

Report considered by Cabinet on 28 February 2000 and referred to Special Council

CABINET –28TH FEBRUARY 2000

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME FOR PLAYGROUNDS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LEISURE

1. Members will find attached a paper outlining the results of the consultation exercise on playgrounds. This paper also outlines options that Council have in determining the speed and extent of the replacement programme for the playgrounds.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**
 - (a) Members are asked to note the outcomes of the consultation process.
 - (b) Members are asked to consider the recommendations outlined in paragraphs 10.

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Consultees: Please see Section 10 (page 3).

PLAYGROUNDS

**A Report on the Seven Area Meetings undertaken following Full
Council on 25 August 1999 and the Response to the RoSPA Report**

November 1999

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Consultation has already taken place and will continue with the following:-	
Planning	
Property Services	
Economic Development	
Procurement Services	

APPENDICES

1. Minutes of Full Council on 25.8.99
- 2-8 Original site by site tables with agreed amendments and the comments/requests made at each meeting, as follows:-
 2. Upper Rhymney
 3. Greater Bargoed
 4. Mid Valley West
 5. Mid Valley East
 6. Aber Valley
 7. Caerphilly Basin
 8. Lower Islwyn

1. Introduction

1.1 At Council on 25 August 1999 the following was resolved:-

- (i) option 2 of the report (paragraphs 4.4 on page 5) be approved:
- (ii) consultation be undertaken with local Ward Members on the siting of the playground replacements indicated in the report.

1.2 The report referred to in the above minute is 'The proposed response to the RoSPA Risk Assessments' prepared by the Client Agency/Community Education, Leisure and Libraries.

1.3 The action approved in paragraphs 4.4 on page 5 of the above report included:-

Remove complete playgrounds and make good site
Remove individual items and make good site
Repair individual items
Safety surfacing required.

1.4 Seven meetings were held between 26 October and 29 November 1999 and CCBC Members and Community Councillors were invited to attend the meeting for their Ward.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Understandably, no proposed replacement playground was refused, or given to another Ward, but some are to be moved within the Ward. Consultation was proposed on a number of others. There is, therefore, no reduction in the original predicted cost of £1,479m - £1,614m.

2.2 If the ADDITIONAL replacement sites requested by Members in response to the RoSPA report were agreed than an ADDITIONAL £325,000 - £400,000 would also be required (Section 6.1 refers). It has not been possible to recommend that these ADDITIONAL replacement sites be included in the replacement programme because of the limitations of available finance. It is proposed that these ADDITIONAL replacements requested are added to the list of 'future replacements' requested by Members - to be dealt with "when finance becomes available".

2.3 A number of future replacements were also requested - "when finance becomes available" and these amount to further additional expenditure of £200,000 - £245,000 (Section 6.2 refers).

2.4 Other comments and requests were made at the meetings and these are detailed in Appendices 2 - 8. General comments, i.e. those coming from more than one meeting, are detailed in Section 4.

2.5 It has been proposed by CMT that the replacement programme is funded from the capital programme over three years.

3. Meetings Held

3.1	Aber Valley	-	26.10.99
	Caerphilly Basin	-	27.10.99
	Mid Valley West	-	8.11.99
	Lower Islwyn	-	10.11.99
	Mid Valley East	-	17.11.99
	Upper Rhymney	-	22.11.99
	Greater Bargoed	-	29.11.99

3.2 At these meetings Members were made aware that requests for additional replacements would require additional funding - unless any replacement was refused or given to another Ward.

4. General Points from the Meetings

- 4.1 A general point is one that came from more than one meeting. In the main these points emerged at most meetings. Full details of the comments made at each of the individual meetings are shown in Appendices 2 - 8.
- 4.2 Developers should always be asked (told?) to provide play facilities or contribute to their provision. The siting of such play facilities should not necessarily be on the site of development, but at the optimum place for the locale.
- 4.3 Savings achieved because of the size of any contracts let in response to the RoSPA Report should be used to provide additional replacement playgrounds.
- 4.4 All sites should be sufficiently fenced to keep out dogs - gates in the fences would be required for access.
- 4.5 The need for a Playground Strategy addressing all issues was agreed at all meetings. This will be provided to Members for discussion and decision in Spring 2000.
- 4.6 Consultation with Members on the equipment to be provided was agreed as essential at all meetings. Officers were always committed to this, but the mechanism for achieving it must now be created.
- 4.7 The proposed Vandalism Index was agreed as essential at all meetings. The possibility of a "league table" and reduced future expenditure for sites heavily or continuously vandalised was also discussed.
- 4.8 Local/individual company sponsorship, possibly for individual sites, should be investigated by the Leisure Department.

