

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Planning and Property (Introduced by Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection))	Cabinet	21 February 2024

Refurbishment of Longton Play Area

Is this report confidential?	No
Is this decision key?	Yes
Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards

Purpose of the Report

1. To award the contract to complete the refurbishment and renewal work at Longton Play Area in Longton.

Recommendations

2. To award the contract for refurbishing Longton Play Area on School Lane in Longton to Playsound Ltd for a fixed price of £120,000 following a tender exercise carried out in accordance with the Council's procurement processes.

Reasons for recommendations

3. The current capital programme includes several play areas identified for improvement. Longton Play Area has funds allocated in the programme for this financial year. This report is required to award the contract to the highest scoring bidder to complete the project.

Other options considered and rejected

4. The option of doing nothing and leaving the site in its current condition or carrying out partial refurbishment works were rejected as the site is now over 20 years old and in need of full refurbishment. This will provide quality facilities that meet modern standards for design and accessibility.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

6. Longton Play Area is located adjacent to Longton Playing Field and is for toddlers (aged 2 to 6) and juniors (aged 7 to 12). The play area was last comprehensively refurbished in 2003 and whilst it remains well used by the public, the layout and equipment is now dated and the site scores poorly for inclusivity, especially when compared with the more modern design of playgrounds recently refurbished around the borough.
7. In line with the Council's aspirations, we are looking to up-grade and refurbish play areas across the Borough. The report 'Creating Playful Communities' by Play England (2011) suggests improving opportunities for play provides additional benefits to the simple fun and enjoyment that it gives to children and young people namely:
 - Play is important for children's health - both physical and mental. Active physical play can contribute to reducing levels of childhood obesity.
 - Access to play and informal recreation opportunities can help to reduce anti-social behaviour.
 - Providing play opportunities brings communities together and is a strong force for community cohesion.

The Proposal

8. It is proposed to fully refurbish Longton Play Area to provide a modern inclusive playground for Toddlers (ages 2-6) and Juniors (ages 7-12) plus active equipment for teenagers.
9. The contract was procured on a design and build basis which is standard for the refurbishment and replacement of play areas. Bidders were notified of the project budget and asked to design a scheme providing maximum value for the budget available against a set criteria and specification pulled together following consultation with the local community.
10. 5 bids were received, and the evaluation scores are set out in the table below:

Bidder	Tender Complete & Within Budget	Quality Total	Social Value Total	Combined Total Score
3 (Playsound Ltd)	PASS	85	6.65	91.65
2	PASS	78	12.00	90.00
5	PASS	83	5.12	88.12
4	PASS	81	3.35	84.35
1	PASS	77	4.42	81.42

Consultation

11. Consultation on the proposed refurbishment of Longton Play Area took place between July and August 2023.
12. The consultation carried out was well received and most people who responded were pleased with refurbishing or replacing the existing equipment.
13. As a result of the consultation the following was changed or added to the scheme's design brief:
 - a. Remove existing skate equipment and include active equipment in the older children's area.
 - b. Additional swing seats
 - c. Additional picnic bench
 - d. Additional benches

Climate change and air quality

14. The work noted in this report impact on the following areas of climate change and sustainability targets of the Council's Green Agenda:
 - Reducing waste production.
15. The following remediations have been undertaken to limit the environmental effect:
 - Waste materials arising from the works including timber, metal and stone, will be reused on site where possible and recycled off site where needed minimising the amount of material disposed of at landfill.

Equality and diversity

16. The new play area will be more inclusive and accessible for local children to use.

Risk

17. A number of risks linked to the current site designs will be addressed through the improvement proposals. The project risk register identifies other key risks, the majority of which will be mitigated by the procurement process followed.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

18. The approved budget for this is in the existing capital programme at the agreed fixed price of £120,000.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

19. A compliant tender exercise has been carried out in this instant. There was a fixed budget for the scheme and the assessment was who could deliver the best scheme in accordance with that budget. A formal contract will be subsequently drawn up.

Background documents

No Background papers.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

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