
REPORT TO:	COMMUNITY SCRUTINY	AGENDA ITEM: 5
DATE OF MEETING:	14 th FEBRUARY 2005	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CHRIS MASON EXT. 5794	DOC:
SUBJECT:	PLAY AREAS & THE MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S URBAN PARKS	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: CS10

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members note the contents of the report and comments are sought on the issues raised.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To apprise the Committee on recent developments and current issues in the management of the District's play areas.

3.0 Detail

Setting the scene

- 3.1 This Committee has, on a number of occasions, received reports on the management and development of the District's formal play areas. Attached at Annexe A is a report presented to the Committee on 29th July 2002. This sets the scene in terms of the Council's responsibilities for play areas. It also provides a basis for identifying what progress has been made in modernising our sites and whether any new issues have arisen.

Work Done & Planned

- 3.2 Since the July 2002 report a completely new play area has been provided at Station Street Recreation Ground, Church Gresley (Section 106 monies) and, from the same source of funding, a new skateboard facility has been provided at Woodhouse Sports Ground. A similar facility was also formally opened to the public at Hilton on 18th July 2004, again funded by Section 106 monies. External funding has also been attracted to provide a climbing boulder at Swadlincote Woodland Forest Park.

- 3.3 In addition, to address some of the issues referred to in earlier external surveys, play equipment was removed at sites in Linton & Smisby (by the Parish Councils on our recommendation), Cockshutt Lane, Melbourne & at Rosliston.
- 3.4 The absence of capital funding, until this current financial year, has somewhat curtailed the progress that could be made in updating our play sites. However, this year's allocation of £60k has meant that we have been able to make further progress. A contribution of £5k has been made towards a new play site at Smisby and new play areas will be created in spring of this year at Winchester Drive, Linton and Main Street, Hartshorne.
- 3.5 A number of other major capital projects, that it is anticipated will be delivered in 2005/06, contain within them the development of new or the upgrading of old play areas. These include:
- £50k on a new play area, including provision for teenagers, in the project to create a new recreation area at Coton Park, Linton.
 - The allocation of £50k towards updating existing & providing new provision for teenagers at Eureka Park.
 - £25k has been obtained from the Barclay's Spaces for Sport Scheme for teenage provision in Maurice Lea Memorial Park, Church Gresley.
 - The majority of funding for the first 2 projects has also come from external sources.

3.5.1 **Issues**

- Despite the absence, until this year of capital funding, good progress has been made in improving the quality of our stock.
- Traditional resource problem in carrying out required inspections and completing repairs. Undertaken secondary to grass cutting. (It is anticipated that this will be addressed by the creation of a new post with specific responsibility for inspecting and maintaining play areas. Report considered by H & CS Committee at their meeting on 3rd February 2005).
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has implications for play areas as well as buildings.
- Too many sites in the wrong locations!!!
- Challenge of funding and delivering the actions identified in the Youth Needs Survey.
- Better at using development money to improve sites. PPG17 study should provide a much more objective basis for this.

4.0 **Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 None directly from this report.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The report highlights successes in improving the quality of play provision throughout the District. It also highlights, as points for discussion, some of the issues / problems associated with the further development of these areas.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 None

