

**Report for:** Cabinet – 16 September 2025

**Item number:** 22

**Title:** Spaces to play, spaces to grow: The Tottenham Parks projects for children and communities.

**Report authorised by :** Barry Francis, Director of Environment & Resident Experience.

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**Ward(s) affected:** St. Ann's, South Tottenham, Seven Sisters, Bruce Castle, West Green and Woodside.

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** Key decision.

## **1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 The Council has committed through the approved capital programme to invest £1.5m and deliver improvements to sports and play facilities across eight locations within the wider Tottenham area. The work is scheduled to be completed in March 2026. The projects will deliver much needed improvements for the borough's children and young people and support them to learn and be more physically active.
- 1.2 In keeping with the Haringey Deal, children, their care givers, other residents and stakeholder groups have been engaged both online and in person to develop the priorities for each site. In line with ambitions within the Corporate Delivery Plan a pilot of participatory budgeting has been included in the engagement to allow all those involved to discuss and agree how the available budgets should be allocated to different elements of each location.
- 1.3 This report seeks Cabinet's approval to procure the work to deliver four refurbished play areas and one new play area. Subject to the tender process/processes one or more contractors may be appointed to complete the works.
- 1.4 This report also recommends that the subsequent award of contracts should be a delegated decision for the lead Cabinet Member and Corporate Director.

## **2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

In February, I announced the investment of £1.5 million to improve eight parks in Tottenham, with all works due for completion by March 2026. This investment will enhance play and sports facilities for children and young people, addressing

safety, accessibility, and outdated equipment enabling them to socialise and play, learn and develop in safe environments.

Five parks—Bruce Castle Park, Downhills Park, Lordship Rec, Markfield Park, and White Hart Lane Rec—will undergo major upgrades via a design-and-build procurement process. Due to capacity and timescales, contracts may be awarded to multiple contractors and I am seeking Cabinet approval to procure and delegate contract awards.

In line with the Haringey Deal and Parks & Greenspaces Strategy extensive community engagement has shaped priorities and a pilot for participatory budgeting which has enabled residents to help allocate funds and rank design preferences.

The designs for the new playground equipment prioritise accessibility, safety, and climate resilience and use sustainable materials. The designs also improve sightlines and build in measures to reduce anti-social behaviour. Where possible we will reuse equipment to redistribute to other local parks to maximise impact.

This project supports many of Haringey Council's corporate goals including better resident experience, reducing inequalities in access and enhancing community safety but most importantly, they support the next generation by supporting health childhoods and strong communities.

### **3. Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

- 3.1 Approves the commencement of a tendering process/processes for a contractor (or contractors) to design and build 5 play areas.
- 3.2 Approves the delegation of the award of the contract or contracts to the Corporate Director of Environment & Resident Experience in consultation with the Lead Member for Culture & Leisure to the maximum value of £1,150,625.

### **4. Reasons for decision**

- 4.1 Seven playgrounds within the wider Tottenham area are in urgent need of upgrade and enhancements.
- 4.2 This project addresses both the health and safety of the existing end of life play equipment and safety surfacing at the same time as providing high quality and accessible playgrounds for our youngest residents for years to come.
- 4.3 The proposed works are in line with the adopted Parks and Greenspaces Strategy 2023-2038 and will contribute to the goal of ensuring all new play areas are fully accessible.

- 4.4 The community have been engaged in line with the Haringey Deal to ensure their views are able to shape and inform the final designs for each new play scheme.
- 4.5 Due to the tight timescales involved in this project to design and build on site of the new play areas by the end of March 2026, and the likelihood that any one play contractor may not be able to commit to all five play areas in this procurement by the deadline, following discussions with the Strategic Procurement Team it has been agreed that the final outcome could be one or more contractors win contracts/lots. NB: 'Approval to Procure' was formally granted on 14/02/25 (A2P80-DPS).

## **5. Alternative options considered**

- 5.1 Creation of a new play framework contract for this project that would then remain for future play area improvement schemes in parks was rejected as it was not possible to establish a new framework and deliver the projects within the time available.
- 5.2 Tendering all 8 schemes via one procurement exercise was rejected because the Playzone scheme at Belmont Recreation Ground must be delivered through the Football Foundation framework as part of its grant conditions. In addition, two smaller schemes could be delivered separately due to their lower value and the fact that this would help achieve the March 2026 deadline.

