

**Teignbridge District Council
Overview and Scrutiny
16 June 2026
Part i**

Play Parks Improvement Project

Purpose of Report

To present the draft Full Council report for the Play Parks Improvement Project to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review and comment.

Recommendation(s)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Review the draft Full Council report for the Play Parks Improvement Project; and
2. Agree any changes or additional recommendations to be put forward to Full Council for consideration.

Financial Implications

Please see Appendix 1

Legal Implications

Please see Appendix 1

Risk Assessment

Please see Appendix 1

Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

Please see Appendix 1

Report Author

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Executive Member

Cllr David Palethorpe – Deputy Leader, Executive Member for Economy, Estates and Major Projects

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Full Council Report – Play Parks Improvement Project

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Full Council report for the Play Parks Improvement Project to Overview and Scrutiny for review and comment. The Play Parks Improvement Project is a district wide programme of play park improvements on some of the parks owned by the district council that will target available funding to the sites most in need, improve play provision for local communities and ensure time limited developer contributions are used effectively.

2. REPORT DETAIL

- 2.1. Please refer to Appendix 1 to review the draft Full Council report.

APPENDIX 1

Teignbridge District Council

Full Council

28 July 2026

Part i

Play Parks Improvement Project

Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the Play Parks Improvement Project and the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 funding to enable a prioritised programme of improvements to a number of Council owned play parks across Teignbridge.

The report sets out the case for investment, the proposed prioritisation and delivery approach, the engagement activity that will inform decisions, governance arrangements, and the financial, legal, risk and climate implications of the programme.

Recommendation(s)

Full Council RESOLVES to:

1. Approve the Play Parks Improvement Project and the proposed phased approach to governance, engagement, prioritisation, funding allocation and delivery.
2. Approve the use of £1 million of Community Infrastructure Levy funding to support the programme, to be used alongside available Section 106 contributions.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member for Economy, Estates and Major Projects and the Head of Finance, to finalise programme scoring matrix, prioritisation, engagement activity, funding allocations and delivery arrangements, including asset transfer packages where appropriate.

Financial Implications

These are as set out in section 6.1.

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Legal Implications

These are as set out in section 6.2.

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Risk Assessment

These are as set out in section 6.3.

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Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

These are as set out in section 6.4.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of play parks included in the programme

Appendix 2 - Engagement Plan

Appendix 3 – Sample Scoring Matrix

Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for a district wide programme of play park improvements on TDC owned parks that will target available funding to the sites most in need, improve play provision for local communities and ensure time limited developer contributions are used effectively.

2. REPORT DETAIL

Overview

2.1. The Council has identified 37 Teignbridge District Council owned play park sites which are likely to require improvement within the next one to five years due to ageing infrastructure, accessibility limitations and uneven quality of provision (see Appendix 1). These improvements go beyond the day-to-day management of repair and maintenance of existing facilities.

- 2.2. All 37 sites will be included in the initial assessment. Following the phased approach set out in Section 3 (analysis, engagement and prioritisation), recommendations will be made on which parks should receive investment to support their continued use, and which may be considered for alternative forms of open space provision. For example, a community may prioritise investment in a centralised destination park rather than nearby smaller pocket parks, with those smaller spaces retained for alternative open space uses.
- 2.3. The proposed programme supports the One Teignbridge Strategy by improving health and wellbeing, tackling inequalities, supporting placemaking and ensuring community infrastructure keeps pace with local growth. The programme will be funded through a combination of approximately £2 million of Section 106 funding and £1 million of CIL already identified within the capital programme. It also creates opportunities, where appropriate, to transfer assets to town and parish councils with funding packages where there are local willingness and ability to do so.

