

Meeting: Full Council

Date: 10th December 2024

Author: Town Clerk

Item for Consideration: South Gloucestershire Council Play Equipment

1.0 Introduction and Background Information

1.1 SGC has informed KTC that a piece of play equipment in Deerswood Park (map below) has failed and been taken out of commission, as SGC does not have the funds to replace it. Replacement costs are in the region of £12k. SGC has made a request to see if the town council would fund part or all of this. This report is to seek the views of councillors, as to whether they might wish to consider this request, or not. If they do wish to support the request, then to consider the information contained in this report. Or Councillors might wish to decline the request as the responsibility for replacing play equipment rests with SGC.

2.0 Further Information

2.1 The timber zipwire at Deerswood Park play area has been decommissioned due to health & safety concerns regarding the condition of the timber frame. This frame comes under a lot of strain from the movement of force when the item is in use so if there is any doubt about its structural integrity, it needs to be taken out of use. An expert contractor has confirmed this assessment and as a result, the seat has been removed to make it safe.

2.2 Due to the nature of timber and the British climate it is not unusual for timber play equipment to only last 10 years or so and this is one of the reasons why play equipment with timber frames is no longer installed. This item is over 12 years old and experiences a high level of use. The cost of replacing this item with a metal version would be in the region of £12k+. Quotes are currently being sought but earlier indications are that this is the budget range and will include rubber matting and a landing platform (see photo below). Unfortunately, the play area maintenance budget only covers repairs and cannot be stretched to cover replacement equipment.

3.0 Budget

3.1 The town council's Community Infrastructure Levy budget contains £81,164. The council has made a previous commitment to make an award of £37,110 to SGC towards the repair and maintenance of the tennis court in Kingswood Park. This leaves a possible £44k for these types of projects. It is difficult to predict the income via CIL as the council is only informed of this in the new financial year. However, the town council has also agreed that any future CIL or S106 funds should be invested into outdoor sports and recreation areas.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 For councillors to give this request some consideration. The Community Grant Scheme cannot be used for this item as that scheme is for community groups only. For Councillors to decide if the award of such a grant might set a precedent to receive further requests, when the council has not been offered any asset transfers, and therefore has no responsibility for parks and play areas in Kingswood.

3.2 For Councillors to consider if they wish to use Community Infrastructure Levy funds to pay for replacement equipment and this specific request.



Picture One: Map and location of Deerswood Park BS15 4QA



Picture two: Example of metal framed ariel wire with rubber matting and landing platform.