

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**CABINET - 19 JANUARY 2022****Report By Depute Chief Executive: Communities and Economy**

SUBJECT: PLAY PARK INVESTMENT PLAN 2021-22

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update Elected Members on recent funding announcement from the Scottish Government, and ask members to consider implementation and approval of prioritised programme to upgrade play parks across East Ayrshire during 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATIONS**Cabinet is requested to:**

- i) **Approve the proposed upgrade of the Councils play parks as outlined within paragraphs 13 – 15 and Appendix A,**
- ii) **Approve the draw from the Renewals and Repairs Fund as noted at paragraph 17,**
- iii) **Otherwise, note the contents of the report.**

BACKGROUND

2. The Scottish Government announced a joint agreement with COSLA to provide £5m funding for play parks across Scotland. The funding is the first round of the Scottish Government's total planned investment of £60m for play park renovation over this parliamentary term. Each local authority will receive a share of the funding to improve the standard of existing play parks, enhancing play opportunities for children and young people.
3. Greener Communities are responsible for the management and maintenance of the 84 adopted play parks within our East Ayrshire Communities, some of these play parks have been installed since 2002 with the most recent park installation being in 2019, these facilities were all installed in a phased approach as part of the previous play park installation programme.
4. As result of the Scottish Government Funding, a sum of £112,000 was allocated to East Ayrshire Council for play park upgrades for financial year 2021/22. It is anticipated that further funding will be available from the planned £60m play park

investment mentioned above. Although our allocation of the £60m fund is not yet confirmed by the Scottish Government, it is estimated that the Council's share of the investment funding over 5 years will be in the region of £1.344m. Once funding amount has been confirmed, it is planned that we carry out further play park improvement works over the next 5 years to allow our facilities to be modernised and improve further accessibility to all Children and Young People.

5. There are many links to Children, Young People and Wellbeing. Play allows children to be creative while developing their imagination, proficiency, physical and emotional strength. As children and young people master the world they play in, play helps them develop new competencies that lead to enhanced confidence and the resiliency they will need to face future challenges. Play also improves the psychological, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and young people, through play, children learn about the world and themselves. They also learn skills they need for study, work and relationships such as: confidence.

CURRENT PLAY PARK CONDITION

6. A condition report was carried out in September 2021 to assess the overall condition of each play park within East Ayrshire; play parks were ranked in order of priority with 4 categories being considered;

Usage	Condition of equipment	Age of Park	Surface Condition
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7. When considering the outcome of the report it was established that most of the equipment within the parks was still in reasonable condition and only needed some paint and surface repair/replacement; however the older parks had no or limited access to Inclusive play equipment.
8. Children and young people of all abilities face barriers to play and inclusive play because of a lack of venues that are close to home. It is our intention to provide an opportunity to access inclusive equipment within many of our older facilities that do not already have appropriate equipment available. We would also take this opportunity to freshen up some of the existing older pieces of equipment by establishing a painting programme and look at surface repair/replacement within recommended parks.
9. To give context to members, it is estimated that to replace fully a play park, the costs work be in the region of £90-130k per play park, dependant on the size of site and type of equipment installed, with some pieces costing in the region of £12-15k to purchase and install.

CONSULTATION

10. Due to COVID, the recent restrictions and the timescale given for deliver, this work has based upon officer assessment in line with the Play Parks National

Principles guidance. We will seek to work with local communities to pursue a collaborative approach to maximising the investment available working with local stakeholders.

11. When identifying suitable play parks for upgrade great consideration has been taken to ensure that they are inclusive and able to meet the needs of local people and in particular, children and young people as far as possible.
12. The Scottish Government have indicated that there will be additional funding for the local authority, over 5 years, which will allow Play Parks to be upgraded across East Ayrshire. Going forward, it is proposed that Greener Communities will consult and co-produce a rolling programme for this investment, working with local communities and in particular their children and young people, to establish their needs and requirements for play, and in line with the Play Park National Principles to upgrade our play park infrastructure.
13. The Council has a dedicated framework in place specifically tailored for supply and installation of play park equipment and as such, these works will be undertaken by the Council's nominated contractor and monitored by officers from Greener Communities.