5. Changes to the Original Removal/Replacement List Agreed by Members at these Meetings

5.1 Understandably, no replacement playgrounds were refused or given to other Wards, but the siting of a number within the Ward was changed. Appendices 2 - 8 detail the original

proposals for each Ward and the changes agreed at these meetings. Requests for additional replacements are detailed in Section 6.1 or 6.2. Comments made at the meetings are detailed in Appendices 2 - 8. The following paragraphs (5.2-5.8) summarise changes to the original replacement list agreed at the meetings.

5.2 ***Group 1 - Upper Rhymney***

Moriah/Abertysswg Ward - the replacement proposed for Greensway will be re-sited elsewhere after consultation to decide the siting.

5.3 ***Group 2 - Greater Bargoed***

No amendments to the original list were proposed, but a number of additional replacements were requested.

5.4 ***Group 3 - Mid Valleys West***

Nelson Ward - the replacement playground should be sited at the Wern Playing Fields instead of at Tawel Fan.

Hengoed Ward - the replacement playground should be sited at Cefn Road and not at the Community Centre.

5.5 ***Group 4 - Mid Valleys East***

Argoed Ward - the replacement suggested for Cwm Argoed Bottom should be re-sited elsewhere in the Ward after local consultation.

Pontllanfraith Ward - the replacement for the Civic Centre locale should be re-sited to a more suitable position within the vicinity.

5.6 ***Group 5 - Aber Valley***

Aber Valley Ward - the replacement suggested for Alexandra Terrace should be sited at Stanley Street.

Penyrheol Ward - the residents around Carmarthen Court, Hendredenny should be balloted before any final decision to site the replacement playground there is taken.

5.7 ***Group 6 - Caerphilly Basin***

No amendments to the original list were proposed, but a number of additional replacements were requested.

5.8 ***Group 7 - Lower Islwyn***

No amendments to the original table were agreed, but a number of additional replacements were requested.

6. Additional Playgrounds Requested

6.1 Additional replacement playgrounds were requested in response to the RoSPA Report.

6.2 The additional replacement playgrounds listed below were requested to go in at the same time as the originally listed replacements. Appendices 2 - 8 show the originally listed, proposed, replacement playgrounds Ward by Ward.

6.1.2.

- a) Replacement of another site for Lower Stanley Terrace (New Tredegar Ward).
- b) Replacement for White Rose Way (New Tredegar Ward).
- c) Partial replacement for Groesfaen Terrace (Darren Valley Ward).
- d) Replacement for Commin Road (Aberbargoed Ward).
- e) Replacement(s) for Heol Coed Cae (Bargoed Ward).
- f) Replacement for Aeron Place (Gilfach Ward).
- g) Replacement for Gelligaer (St. Cattwg's Ward).
- h) Replacement/new for Cefn Hengoed Youth Centre (Hengoed Ward).
- i) Premier playground for the Blackwood area (Blackwood Ward).
- j) Premier replacement and not a standard replacement for Windsor Avenue (Newbridge Ward).
- k) Partial replacement for Hendre (Aber Valley Ward).
- l) Partial replacement for Mountain View (Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen Ward).
- m) Replacement for Wattsville (Ynysddu Ward).

6.1.3 The additional cost of these requests for additional playgrounds is £325,000 - £400,000.

6.1.4 If additional funding is not agreed for all or part of the above, it is suggested that these requested playgrounds are placed on a priority list for future development, when additional finance becomes available. They should, however, be subjected to the criteria to be defined within the Playground Strategy regarding the definition of Playground Need. This is due to be presented to Members in Spring 2000.

