

Proposal for improvements to western play area in the Rec

Background



Several years ago, the Environment Committee agreed a plan to move the play equipment for young children to the eastern side of the Rec to be near the car park and toilets.

The old cradle swings were to be scrapped and new swings purchased. The other play equipment for young children within the fenced play area was to be removed and either re-sited, scrapped or passed on.

The fenced area would then have equipment suitable for older children and adults - the basket swing, the aeroskate and the flat seat swings, though the seat swings will need upgrading in the near future.

The new swings will be installed near to the play castle this summer and the old cradle swings can then be removed.

The fencing around the play area was repaired recently, but it was vandalised again shortly afterwards.

After the bark was topped up, the area under the basket swing quickly became depleted, resulting in a large puddle of water beneath it. The bark costs £267 for swings and adventure areas.

The area is currently rather an eyesore - without any help from vandals!

Proposal

Remove the wooden fence

Remove the bark, add topsoil and seed the area with grass.

Lay mulch / wet pour surface under the basket swing

Replace the double flat seat swings and lay a mulch / wet pour surface underneath

(The aeroskate already has a wet pour surface underneath it.)

IF the swings need to be protected for safety reasons, a metal fence could be installed to match nearby equipment. It would also be low maintenance and vandal-resistant.



Cost estimate

If the proposal was to be accepted, formal quotes can be sought, but an estimate is as follows:

Removal of wooden fence	Staff time		
Removal of bark	Staff time	bark can be used in adventure play area	
Seed area with grass	£300	plus staff time to prepare	
Topsoil	£700	30m ²	if required
Surface area under basket swing	£2,500		
Swings with wet pour surface	£9,000		
<i>Metal fencing around 3 edges</i>			if required

Budget

There is currently £17,500 in an EMR for recreation ground facilities.

This EMR was for a zip wire, but since the installation of the Health Pathway and the pump track, there has been a question about where there is sufficient space. (The pump track is larger than was initially planned when the improvements to the Rec were agreed.)

Proposal

That the funds in EMR 440 for Recreation Ground facilities, held since 2019, are used to improve the western play area to bring it up to the standard of the remainder of the Rec. The zip wire can be considered for funding in the future if it is felt that there is sufficient space.

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NB The sign at the western entrance to the Rec needs to be updated or removed because it states that the equipment is suitable for children under 12 years. The aeroskate is designed for age 6 to adult and the swings will support adults, too.