



Subject:	Playground Improvement Programme 2021 – 2022
Date:	11 May 2021
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Cate Taggart, Neighbourhood Services Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Some time in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the successful 2020/21 Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) and outline plans for new playground refurbishments under the 2021/22 programme.
1.2	Members are asked to note that refurbishments are to be funded under the Capital Programme and that an allocation of £580,000 has been agreed for this work, in this financial year.
1.3	Members should also note that under last year's PIP;

1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment works at Blackmountain, Ohio Street and Falls Park playgrounds were successfully completed. • Covid 19 restrictions impacted on the planning process and land transfer associated with construction of a new play facility at Vere Foster. As a result construction works commenced late in the 2020-21 financial year and are currently ongoing. Costs associated with completion of the new facility at Vere Foster will be part of this year's programme and included within the capital budget of £580k. Completion costs are estimated to be in the region of £150k. • A playground refurbishment at Grosvenor Recreation Centre, fully funded by DfC (£145k), was completed successfully. • An extension of the existing Lisnasharragh (Clonduff) playground, funded under the Leisure Transformation Programme, was also successfully delivered last year. <p>Members should also note that during last year's programme DfC funded 49% of improvement work at the following playgrounds, reducing council's net capital spend by a total of £272k;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls Park • Ohio Street • Vere Foster
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:</p> <p>Agree refurbishment works at the sites below under the Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) 2021-22. This year's programme has an annual, in year budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme for financial year 2021/22;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of construction works at Vere Foster playground • Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area) • Ormeau 2000 playground (Park Road)
2.2	<p>In the event council secure external funding or identify internal shortfalls in year, Members are asked to agree</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbishment works at Clarawood Park playground (junior zone) are also included as part of this year's annual programme.
3.0	Main report
	Playground Refurbishment Programme
3.1	<p>Since its inception in 2012, the Playground Refurbishment Programme continues to make a significant and positive impact to the overall quality and play value of the city's playgrounds; this has greatly improved accessibility, providing more inclusive equipment, safety surfacing, boundary fencing, site furniture and landscaping works.</p>
3.2	<p>With continued investment over the last nine years, Council is achieving the desired improvements at each of its sites. The Council's newest refurbished playground facilities below are now more inviting, inclusive and exciting places for children and parents to visit; moving their quality scores to the desired higher standard. (See appendix 1 – image of some recently refurbished playgrounds).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blackmountain 2. Ohio Street 3. Falls Park 4. Grosvenor Recreation Centre 5. Lisnasharragh (Clonduff)
3.3	<p>Members should note that Play Services Ireland Ltd undertook the independent playground inspections on behalf of the Council. The 'quality score' allocated for each playground is based on compliance with European safety standards BS EN 1176-7: 2020.</p>
3.4	<p>The independent playground inspection report highlights the age range for each piece of playground apparatus and identifies and prioritises repairs to existing playground equipment. The Council's Facilities Management and Playground Inspectors continue to undertake these repairs in the order they have been prioritised. (See Appendix 2 – copy of the 2021 Independent Playground Inspection report for Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area) which has the city's largest, bespoke multi-play fort. This unit is heavily used throughout the summer months however, it has been identified as nearing the end of its life expectancy.</p>

3.5	<p>Each playground is individually categorised, giving a combined 'quality score' Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area) playground for example was allocated an overall quality score of 3.8 which positions it just below the categorisation of Insufficient/Poor.</p> <p>Quality scores:</p> <p>Score 9 – 10 Excellent</p> <p>Score 8 – 9 Very Good</p> <p>Score 7 – 8 Good</p> <p>Score 6 – 7 Fairly Good</p> <p>Score 5 – 6 Sufficient</p> <p>Score 4 – 5 Fair</p> <p>Score 3 – 4 Insufficient</p> <p>Score 2 – 3 Poor</p> <p>Score 1 – 2 Very Poor</p> <p>Score 0 – 1 Extremely Poor</p>
3.6	<p>Following the independent inspection assessments of all 103 playgrounds across the city, it is proposed that sites listed under Item 2.1 are refurbished as part of this year's Playground Improvement Programme, which has an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme. If additional funding or internal shortfalls are identified in year, it is proposed that an additional playground site at Clarawood Park (junior zone) is also improved under this year's programme.</p>
3.7	<p>The playgrounds recommended for refurbishment are the ones with the lowest quality scores (See appendix 3 – 2021 mean quality score ratings). Because of the proposed refurbishment works, these playgrounds will move from insufficient/poor/fair to the higher classification of 'Excellent' – quality score 9 – 10 when re-inspected.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The proposed Playground Improvement Programme will be funded through the Capital Programme with an annual budget of £580,000 allocated for works. CNS Landscape, Planning and Development Officers will continue to re-design play facilities and project manage all works associated with the 2021/22 Playground Improvement Programme.</p>

3.9	<p>As in previous years, the OSS Managers will continue to assist with the distribution of information relating to playground improvements to elected members, local communities and user groups.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.10	None
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Image of recently refurbished playgrounds</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Copy of the 2021 Independent Playground Inspection report for Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area)</p> <p>Appendix 3 – 2021 playground Quality Score ratings</p>