6.2 Additional Replacements Requested for the Future

6.2.1 The additional replacement playgrounds listed below were requested for future development, when finance becomes available. Appendices 2 - 8 show the originally listed, proposed, replacement playgrounds Ward by Ward. All of these are standard replacements, unless indicated otherwise.

6.2.2

- a) Sunny View)
- b) Bryn Glas) (Pontlloftyn Ward)
- c) Queen Street)
- d) Phillipstown Community Centre playground should be moved to Derlwyn Street. Officers comment that this is likely to be at least as expensive as a replacement playground (New Tredegar Ward).

- e) Additional equipment was requested for Maes-y-Graig Street (Gilfach Ward).
- f) At least one playground to be developed on the eastern side of the Darren Valley (Darren Valley).
- g) Fairways (Bargoed Ward).
- h) Vere Street (Bargoed Ward).
- i) Pen-y-Fan Close (Crumlin Ward).
- j) Trapwell (St. James Ward).

6.2.3 The additional cost of these requests would be £200,000 - £245,000.

6.2.4 If additional funding is not agreed for all or part of the above, it is suggested that these requested playgrounds are placed on a priority list for future development, when additional finance becomes available. They should, however, be subjected to the criteria to be defined within the Playground Strategy regarding the definition of Playground Need. This is due to be presented to Members in Spring 2000.

7. Summary

7.1 Subject to confirmation from contract prices submitted, the original budget of £1.479m - £1.614m will still be required.

7.2 The projected cost of the additional replacement sites requested from the RoSPA response is:
£325,000 - £400,000

The projected cost of the additional replacement sites requested for future development is:
£200,000 - £245,000.

7.3 If the decision is to accede to these requests, then this will increase the one-off financing required by approximately 37%.

7.4 In addition, allowing just over £1,000 for maintenance costs per annum, the maintenance budget would need to be increased annually by approximately £25,000.

7.5 If the decision of Council is not to fund the additional replacements requested (paras 7.1 and 7.2) they could be classed as priority in the future, but subjected to the criteria to define playground need, that will be contained in the Playground Strategy to be presented in early 2000.

7.6 Officers will be assigned within an action plan to follow up the items raised as comments at the various meetings.

7.7 A vandalism index for repairs required not caused through fair wear and tear will be created from April 1st 2000.

8. Timetables

8.1 Removal

Following the approval of full Council on 25th August 1999, the contract for removal of the 95 playgrounds was tendered and awarded to Caerphilly's Grounds Maintenance DSO in February 2000. Completion of the removals is due at the end of March 2000 or early April 2000, before the commencement of the Easter school holidays.

8.2 Safety Surfacing etc.

The provision or replacement of safety surfacing at sites to remain open is in the process of being tendered and scheduled for completion by the end of April 2000. The small amount of repair or replacement of individual items at sites remaining open will also be completed during April 2000.

8.3 Reinstatement

The site reinstatement contract whereby the concrete/tarmac foundations will be removed from the vast majority of the sites, where the equipment is being entirely removed, will be let during March 2000. The target completion date is the end of June 2000.

8.4 Replacement

The replacements will now take place over a period of 3 years and the contract(s) for this operation will have to be let via the EC Procurement Procedures. This will almost certainly add 3-6 months to any letting timetable and will make it much more difficult to consult with Members on options for the equipment to be provided. It should, however, still be possible to involve selected Members in the selection process.

8.5 Members are therefore asked to agree to the above timetable and also agree that this should be financed from the capital programme over the next three years.

9. Acknowledgements

9.1 A high standard of discussion took place at each of the meetings and all Members represented their Wards well, but with a sound awareness of the overall picture. The officers involved would like to thank all Members and Community Councillors who attended these meetings for their contributions.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members:-

- a) agree to the replacement programme to include the changes in paragraphs (5.2-5.8), subject to Planning approval where required and discussion with Property Services where appropriate;

- b) agree that the selection of playgrounds for each of the three yearly phases be based upon the 10 criteria to determine playground need, which will form part of the Playgrounds Strategy;
- c) agree that all additional playgrounds (detailed in 6.1) be placed on a list of 'future requirements' to be dealt with "when finance becomes available";
- d) agree that requests for future replacements (detailed in 6.2) be placed upon the same list;
- e) agree that a replacement programme be funded over 3 years from the capital programme.