## **6. Background information**

- 6.1 The Parks and Greenspaces Strategy Asset Management Plan recommends the replacement of playgrounds after a period of 20 years. It's not been possible due to funding limitations to be able to have a proactive programme that ensures each play area is refurbished at the end of the 20-year period.
- 6.2 However, the additional £1.5m funding that has been made available in 2025/26 will provide a significant uplift across six existing sites, address the lack of play provision in Woodside Ward and allow for the provision of a new Playzone sports court at Belmont Recreation Ground that has been made possible by a grant from the Football Foundation. In all improving eight park locations.
- 6.3 Since the funding was announced in February this year an extensive consultation and engagement process has taken place as part of this project, working closely with residents, schools, friends' groups, ward councillors and other local stakeholders to identify key improvements and design spaces that will be utilised by our families for years to come.
- 6.4 Consultation for this project included online via the Commonplace platform for 7-8 weeks for each site, on-site banners advertising the project, outreach within local schools, in-park pop-up consultations with paper copies available where possible. For Markfield Park this was also published within the LinkIt mail out.
- 6.5 Specifications have been drawn together using our engagement summary reports and discussions with friends' groups, ward councillors and other stakeholders.

- 6.6 As part of this project the council has trialled a participatory budgeting approach, whereby residents have been provided with the opportunity for greater autonomy over decisions that are made within their parks. Through our online consultation, residents were encouraged to discuss their preferences, ranking priorities for improvements and helping to allocate the available budget to help inform the decisions on how budget is spent.
- 6.7 Detailed specifications for each park/play area that reflects the consultation feedback will be provided as part of the design and build tender package.
- 6.8 Of the eight parks being improved five projects will be commissioned based on the approvals given in this report. Those parks are:-
- Bruce Castle Park
  - Downhills Park
  - Lordship Recreation Ground
  - Markfield Park
  - White Hart Lane Recreation Ground\*
- \* Additional work will also be carried out to resize the pond/create sustainable urban drainage as part of a wider project that will include the playground elements. This is in line with the agreed masterplan created by the community a number of years ago. Separate funding from the approved capital programme will be used for this.*
- 6.9 There are three sets of improvements being progressed independently at the following locations and not the subject of this report but are receiving funding in full or part from the Tottenham Parks Programme:-
- Belmont Recreation Ground – New Playzone Sports Court
  - Chestnuts Park – play upgrades in line with community master plan
  - Paignton Park – targeted improvements to a portion of the play area
- 6.10 Where possible any reusable equipment from the sites that are being refurbished will be relocated to other Tottenham parks and greenspaces to replace redundant or recently removed equipment. This will spread the impact of this scheme further and address gaps in play provision.
- 6.11 Future engagement - As part of the future engagement of this project, following the procurement process, residents will be able to feed back on the winning design, allowing for amendments before the final installation is complete.

### **Key Risks to Delivery**

- 6.12 Weather - As the works will be taking place during the winter and spring months then adverse weather conditions are to be expected which could slow down the delivery of schemes leading to sites being out of use for longer periods than would be expected.

- 6.13 Delays in the timetable – subject to the approvals sought in this report, resources are in place to progress the remainder of the project milestones and to achieve a start on site pre-Christmas.
- 6.14 Supply Chain delays – pre-tender engagement will take place and companies will be asked to confirm that they can meet the delivery timetables prior to tendering for the works. Depending on the responses provided the Council may decide to award the project lots separately to provide better assurance of delivery.

### **Next Steps**

- Tender process & evaluation: September 2025 to October 2025.
- Contractor appointment & mobilisation: October 2025-November 2025.
- Works commence on site: December 2025/January 2026.
- Works to be completed on site: By the end of March 2026.

## **7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes'**

7.1 The council's Parks & Greenspaces Strategy, which was adopted by Cabinet in July 2023, included the following three key priorities:

- Inclusion & Wellbeing: Greater use of parks & greenspaces for healthy lifestyles, for children, young people, older people, women & girls, disabled people, all cultures. Extensive consultation and engagement, co-production and participatory budgeting.
- Climate Change & Biodiversity: Please see Section 8 below.
- Service Quality: Extensive consultation, comprehensive specifications based on community feedback, robust design and build contracts, reputable contractors.