PROPOSAL

14. As noted above, an assessment of all play parks has been carried out and as a result, each play park has been prioritised based on age, condition of equipment, condition of surface and usage.
15. Cabinet is asked to endorse the programme of enhancement that will see older play parks being adapted to provide equipment that would meet current guidelines for inclusability, at present there have been 12 play parks identified to receive these upgrades in 2021/22 as noted at **Appendix A**. Some play equipment will also be considered for painting and surfacing programme.
16. Investment for this year is required to be completed or at least ordered, this fiscal year 2021/22 and will be further supported by Housing & Communities balances of £41,000, we anticipate a delivery and installation timescale of approximately 6 months from the date of order; however Installation of equipment will be weather dependent particularly at this time of year.
17. Additionally, the periodic inspection of the play parks across East Ayrshire will at times, identify equipment that will need to be repaired or replaced and it is proposed that a draw of £0.100m each year for the next five years is approved from the Council's Renewals and Repairs Fund to take this work forward. The annual draw from said fund will supplement the Playparks Investment funding that has recently been announced by the Scottish Government. This will provide an opportunity to extend the prioritised programme of works.

POLICY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

18. The playpark upgrade programme supports the Community Plan key themes of Safer Communities and Wellbeing, by encouraging our Children and Young people from an early age to use safe facilities and to keep active. It also encourages Children and Young people to use our green spaces for other activities as many of our parks are located within green open spaces.
19. It also links to the Transformation Strategy's Vibrant & Empowered Work stream and will form part of the Authority's Green Infrastructure Strategy. There may be scope for considering our play parks and street cages as part of our future capital investment programme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

20. The Council has a duty of care to ensure that the equipment provided in our play parks is safe and fit for purpose. The renewal of equipment complements the rigorous inspection and maintenance regime which is in place.
21. The Council has a dedicated framework in place specifically tailored for supply and installation of play park equipment and as such, these works will be undertaken by the Council's nominated contractor and monitored by officers from Greener Communities.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no Human Resources implications arising from this report.

EQUALITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

23. This provides inclusiveness to all and provides areas for people to meet and play an equality impact assessment has been carried out.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

24. The Scottish Government funding conditions stipulate spend requires being committed within the current financial year; therefore, any delay could impede investment. The planned spend will commit the £112,000 funding, supplemented by the £41,000 retained within Housing & Communities balances.
25. The programme of work through the Playparks Investment Fund will see improvements planned for all 84 adopted play parks over the investment period, further enhanced and supported by the proposed draw down from the Renewals and Repair Fund.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

26. The identified works will ensure that more play parks within East Ayrshire are accessible and inclusive to all, the playpark upgrade programme is aimed at trying to modernise our play parks, ensuring they are safe for our young people. All Council play parks are subject to regular safety inspections and this investment will support the working lifespan of such facilities.

NET ZERO IMPLICATIONS

27. People are able to access local green spaces and enjoy the many facilities provided within these areas.

Katie Kelly
Depute Chief Executive
13/1/22

APPENDICES

A. Proposed upgrade/painting programme 2021/22

Background Papers:

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PROPOSED UPGRADE PROGRAMME 2021/22

The upgrade and painting proposals within this programme is noted below and are weather dependent.

MONTH	TOWN	PLACE	DESCRIPTION
February 2022	Kilmarnock	New Farm Loch	Install Inclusive Equipment
February 2022	Kilmarnock	Piersland Park	Install Inclusive Equipment
February 2022	Kilmarnock	Thorn Terrace	Install Inclusive Equipment
February 2022	Galston	Portland Park	Install Inclusive Equipment
February 2022	Kilmaurs	Morton Park	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Logan	Glen Avenue	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Drongan	Milmannoch Road	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Patna	Carnshalloch Avenue	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Cumnock	Flush Park	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Cumnock	Craigens	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Cumnock	Woodroad	Install Inclusive Equipment
March 2022	Auchinleck	Well Road	Install Inclusive Equipment

Play Park painting programme		
Town	Site	Items
Darvel	Hutchieson drive	Swings
Gatehead	Fairlie View	Multiplay unit
Hurlford	Richardson park	Swings
Kilmarnock	Dean Park	See Saw Swings 2 Bay
Kilmarnock	Kay Park	Swings See Saw Horse old side
Kilmarnock	Lainshaw Park	Various items
Kilmarnock	Linfearn Avenue	Swings
Kilmarnock	New Farm Loch	Various items
Kilmarnock	Thorn Terrace	Various items
Kilmaurs	Morton Park	Various items
Knockintiber	Knockintiber	Swings
Moscow	Fir Park	Swings
Newmilns	Clearmont	Swings 2 bay
Newmilns	Jamieson Park	Various items
Auchinleck	Well Road	Various items
Catrine	Riverside	Swings
Cumnock	Craigens	Various items
Cumnock	Flush Park	Swings
Cumnock	Hearth Road	Swings
Cumnock	Kier Hardie	Various items
Dalrymple	Barbieston Road	Various items
Dalmellington	Burnton	Swings
Hayhill	Hayhill	Swings 2 Bay
Logan	Glen Avenue	Various items
Mauchline	Jean Armour Drive	Various items
Patna	Carnchalloch Avenue	Swings Tank
Patna	Doonbank	Various items