3. PROPOSED APPROACH

- 3.1. The programme is proposed to be structured into four phases, providing a clear, evidence-based and prioritised approach to investment and delivery:

Phase 1 (evidence and engagement)

- 3.2. Phase 1 focuses on data collection and analysis of the 37 sites, bringing together a comprehensive evidence base to identify priority sites. This includes reviewing park condition data, identifying any immediate safety risks, analysing available S106 funding and associated restrictions, assessing deprivation indicators, and comparing existing provision to standards for play provision as set out in our Local Plan. Wider contextual factors, such as proximity to town centres and population data, are also considered, alongside mapping of all existing play provision to understand coverage and gaps across the district.
- 3.3. Phase 1 will also include consultation with the community to help make the decisions as to how the programme will invest in the play parks included in the programme. Details are included in the Engagement Plan in Appendix 2.
- 3.4. A central element of engagement will be an accessible online survey, promoted widely through multiple channels including social media, the Council website, newsletters and printed materials. The survey is designed to be quick and easy to complete, with information boards and posters displayed at park locations, community venues, and shops promoting the project and displaying QR codes to link to the website and online survey. Paper copies of the survey will be available at key community-based locations, e.g. schools, community halls, nearby to parks etc.
- 3.5. All town and parish councils and ward councillors involved in this programme will be contacted directly and invited to take a lead role in managing engagement within their communities and encouraged to facilitate targeted local consultation activity through schools, youth groups, community run events, and other community groups.

Phase 2 (prioritisation)

- 3.6. This phase introduces a consistent and transparent prioritisation process through a weighted scoring framework. Sites will be assessed using a Red-Amber-Green methodology, with a proposed weighting of 45% for condition (including safety, compliance and quality of equipment), 35% for place-based need (including deprivation, demand and anti-social behaviour), and 20% for provision and accessibility (including proximity to other play areas, inclusivity and gaps in provision). Sites with immediate safety risks are addressed outside of this process to ensure urgent issues are resolved promptly. This phase results in a clearly prioritised list of sites, ensuring investment is targeted where it will have the greatest impact. A sample Scoring Matrix is provided in Appendix 3.

Phase 3 (allocation of funds)

- 3.7. Phase 3 focuses on the allocation of funding based on the prioritisation outcomes, site requirements and available resources. Indicative costs suggest smaller schemes typically range from approximately £50,000-£100,000 and larger playgrounds from £100,000 to £300,000. Recent examples of park refurbishments include Shaldon (c. £105,000), Ashburton Road (c. £224,000), Decoy (c. £293,000) and Teignmouth Den (c. £282,000). It is not possible to distribute funds equally per play park as S106 is tied to specific locations and some play parks may require more investment than others due to their condition.
- 3.8. S106 funds are only available in the settlements of Chudleigh, Dawlish, Exminster, Heathfield, Kingsteignton, Newton Abbot and Teignmouth. This S106 funding will be used in the first instance. Where funds are required in excess of the available S106 in these locations, or in the settlements where there is no S106 (Ashburton, Buckfastleigh and Starcross), CIL funding will be deployed to address any remaining gaps.
- 3.9. Funding will be allocated in accordance with site priority and scale of works, with higher priority sites funded first. Funding will be distributed through a mix of delivery routes, including transfer to town and parish councils to facilitate local delivery, allocation to existing repairs and maintenance budgets for ongoing improvements, and direct commissioning of capital works.

Phase 4 (delivery)

- 3.10. Phase 4 sets out the delivery of improvements where works cannot be progressed through asset transfer or business as usual arrangements. In these cases, third-party contractors will be commissioned to design and deliver refurbishment works for identified sites, funded through S106 and CIL contributions.

4. Governance

- 4.1. It is proposed that the project will be overseen by a Play Parks Funding Board which will be comprised of the Director of Place, Head of Assets, Head of Leisure, Head of Development Management, the Executive Member for Economy, Estates and Major Projects, and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny.

4.2. The Play Parks Funding Board will be engaged in the following key activities within the programme:

1. Site visits to all play parks in the programme, to be accompanied by ward councillors and representatives of the town and parish council as part of the Phase 1 engagement plan.
2. Review of the scoring matrix following Phase 2 prioritisation.
3. Review of allocation of funds as part of Phase 3.

4.3. The report asks for delegated authority to be given to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member for Economy, Estates and Major Projects and the Head of Finance, to finalise programme prioritisation, engagement activity, funding allocations and delivery arrangements, including asset transfer packages where appropriate. These decisions will be informed by the Play Parks Funding Board which will have been engaged in the programme as set out above.

4.4. Decisions will be published through the existing officer decision process, which allows for member call-in.

4.5. Annual progress reports will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny and Executive setting out park scores, funding allocations, expenditure and delivery progress.