7.2 The Corporate Delivery Plan high level strategic priority outcomes that this project supports are:

- Excellent resident experience & success: Residents able to contribute through the consultation proves into the designs of the new play areas and to help prioritise how funds are spent.
- Children & young people: Happy childhoods: Fit for purpose modern play facilities in play areas across the Tottenham area.
- Culturally rich: Varied play offers at each site, each based on local people's input.
- Climate emergency: Please see Section 8 below.
- Place & economy: Fit for purpose modern play facilities in play areas across the Tottenham area.
- Reduce inequality of access: Provision of upgraded and accessible play areas across the Tottenham area.
- Safe, clean & green: Designing out crime through ensuring that these spaces do not create space for ASB or Crime, ensure spaces align with research around 'Make Space for Girls' to ensure women's safety within parks. Further considerations which have been made through the design are:
  - Enhancing sight lines through and on the approach to play areas.

- Reducing places to congregate and hide.
- Use of colours which reflect rather than absorb light.
- Natural lighting where new lighting cannot be installed and associated crown lifting/tree works.
- Increased number/volume of bins as litter and condition of space is known to attract other ASB.
- Uplifting the area to increase sense of place and increase natural surveillance through increased footfall.
- Ongoing maintenance.
- Removal/relocation of benches in ASB hotspots which are within/close to children's play spaces.

NB: The above has also been set out for the Designing Out Crime Officer whose feedback on any further considerations has been sought and who will have the opportunity to review the 3D rendered designs once we have these from the successful contractor(s).

- Reduce carbon emissions:
  - Avoiding using black safety surfacing to reduce heat.
  - Using recycled plastics or FSC certified timbers which have better sustainability credentials.
  - Refurbish and recycle any removed play equipment for reuse in other play area sites.
  - Where timber is used, this is to be restricted to Robinia heartwood.
  - Consider the provision of shade
  - Please see Section 8 below.
- Shaping Tottenham: Improvement of 8 play and sports areas within the Tottenham area with this £1.5m investment.
- Making Haringey a place where everyone can belong and thrive: Improvement of 8 play and sports areas within the Tottenham area with this £1.5m investment.
- Thriving places: Improvement of 8 play and sports areas within the Tottenham area with this £1.5m investment.
- Supporting children and young people's experiences and skills: Consulting children and young people on their requirements. Providing fit for purpose, modern and accessible play facilities for all children and families.

## **8. Carbon and Climate Change**

- 8.1 The Council's ambition is to achieve a carbon neutral Haringey by 2041. According to the Energy Saving Trust, behavioural change such as embedding an assessment of carbon impact into project briefs, procurements and project sign-off procedures would likely lead to a 5-10% carbon reduction improvement in those projects.
- 8.2 As part of this project's consultation & engagement phase, residents were asked whether they would like to see further enhancements to their green spaces, such as rewilding, greening, planting to reduce noise/air pollution from surrounding roads and options for tree planting to reduce urban heat island effect. All designs will consider how these can be incorporated in line with public comments.

8.3 Any trees planted as part of this project will help achieve the council's target of planting 10,000 new trees/increasing tree canopy cover by 30% by 2030.

8.4 Sustainability of materials (examples).

- Avoiding using black safety surfacing to reduce heat.
- Using recycled plastics or FSC certified timbers which have better sustainability credentials.
- Refurbish and recycle any removed play equipment for reuse in other play area sites.
- Where timber is used, this is to be restricted to Robinia heartwood.
- Consider the provision of shade

## **9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (Procurement), Director of Legal and Governance, Equalities)**

### **9.1 Finance**

This report seeks approval for the commencement of a tendering process/processes for a contractor (or contractors) to design and build 5 play areas, including the subsequent award of a contract or contracts to the value of c.£1,151k to a contractor (or contractors) to design and build the 5 play areas.

Within the current capital programme plan, there is £1.5m budget provision under capital scheme 343 (Tottenham parks) to fully fund the cost of this proposal. This leaves a balance of c.£349k towards the delivery of capital works on the remaining three parks.

### **9.2 Procurement**

Strategic Procurement (SP) notes the content of this report which seeks approval to procure construction and refurbishment works at 5 Haringey locations:

- Bruce Castle Park
- Downhills Park
- Lordship Recreation Ground
- Markfield Park
- White Hart Lane Recreation Ground

SP will work with the Service to establish the most efficient route to market pursuant of CSO 12.01, with primary consideration to CSO 7.02 and 8.01. Where it is not possible to use either CSO 7.02 or 8.01, approval for an alternate route to market will be sought from the Chief Procurement Officer.

