

Report to Rochdale North Township Committee



Date of Meeting	9 th September 2020
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Environment, Cabinet Member for Planning, Development & Housing
Report Author	Nick Barton
Public/Private Document	Public

Section 106 - Central Rochdale Play Provision

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to allocate funds currently held from Section 106 Open Space contributions in Central Rochdale Ward to improve play facilities at the South Street Play Area.

Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee Members approve the allocation of £147,936.09 from Section 106 Open Space contributions to improvements to toddler, junior and adventure play facilities at South Street Play Area.

Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1 Rochdale North Township Members have previously requested that all Section 106 Open Space funded schemes be approved by Members by way of a report to an appropriate committee. A similar process of reporting exists in all other Townships.
- 3.2 Costed schemes have been prepared by the Council's Environmental Management Service and are supported by Ward Councillors.
- 3.3 The schemes are within the parameters of the Section 106 agreements and the Council's 'Provision of Recreational Open Space in New Housing' Supplementary Planning Document.

Key Points for Consideration

- 4.1 Rochdale Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Provision of Recreational Open Space in New Housing', states that contributions may be used towards the provision (including 20 years maintenance) and / or improvement of open space within 5 years of receipt. In the case of informal open space, such as play areas, provision should be within 20 minutes walking distance of the development generating the contribution, the proposed project meets this criteria.
- 4.2 South Street Play Area is 600m from Dean Street. The facilities at South Street Play Area currently include two Multi Use Games Area, a toddler and junior play area for ages 2-11 and an older children's play area for ages 11-16.
- 4.3 Most of the equipment in the toddlers play area is dated, and whilst still serviceable, has been overtaken by new play equipment that offers greater play value and more varied play opportunities than the current equipment.
- 4.4 The older children's play area is similar in that it has low play value compared to newer equipment designs and since installation has become less and less popular.
- 4.5 There is an opportunity to improve access and inclusion and the range of provision for children and families with disabilities.
- 4.6 The proposal includes the installation of a new toddler play unit, with more play elements and increased play capacity; replacement of swings and installation of an accessible springer, roundabout and trampoline; and replacement of adventure play equipment to provide equipment such as a mini zip wire, climbing walls and a rope pyramid.

Alternatives Considered

- 4.7 The Council is required to spend Section 106 contributions in accordance with legal agreements and local and national planning policy. Not bringing forward projects to spend Section 106 contributions in accordance with these agreements and policies risk the loss of investment in local facilities, and the refunding of monies held from Section 106 contributions where there is a time limited period for spend.
- 4.8 Proposals put forward in this report have been the subject of consultation with Ward Members and reflect their priorities. The use of resources has been considered to maximise the funding available.

Costs and Budget Summary

- 5.1 Section 106 contributions are monitored and managed to ensure that they are

received and spent in accordance with policy and financial regulations.

- 5.2 The Council's Environmental Management Service will manage the implementation of these projects in accordance with established project management methodology and are able to meet the full cost of the project from identified budgets.
- 5.3 The funding will provide capital costs to upgrade and existing play facility, maintenance costs will be met from existing maintenance budgets for those facilities held by the Environmental Management Service.
- 5.4 The identified funding of £147,936.09 relates to unallocated Section 106 contributions from development at Dean Street.

Risk and Policy Implications

- 6.1 As identified within the report, contributions from Section 106 agreements must be spent within the parameters of each of those legally binding documents. Where money is not spent within the appropriate parameters, then this risks legal challenge, which would present significant financial and reputational as well as legal risk to the Council.
- 6.2 The proposals outlined in this report are compliant with the legal agreement and the Council's policies on the provision of local open space Section 106 contributions.

Consultation

- 7.1 The projects contained within this report have been developed in consultation with Ward Members.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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8.1	Provision of Open Space in New Housing Supplementary Planning Document
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Planning and Development, Floor 3, Number One Riverside or online at: http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/pdf/2017-02-21-recreational-open-space-spd-updated-v2.pdf

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