5. Timescale and Milestones

5.1. Subject to Full Council approval, the following key dates and milestones are proposed:

Date	Key milestone
July 2026	Notify relevant town and parish councils of project
July-September 2026	Phase 1 – evidence and engagement stage
September 2026	Phase 2 – prioritisation using scoring matrix
September 2026	Play Parks Funding Board Phase 2 review
October 2026	Phase 3 – provisional allocation of funds
October 2026	Play Parks Funding Board Phase 3 review
November 2026	Draw up funding agreements for asset transfer packages
November 2026	Transfer agreed funds to the Repair and Maintenance budget

November 2026	Publish tender for third-party contractor works
January 2027	Commission contractor
January – March 2027	Design Stages
April 2027	Begin programme of delivery

6. Implications, Risk Management and Climate Change Impact

6.1. Financial

The programme is expected to be funded through circa £2 million of available Section 106 funding and £1 million of Community Infrastructure Levy funding. Indicative refurbishment costs range from approximately £50,000-£100,000 and larger playgrounds from £100,000 to £300,000, including equipment, installation, surfacing and ancillary works. Prioritising the use of S106 before CIL will ensure these developer contributions are spent for their intended purpose, while a planned programme should also reduce whole life costs compared with repeated reactive repairs. Where suitable, asset transfers may also reduce future maintenance liabilities for the Council.

There are some costs associated with promotion and communications of the project. These can be absorbed within the Design and Engagement Budget for 26/27.

6.2. Legal

The programme must ensure that Section 106 contributions are used in accordance with the terms of the relevant agreements, including locality restrictions and spend-by dates, and that any use of CIL complies with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Procurement, subsidy control, contract management, land ownership and asset transfer arrangements will need to be considered as the programme progresses.

6.3. Risks

Several delivery, financial and stakeholder risks are associated with the programme. These primarily relate to funding constraints and deadlines, delivery timescales, and stakeholder expectations. A range of mitigations have been built into the programme design to manage these risks and support successful delivery:

- Risks relating to funding deadlines are mitigated through active management of Section 106 contributions, including maintaining a live schedule of spend deadlines, prioritising their use ahead of CIL funding, and bringing forward deliverable schemes where timescales are tight.
- Financial and funding constraints are managed through the application of a robust prioritisation framework, ensuring that investment is targeted at the highest-need sites and that available funding sources are combined where appropriate to maximise impact.

- Stakeholder and reputational risks are mitigated through transparent communication, clear explanation of the evidence-based decision-making approach, and ongoing engagement with Members and communities to manage expectations.
- Risks associated with asset transfer are addressed through early engagement with town and parish councils to understand capacity and appetite, supported by the provision of funding packages, clear guidance on future responsibilities, and the use of standardised agreements to enable a smooth and consistent transfer process.

6.4. Environmental / Climate Change Impact

Positive:

- Opportunity to enhance green infrastructure and provide biodiversity benefits alongside infrastructure improvements.
- Encouragement of active travel through improved local play provision (reducing trips to provision further away)
- Climate adaptation benefits, e.g. introducing trees or improved surfacing can help mitigate urban heat, or improvements to drainage can reduce surface water flooding.

Negative:

- Carbon emissions from construction and materials
- Potential loss of natural or semi-natural features (e.g. replacing grass with artificial surfacing)
- Increased maintenance emissions because of higher specification or increased number of equipment.

7. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Three options have been considered: do nothing; do the minimum; do something.

7.1. Business as usual

This approach would see the continuation of day-to-day repair and maintenance of TDC owned parks across the district. We would continue to address safety risks and repair and replace equipment and surfacing identified as needed through annual condition surveys or through the reporting of issues. It would not respond to wider issues such as accessibility, inclusive design or variations in quality across the district. As a result, it would make a limited contribution to improving health, wellbeing and reducing inequalities, as investment would not be targeted to areas of greatest need. In addition, the lack of a coordinated approach to managing CIL and Section 106 funding would increase the risk of unspent contributions and fragmented delivery, reducing the overall effectiveness of the programme. For these reasons, this option is not recommended.