SP will work with the Service to ensure value for money is achieved through the procurement activity, including delivery of Social Value aligned with the Council's priorities in accordance with CSO 6.02

Pursuant to the provisions of the Council's Contract Standing Order (CSO) 2.01(b), Cabinet are required to approve the commencement of a tendering process where the value of the contract to be procured is £500,000 and above.

### **9.3 Legal**

9.3.1 The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) has been consulted in the preparation of the report.

9.3.2 Pursuant to the Council's Contract Standing Order (CSO) 2.01(b), Cabinet has authority to approve the commencement of a procurement exercise where the value of the contract to be procured is £500,000 or more and as such the recommendation in paragraph 3.1 of the report is in line with the Council's CSO.

9.3.3 Pursuant to the provisions of the Council's Contract Standing Order (CSO) 2.01(c), Cabinet has power to approve the award of a contract where the value of the contract is £500,000 or more.

9.3.4 Further to paragraph 9.3.3 above, the recommendation in paragraph 3.2 of the report to delegate the power to award the contract or contracts to the Corporate Director of Environment & Resident Experience in consultation with the Lead Member for Culture & Leisure to the maximum value of £1,150,625 is line with the provisions of Part 4 Section F paragraph 1.3(a) of the Council's Constitution and also in line with law. Cabinet has power under the Local Government Act 2000 to delegate the discharge of any of its functions to an officer (S.9E (Discharge of Functions)).

9.3.5 The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) confirms that there are no legal reasons preventing Cabinet, from approving the recommendations in the report.

### **Equality**

The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.



The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation.

Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

This report is seeking Cabinet approval for a procurement process to be undertaken, for the improvement of four refurbished play areas and one new play area.

When designing new playgrounds, we consider accessibility and inclusivity of these spaces, including spaces for children and adults with complex additional needs, physical disabilities, learning difficulties, neurodivergence, language barriers, gender and socio-economic barriers to accessing these facilities.

We also specifically consider 'Make Space for Girls' to ensure women's safety within parks.

Key considerations which for the design include:

- Quiet spaces.
- Spaces for imaginative/non-prescriptive play.
- Level access throughout.
- Functioning gates with appropriate widths for both wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs.
- Limiting access via technology eg QR codes.
- Access to imagery and bright colours.
- Seating with side transfer and correct height to aide those with mobility issues.
- Wheelchair accessible play equipment.
- Sensory play equipment and planting.
- Sight lines and safety.

The Parks & Greenspaces Strategy sets out the council's aspiration to provide that 50% of play areas are fully accessible over the next ten years.

Extensive consultation has been undertaken online via the Commonplace platform for 7-8 weeks for each site, on-site banners advertising the project, outreach within local schools, in-park pop-up consultations with paper copies available where possible. For Markfield Park this was also published within the LinkIt mail out. In particular the consultation included people with disabilities, women and girls, children and parents, and for Markfield Park the Jewish community.

Specifications have been drawn together using our engagement summary reports and discussions with friends' groups, ward councillors and other stakeholders.

As part of this project the council has trialled a participatory budgeting approach, whereby residents have been provided with the opportunity for greater autonomy over

decisions that are made within their parks. Through our online consultation, residents were encouraged to discuss their preferences, ranking priorities for improvements and helping to allocate the available budget to help inform the decisions on how budget is spent.

As part of the pilot participatory budgeting process, the public played a role in shaping the proposals to be delivered. The project's framing was guided by the 2023 Parks and Greenspaces Strategy, underpinned by the accompanying EqlA. A project specific EqlA will be drafted post-procurement, prior to final decisions being made on playground designs and final implementation.

Detailed specifications for each park/play area that reflects the consultation feedback will be provided as part of the design and build tender package.

Once the tender process has been undertaken, the resulting designs, which will have been based on the consultation feedback, will be shared with Disability Action Haringey and others to agree the winning scheme and any other amendments.

An equality screening tool form has been completed and uploaded along with this report. As described above, an initial part of the pilot participatory budgeting process meant that the public played a role in shaping the proposals to be delivered. The project's framing was guided by the 2023 Parks and Greenspaces Strategy, underpinned by the accompanying EqlA. A project specific EqlA will be drafted post-procurement, prior to final decisions being made on playground designs and final implementation.

As an organisation carrying out a public function on behalf of a public body, the Contractor will be obliged to have due regard for the need to achieve the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as stated above. Appropriate contract management arrangements will be established to ensure that the delivery of the major works does not result in any preventable or disproportionate inequality.

## **10. Use of Appendices**

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment.