

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES & LICENSING COMMITTEE

24 MARCH 2022

Report Title	PLAY AREA REVIEW			
Purpose of Report	To seek authority from Committee to conduct a review, consult and develop SDC owned play areas across the district.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to: 1. Approve the Play Area Consultation and Development Action Plan. 2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Communities in consultation with the Chair of Community Services and Licensing to explore the play options and make recommendations back to this committee on investment and future management options.			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation Project Manager for Leisure, Health & Wellbeing, Housing Manager, Senior Community Services Officer, Principal Planning Officer, Senior Planning Strategy Officer.			
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Options	N/A			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix A – COMF Business Case Template Appendix B – Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy Appendix C - Green Infrastructure & Open Spaces study Appendix D - List of SDC owned play areas & map Appendix E - Play Area Consultation and Development Action Plan Appendix F – Equality Impact Assessment			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In October 2021, Stroud District Council applied to Gloucestershire County Councils Covid Outbreak Management Fund (“COMF”) for capital investment for SDC owned play areas to help reduce health inequalities by providing accessible play spaces for all.
- 1.2 In November 2021, Stroud District Council had confirmation that their bid for £300,000 had been successful.

- 1.3 A further £25,000 was allocated in January 2022 from COMF to support this time for officer resource.
- 1.4 A key element of the bid focused around the benefits and impact of having access to local play areas on both physical, mental, and general wellbeing for children and their adult carers. Please see appendix A for the COMF application form.
- 1.5 In 2021, Community Services and Licensing Committee approved The Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2041. The strategy promotes the use of outdoor play as a way for people to be physically active and improve their mental health and wellbeing. Please see appendix B for a copy of the Strategy.
- 1.6 In June 2019, Stroud District Council commissioned Ethos to conduct an Open Spaces and Green Infrastructure Study. The study examined the existing and projected needs for open space, green infrastructure, sport and recreation provision in the district and provides key evidence to support the proposed action plan. Please see appendix C for a copy of the Study.

2. CURRENT PLAY AREAS

- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) manage twenty-one play areas and two Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) throughout the district, while the General Fund (GF) manage a further ten, including Stratford Park.
- 2.2 The thirty-three areas are diverse, ranging from small estate sites with little equipment, to the expansive area within Stratford Park.
- 2.3 All play areas meet safety guidelines and are subject to regular inspections. However, some offer more play value than others. The table at Appendix D lists all of the play areas and identifies the town or parish in which they sit.

3. THE CONSULTATION AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN STRUCTURE

- 3.1 The purpose of the action plan (Appendix E) will be to provide a structure to ensure residents will have good access to high-quality play areas in key locations across the district. (See pages 15-20 of Appendix E.)

- 3.2 The action plan's overall vision is :-

"Stroud District Council aims to plan and manage high quality, accessible play spaces that positively contributes to the wellbeing of the community it serves"

- 3.3 We followed the Sport England approach to strategic action planning as shown in the four stages below:

- 3.3.1 Stage 1 – **Physical Condition Survey** – A review of all SDC owned play areas will be conducted by ROSPA.
- 3.3.2 Stage 2 – **Insight** - understanding the community around the play areas including current user profile, demographics now and future, activity levels, and current budget provision.

- 3.3.3 Stage 3 - **Identify** - How the insight can be delivered including a Management options appraisal, facility investment and links to community delivery and community hubs.
- 3.3.4 Stage 4 – **Commitment** - Secure commitment to the identified play areas that will receive capital investment and redevelopment.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The draft Play Area consultation and Development Action Plan provide a structure and direction of travel for the development and assessment of play areas in the district. This plan is flexible and will allow officers to meet the changing needs of our communities while we conducted our consultation.
- 4.2 The adoption of the action plan will enable the council in partnership with local partners to plan and deliver investments in SDC owned play areas.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications related to this report as it is to seek authority from the Committee to conduct a review, consult and develop SDC owned play areas across the district. Future spending plans will impact both the General fund and the HRA and will have to be brought back to CS&L and Housing Committee for approval. Funding for the specified schemes has been secured through COMF of £325k.

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5.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications related to this report as it is to seek authority from the Committee to conduct a review, consult and develop SDC-owned play areas across the district. Future plans once the options review is completed may have legal impacts and will have to be brought back to CS&L and Housing Committee for approval.

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5.3 Equality Implications

An EqIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the action plan and it will be kept updated during the lifespan of the project. The initial EqIA is attached at Appendix F.

5.4. Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category