7.2. Do something (proposed approach)

Alongside the day-to-day repair and maintenance of TDC owned parks across the district, this approach would deliver a planned and prioritised programme of improvements to play parks. It will target investment based on available S106 funding, site condition, deprivation and local need, and safety considerations. It

would improve safety, accessibility and inclusivity, supporting healthier and happier communities while helping to reduce inequalities. The coordinated use of funding would ensure developer contributions are maximised, with S106 applied within required timescales and CIL used to address remaining priority sites. A more strategic approach would also enable consistent quality across upgraded parks, reducing whole-life costs compared to repeated reactive repairs. In addition, it creates opportunities for appropriate asset transfer to town and parish councils, supported by funding to deliver improvements, helping to reduce ongoing Council costs and enabling local management of assets within their communities. For these reasons, this option is recommended.

7.3. Do more

A third option would be to adopt a more ambitious, district-wide approach, extending the programme to include all play parks owned by the Council rather than focusing solely on those identified through the condition survey as requiring improvement within the next five years. This would be supported by increasing the proportion of CIL funding allocated to the project, enabling a comprehensive review and enhancement of play provision across the district. While this approach could deliver significant long-term benefits in terms of consistency, quality and strategic investment, it would reduce the level of CIL available for other committed projects within the Capital Programme, particularly in areas such as education and active travel. In addition, delivering a programme of this scale would present resourcing and capacity challenges, particularly within the timescales associated with Local Government Reorganisation.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. The Play Parks Improvement Project provides a structured and evidence-based approach to upgrading play provision across Teignbridge. It will help deliver safer, more accessible and better-quality community spaces, support health and wellbeing, and ensure the Council makes effective use of time-limited developer contributions. Subject to approval, the next stage will be to finalise engagement activity, complete scoring and prioritisation, and bring forward funding allocations and delivery arrangements.

Appendix 1: TDC Parks in Programme

	Name of Park	Town
1	Barnsey Close, Westabrook	Ashburton
2	Cleder Place	Ashburton
3	Westabrook	Ashburton
4	Home Park	Ashburton
5	Miners Close	Ashburton
6	Recreation Ground	Ashburton
7	Market Close	Buckfastleigh
8	Glebelands	Buckfastleigh
9	Duckspend	Buckfastleigh
10	Palace Meadow	Chudleigh
11	Sandy Lane	Dawlish
12	Newlands	Dawlish
13	St. Marys Cottages	Dawlish
14	Third Avenue	Dawlish
15	Third Avenue	Dawlish
16	Berrybrook Meadow	Exminster
17	Gissions	Exminster
18	Miller Way	Exminster
19	Prince Rupert Way	Heathfield
20	Browhill	Heathfield
21	St Columba Close	Kingsteignton
22	Kingsleigh Park, off Gate Tree Close	Kingsteignton
23	Priscott Way	Kingsteignton
24	Chichester Way	Newton Abbot
25	Osborne Park	Newton Abbot
26	Powderham Road	Newton Abbot
27	Bakers Park	Newton Abbot
28	Courtenay Park	Newton Abbot
29	Sandringham Park	Newton Abbot
30	Hamilton Drive	Newton Abbot
31	Sandford View	Newton Abbot

32	Staplake Gardens, Brickyard Lane	Starcross
33	Coombe Valley	Teignmouth
34	Broadmeadow	Teignmouth
35	Lower Kingsdown Road	Teignmouth
36	The Den	Teignmouth
37	Fourth Avenue	Teignmouth

Appendix 2: Engagement Plan

Engagement workstream	Objective	Lead(s)	Means of communication	Priority	Success indicators	Notes
Consistent messaging	Agree a set of key messages which are continually reinforced in communications	TDC Comms	Social media Websites Consultation materials Conversation Newsletter	High	Sentiment analysis Reduction in repeated misinformation	
Online survey	Design and promote a survey that can be advertised through all engagement channels	Strategic Infrastructure and Growth Team	Social media Websites Consultation materials Conversation Newsletter	High	Number of surveys completed	Paper copies to be distributed via town and parish councils at key locations and on notice boards
Residents Newsletter		Strategic Infrastructure and Growth Team TDC Comms	Granicus – as part of weekly newsletter as appropriate	Medium	Click throughs Website visits Video views	To include Play Parks Improvement Project branding
Social Media communications	Provide ongoing information about the project and how people can get involved	TDC Comms	Facebook	Medium	Click throughs Website visits Reduction in repeated misinformation	Include photos
Information Boards	Prepare information boards for each	Strategic Infrastructure	Placed at each park included in the project	High	Number of click throughs from QR code	x 37 for each of the parks

