

Report to Pennines Township Committee



Date of Meeting	16 September 2020
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Planning, Development & Housing, Cabinet Member for Environment
Report Author	Nick Barton
Public/Private Document	Public

Section 106 - Pennines Play Provision

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to allocate funds currently held from Section 106 Open Space contributions in Littleborough Lakeside to contribute to improvements to play facilities at Hare Hill Park and Stansfield Estate.

Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee Members approve the allocation of £27,007 from Section 106 Open Space contributions to improvements to play facilities at Hare Hill Park.
- 2.2 It is recommended that Committee Members approve the allocation of £105,000 from Section 106 Open Space contributions to provide a new toddler and junior play facility at Barnes Meadow to service the Stansfield Estate.

Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1 Pennines 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 projects meet this criteria.

Hare Hill Play Area

- 4.2 Hare Hill Park is a popular park with a range of facilities. The park benefits from having two play areas catering for different age ranges and a skateboard facility. Most equipment in the toddler play area is in good order and provides high quality play value.
- 4.3 Some equipment is now coming to the end of its life span. Some of the equipment is also outdated and needs to be replaced to ensure it remains interesting and challenging for children. There is an opportunity to improve access and inclusion for children and families with disabilities.
- 4.4 The project proposes to remove the poor quality roundabout and replace with a new inclusive roundabout, which will enable children with disabilities to play alongside children with no disabilities. Replace end of lifespan fire engine play with a new fire engine as this offers multiple play elements for children and feedback shows that the fire engine theme is popular with children. An additional new play element will be installed, such as a trampoline, however the exact equipment will be determined by discussion with ward members and play area users.
- 4.5 The cost of the works is £27,000, including £5,600 a 20 years maintenance fee for inspecting and maintaining the additional playground equipment.

Stansfield Play Area

- 4.6 Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) are to close their play area on Stansfield Estate. The draft Play Strategy for the Borough recommends a replacement toddler and junior play area on the estate, which will be built on Rochdale Borough Council land to ensure its long term status.
- 4.7 The project proposes the provision of a new play area serving ages 2-11 on land at Barnes Meadow, next to the existing football kick about area opposite 45-51 Barnes Meadow, but stepped back from the road to mitigate impact on residents facing. Residents will be consulted on whether they would like tree planting between their houses and the proposed play area location. A connecting tarmac path would take people from the pavement to the play area. No play equipment for older children will be included, again to mitigate any impact on residents.

- 4.8 RBH are to contribute to the new play area, however the bulk of the cost will have to be met from Council resources, including 20 year maintenance costs, the estimated cost of the works including maintenance is £100,000-£110,000.

Alternatives Considered

- 4.9 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.
- 4.10 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 identified funding of £132,007 is made up of Section 106 Open Space contributions from development in Littleborough Lakeside at Hare Hill Road (£22,857), Madens Square (£3,735), Todmorden Road (£415) and Stansfield Mill (£105,000).

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 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 Recreational Open Space in New Housing Supplementary Planning Document.	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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