

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer and Digital (Introduced by Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets))	Cabinet	Wednesday, 23 March 2022

Moss Side & Birch Avenue Playground Refurbishment Projects

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

- To bring the refurbishment projects for the playgrounds at Moss Side Park, Leyland and Birch Avenue, Penwortham before members and to seek permission to award the contract for Moss Side to the preferred bidder and request that authority to award the contract to the highest scoring bidder for Birch Avenue, when identified, be delegated to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Recommendations to Cabinet

- That Cabinet grants permission for the following:
 - To award the contract for the works at Moss Side, Leyland to Bidder 2 in Table 1, Appendix 1 at a cost of £175k.
 - That authority to award the contract to the highest scoring bidder (yet to be identified) for Birch Avenue Playground be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property & Assets in consultation with the Director of Customer and Digital

Reasons for recommendations

- The current capital programme includes a number of play areas identified for improvement. Moss Side Playground has an approved total budget of £175,000 and bids have been invited on a design and build basis, meaning all tender prices are fixed at £175k.
- Birch Avenue Playground had a budget of £75,000 included in the approved capital programme with an uplift of £70,000 to a total of £145,000 approved by Council at the meeting on 26 January 2022. Tender returns are due back on 21 March 2022 with a three week period needed for evaluation of the bids and analysis of the social value element by the Social Value Portal.

- The £145,000 budget requires that the contract award be authorised by Cabinet, however, a preferred bidder will not be identified before the start of April 2022. The next Cabinet meeting after this date is scheduled for 22 June 2022 and therefore it is requested that the award decision be delegated as described to allow an earlier award and start of works on site.

Other options considered and rejected

- The options of doing nothing at Moss Side and leaving the site in its current condition or carrying out partial refurbishment works were rejected as the site is now 17 years old and provides only equipment suitable for toddlers, with no junior facilities in close proximity.
- The option of submitting a report to the June Cabinet meeting for Birch Avenue was considered but this would lead to any decisions made not coming into force until 30 June 2022. As works to playgrounds are avoided in the summer holidays as far as possible, works would not begin until September 2022. It would be preferable to receive authorisation to award earlier to provide the opportunity to carry out the works prior to the summer holidays.

Corporate priorities

- 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

- 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:
 - 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.
- A previous playground refurbishment programme ran from 2003 to 2012 and refurbished a number of the council's children's play areas within the borough. Moss Side was last refurbished as part of this programme in 2005, however, funding was provided for a new toddler play area, a ball court and shelter for teens and a number of new link paths. There was insufficient funding at the time for the provision of junior equipment.
- Birch Avenue was also refurbished in 2005 providing equipment for toddlers and juniors. Some of the equipment is now dated and would benefit from refurbishment. The bitmac surfacing is also deteriorating in a number of places and would benefit from replacement to ensure the surfacing lasts at least the design life of the new equipment.

Proposals

12. It is proposed to refurbish both the sites to provide equipment for toddlers (ages 2-6) and juniors (ages 7-12) to provide modern accessible and inclusive playgrounds. Bidders were notified of the project budgets and asked to design schemes providing maximum value for the budget available.
13. Three tender submissions have been received for Moss Side and evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria. The details are listed in Table 1 in Appendix A. Tender Number 2 is an acceptable quality, compliant tender and is recommended for acceptance.
14. As the contract value for Moss Side is over £100,000, the social value element of the tender was submitted to the Social Value Portal for analysis and scoring. The final percentage score has been provided and added into the bidder's overall score. The overall highest scoring bidder has highlighted key outputs as part of their social value submission including sourcing as raw materials in the local area where possible and employing subcontractors located close to the site, where possible. The bidder is a living wage employer and ensures subcontractors are vetted to ensure their staff are paid above the minimum wage. The bidder has also offered to donate £1,750 to a local charity in consultation with the council. The Social Value Portal will monitor and evaluate the delivery of these undertakings.
15. The approved capital programme includes a total budget of £175k for the scheme at Moss Side and £145 for Birch Avenue following the approved budget increase by Council.

Consultation Carried Out

16. Consultation was carried out for Moss Side Playground between 19 July 2021 and 2 August 2021 and for Birch Avenue between 27 October and 15 November 2021. The consultations invited the public to submit their thoughts on the current sites and give views about suggested possible items of new equipment.
17. The information was provided on the council's online consultation portal with letters sent to surrounding houses, signs displayed on site and advertised through the council's social media channels. Consultation replies have been reviewed and fed into the design brief for bidders.
18. Feedback from the public consultation for Moss Side showed the site's central location made it easily accessible to local residents but usage was limited by the range of equipment and the site was felt to look tired. Various items were suggested for inclusion provided at neighbouring playgrounds and although certain items are included in the brief to bidders that are common to most sites (swings or example) a range of different equipment is aimed for across different playgrounds to avoid them all having the same facilities and experience. Items such as zip lines and sand pits are often common requests but due to the space required and additional maintenance needs, these are reserved for the borough's principal sites.
19. An additional question was asked in the consultation for Moss Side for thoughts on the future provision of teen facilities such as bmx and skate ramps. The response was very positive and therefore this feedback will be fed into the strategy being worked up for the future provision of such facilities within the borough.
20. The public consultation for Birch Avenue highlighted that some of the proposed replacement equipment and existing items to remain were not popular and alternative

equipment was requested. It is therefore proposed to replace items with alternative equipment in line with the most common consultation responses. In addition, more seating was requested by many respondents and therefore additional seating/picnic tables and associated hard surfacing has been included in the brief to bidders.

21. Details of the playground consultations have been sent to the Chairs of the relevant My Neighbourhood Hubs and there will be further engagement as the projects progress, if given approval to proceed at this stage by Cabinet.

Climate change and air quality

22. 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.

23. The following remediations have been undertaken to limit the environmental effect:

- Waste materials arising from the demolition of the existing playground including timber, metal, stone and rubber, will be reused and recycled where possible minimising the amount of material disposed of at landfill.

Equality and diversity

24. The new play area will be more inclusive and accessible by design.

Risk

25. 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

26. The approved capital programme includes a budget of £175k to cover the works at Moss Side.
27. As the scheme for Birch Avenue is a design and build scheme the approved budget cannot be exceeded as part of this tender so will be within existing budget approvals.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

28. The project for Moss Side has been through a compliant procurement process in accordance with our Contract Procedure Rules. A formal contract will be drawn up in due course. Given the value of the proposed contract it is appropriate for Cabinet to make the award decision.
29. There are no issues with the proposed delegation for the Birch Avenue Project. This seems sensible and necessary in the circumstances.

Background documents

Council Budget Report including capital programme details for 2021/22 - 24 February 2021

Birch Avenue Playground Project Budget Uplift - report to council meeting, Wednesday 26 January 2022.

Appendices

Appendix A – Tenders Received for Refurbishment of Moss Side Playground

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