Engagement workstream	Objective	Lead(s)	Means of communication	Priority	Success indicators	Notes
	of the parks in the project linked to a QR code for the website and survey	and Growth Team TDC Comms				included in the project
Posters	Prepare posters promoting the project in each relevant community linked to a QR code for the website and survey		Printed by TDC and distributed via town and parish councils and ward members to local traders and community groups	High	Number of click throughs from QR code	
FAQs	Information on the website about the project	Strategic Infrastructure and Growth Team	Website	Medium	Reduction in repeated misinformation	
Website	Provide key information about the project	Strategic Infrastructure and Growth Team	Council website	High	Number of website views	
Community engagement	Targeted engagement to get the views of representatives across the community	Town or parish council	Face-to-face Community events Via existing community groups	High	Number of people engaged Demographic representation of respondents	

Engagement workstream	Objective	Lead(s)	Means of communication	Priority	Success indicators	Notes
			Schools			
Ward Members and Town Parish Councillors	Involve councillor representatives in decision making process	Strategic Infrastructure and Growth Team	Site visits prior to allocation of funds	High	Number of councillors attending site visits Number of objections to proposals at Full Council	To be attended with the Play Parks Funding Board

Appendix 3 – Sample Scoring Matrix

Each area's 0-4 score is adjusted by its importance (weight). All weighted scores for a particular park are added together to give a final score between 0 and 4.

Park Name	CONDITION (35%)				PLACE BASED NEED (45%)						PROVISION (20%)		Total Score
	Risk	Risk score	Quality	Quality score	Deprivation	Deprivation score	Park Type	Park type score	Population of children (within 800m of park)	Pop Score	Provision of parks within 400m and 800m	Provision Score	
	0 - Very Low 1 - Low 2 - Moderate 3 - High Risk 4 - Very High Risk		0 – High Quality 1 – Good Quality 2 – Moderate Quality 3 – Poor Quality 4 – Critical / Unusable		0 - Least Deprived (1 -2 IMD) 1 - Low Deprivation (3-4 IMD) 2 - Moderate Deprivation (5-6 IMD) 3 - High deprivation (7-8 IMD) 4 - Most deprived (9-10 IMD)		1 – LAP (Local Area for Play) 2 - LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) 3 – NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped area for play) 4 – NEAP with other facilities (MUGA, Skate park etc)		0 - Very Low 1 - Low 2 - Moderate 3 - High 4 - Very High		0 - Excellent provision 1 - good provision 2 - Moderate provision 3 - Poor provision 4 - No provision		0
Park 1	Risk score of 8 (low risk)	1	Limited or outdated equipment offering low play value	3	IMD 4 – Low Deprivation	1	LAP	1	Estimated High population of children	3	There is a LAP, a LEAP and a NEAP within 400m and 800m	1	1.6
Park 2	Risk score of 10 (low risk)	1	No facilities park is unusable	4	IMD 4 – Low Deprivation	1	LAP	1	Estimated low population of children	2	There is a LAP, a LEAP and a NEAP within 400m and 800m	1	1.7
Park 3	Risk score of 10 (low risk)	1	Limited or outdated equipment offering low play value	3	IMD 4 – Low Deprivation	1	NEAP	2	Estimated High population of children	3	There is a LAP, a LEAP and a NEAP within 400m and 800m	1	1.8
Park 4	Risk score of 12 (Moderate risk)	2	A good range of facilities but basic equipment offering moderate play value. Some signs of wear or limited maintenance. Could be more inclusive.	2	IMD 4 – Low Deprivation	1	NEAP - including skate park and MUGA	4	Estimated very high population of children	4	This is a NEAP with Leap within 800m	1	2.2

The final score is then converted into a RAG status using the below thresholds to determine the parks that are of the highest priority.

Score weighting and RAG Thresholds

Condition (35%)	Place Based Need (45%)	Provision Gap (20%)
Risk Factor (20%)	Deprivation (15%)	Provision mapping (20%)
Quality and Accessibility (15%)	Park Type (20%)	
	Population of children (10%)	

RAG Thresholds	
<1.49	Low priority
1.5 to 2.99	Medium priority
3.0 to 4.0	High priority

