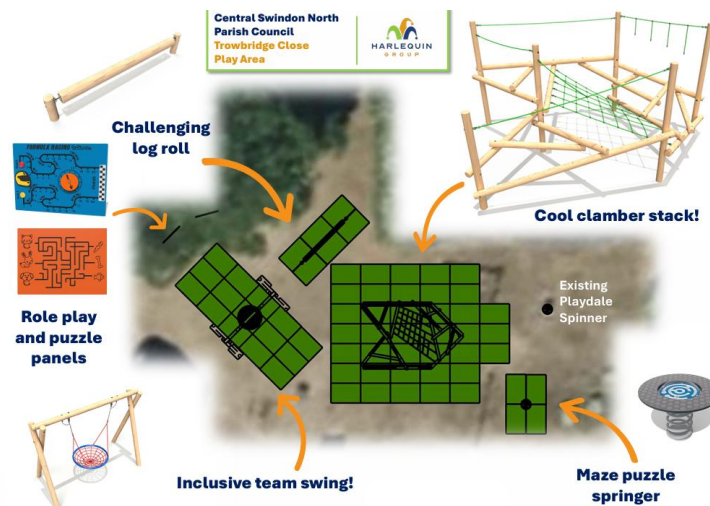
3. Proposed Schemes

Both bidders have proposed removing the existing trail equipment and three springers and replacing them with a range of new equipment.

Bidder A

Bidder A's scheme includes:

- 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.



Bidder B

Bidder B's scheme includes:

- A multi-activity "Pick Up Sticks" climbing unit with steel post feet;
- A 1.2-metre-diameter birds' nest swing with steel post feet;
- A spring rocker;
- A low-level log run;
- A three-in-a-row activity panel;
- A noughts-and-crosses activity panel;
- Grass-mat impact-absorbing surfacing;
- Removal and disposal of the existing equipment;
- Site fencing, welfare and secure storage arrangements; and
- A post-installation inspection.



Both proposals provide a mixture of climbing, balancing, swinging, imaginative and social play opportunities.

4. Materials and Durability

In most circumstances, officers wouldn't recommend timber equipment because of its susceptibility to deterioration where structural posts are installed directly into the ground.

However, both proposed schemes use timber equipment with steel feet or shoes. This is considered appropriate for Trowbridge Close because the timber would fit well with the character of the location, while the steel fittings would prevent the main structural posts 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.

Bidder B provides a 15-year guarantee against the structural failure of machine-rounded timber components fitted with steel shoes. This offers additional assurance regarding the proposed equipment's durability.

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

5. Quotation Comparison

The quotations received are summarised below:

Bidder	Total excluding VAT
Bidder A	£19,992.83
Bidder B	£16,658.10

Bidder B's quotation is £3,334.73 excluding VAT lower than Bidder A's, representing a saving of approximately 16.7%.

Although the individual equipment designs are not identical, the schemes are considered broadly comparable in their intended play functions. Bidder B's proposal provides climbing, swinging, rocking, balancing and interactive play opportunities, together with removal of the existing equipment, safety surfacing, site preliminaries and a post-installation inspection.

Bidder B is therefore considered to offer the best overall value for the Council.

6. Financial Implications

The total cost of Bidder B's proposal is **£16,658.10**.

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

The contractor has advised that its current manufacturing lead time is approximately eight weeks. The final installation programme will be confirmed when the order is placed.

7. Recommendation

Full Council is asked to:

1. Approve the refurbishment of Trowbridge Close Play Area;
2. Approve the appointment of **Bidder B** at a total cost of **£16,658.10 excluding VAT**.
3. Approve the allocation of the expenditure against the Council's existing PWLB funding for play-area improvements;