

PLAY PARK FUNDING – UPDATE REPORT NO 4

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the December 2022 Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee (EDI), a Play Park Funding report was noted by members with an agreement that officers would submit a further report outlining the suggested process and timelines proposing further engagement with other groups, including Youth Forums and relevant Community Councils. The original report and subsequent update reports can be found at the following links:

[December 2022 EDI Play Park Funding Report:](#)

[March 2023 EDI Play Park update Report.](#)

[August 2023 EDI Play Park Update report 2](#)

[November 2023 Play Park Update report 3](#)

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee consider the updates provided in the report.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 In August 2022, the Scottish Government confirmed a full 5 year funding package to all Scottish Local Authorities from 2020/21 through to 2025/26. Argyll and Bute Council will receive a total of £938k for Play Park funding for their 28 play parks. All Scottish Councils have received funding through the Capital Allocation for Renewal of Play Parks Fund for investment in play park equipment.
- 3.2 Previous EDI Committees as well as Elected Member Business Days have agreed funding. A timeline for engagement with Community Councils and Disability Forums has been updated in the table at paragraph 3.8 of this report.
- 3.3 The Scottish Government commitment was to ensure that all children have access to quality play in their own community and **the budget was specific in**

that the funding was for renewing existing play parks. A definition/scope of investment was also issued as part of the grant offer and is as below:-

- *The agreed definition of an eligible play park is one which is local authority owned, managed or maintained sites, designated for play, which are free to access and open to all. Play parks in private ownership, those that require an entry fee or those only available to specific groups / with conditions for entry would be outwith scope. We would expect that play parks with equipment (swings, slides etc) aimed at children aged 0-14 would be included as would other facilities used by the same age group (e.g. pump tracks), but MUGAs (Multi Use Game Areas) or dedicated sports fields would be outwith scope.*

- 3.4 A partnership approach continues with South Islay Development (SID) who are in the process of redeveloping the Ramsay Hall Area which will incorporate the play park. The supplementary funding of £30k will allow a better more improved play park and the SID are currently reviewing their initial plans and will come back in the new year with a suggested location plan of equipment and materials for agreement.
- 3.5 An initial tender process for Tarbert Play Park took place in early 2024, this process failed. The officer managing the budget has then met with companies on the play park tender framework and went over the reasons they have not tendered. The tender was re-issued and proved successful with the award being issued in July 2024. The works are due to start on 21 October 2024 for a 4 week period.
- 3.6 Initial engagement has been carried out with some disability forums across the Council area, however this needs further discussions in the Helensburgh area as there have been several contacts made with various organisations. This is being progressed.
- 3.7 Should there be further issues with no tender bids received, officers are already looking at a mixed model of delivery in house or in partnership with local businesses. This must however be done in line with strict legislative restrictions on children’s play park equipment carried out by qualified individuals.
- 3.8 Officers suggest the following updated timeline is appropriate:-

| ACTION | TIMESCALE |
|--|--|
| Engagement with Community Councils and Education Department | Commenced March-May 2023 – now complete. |
| Engagement with Disability Forums | Commenced Winter 2023 – still ongoing. |
| Procurement process which may need to include a mixed model delivery of the equipment and fitting and depends on tender bids (which will last in the region of | Commenced early 2024, for the Tarbert Play Park. |

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|---------------|--|
| 8 – 12 weeks) | |
| Installations | Commencing Summer 2024 for Tarbert (continues to be dependent on procurement process as above) |

3.9 It should be noted however that the Tarbert Play Park procurement process started in February 2024 with a successful tender appointed in July 2024. This was only after a failed tender process and a second further process which required a single officer dealing with the play park improvement works, meeting with play park companies to negotiate and discuss requirements. It is therefore difficult to confirm an exact timeline.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The Scottish Government has allocated a total of £938k for Play Park funding to Argyll and Bute Council for investment in play park equipment through to 2025/26 from the Capital Allocation for Renewal of Play Parks Fund. This paper reports on the positive update for the Tarbert Play Park Tender being resolved as well as proposed Islay partnership work.

4.2 The report further reports on the limited timescales to tender for the remaining play parks and complete the budget spend before the end of March 2026.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy – In line with previous decision and will also pay regard to procurement policy.

5.2 Financial – Mainly funded from Scottish Government play park capital grant, supplemented by other small pots of funding.

5.3 Legal – None known.

5.4 HR – None known.

5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None known.

5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – Engagement will take place with appropriate groups, including the disability forum, to provide a positive impact on our young people.

5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None known.

5.5.3 Islands – Elements of renewal on all council owned play parks, which therefore will not adversely affect islands.

5.6 Climate Change – We will endeavour to minimise carbon footprint of this project.

- 5.7 Risk – Failure to deliver within the allotted Scottish Government timescales may result in losing the budget allocated.
- 5.8 Customer Service – The intention of this funding is to provide better facilities for our customers.
- 5.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – This play park renewal project will benefit children and young people.

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August 2024

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