

## APPENDIX 1

### PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Outdoor Play Provision

SCRUTINY MONITORING – PROGRESS UPDATE	
<b>Review:</b>	<b>Outdoor Play Provision</b>
<b>Link Officer/s:</b>	<b>Neil Mitchell</b>
<b>Action Plan Agreed:</b>	<b>June 2024</b>

Updates on the progress of actions in relation to agreed recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews are required approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan. Progress updates must be detailed, evidencing what has taken place regarding each recommendation – a grade assessing progress should then be given (see end of document for grading explanation). Any evidence on the impact of the actions undertaken should also be recorded for each recommendation.

<b>Recommendation 1:</b>	<b>SBC ensures both revenue and renewal considerations are an intrinsic part of any existing and future outdoor play space proposal within the Borough to maximise the long-term sustainability of such sites.</b>
Responsibility:	Tony Raine (with support from Steve Bowerbank / Keith Jackson)
Date:	30 December 2024
Agreed Action:	Calculate estimated costs for inspections, maintenance and renewal / replacement of equipment and surfacing - for all SBC play areas and informal sport facilities (e.g. MUGAs).
Agreed Success Measure:	Estimated costs identified to ensure SBC can ensure long-term sustainability of sites.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	<p>All play areas have been assessed and tables developed identifying individual items of equipment at each site, the play value of each item, it's life expectancy and replacement costs (including surfacing).</p> <p>First stage of Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Outdoor Play Provision 2025 agreed by Cabinet 17/7/25. During the development of the paper intensive work was undertaken estimate costs. Strategy contains several principles designed to address revenue and renewal considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle 6, 'We aim to limit the overall scale of provision to a level which is sustainable in terms of Council resources for management and maintenance.'</li> </ul>
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>1 (Fully Achieved)</b>
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	<a href="https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf">https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf</a>

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<b>Recommendation 2:</b>	<b>To encourage a greater sense of community ownership, consideration be given to approaching relevant Town / Parish Councils and the local business community within the vicinity of existing outdoor play spaces to potentially support the development / maintenance of a site.</b>
Responsibility:	Neil Mitchell
Date:	At draft Strategy stage (see 7)
Agreed Action:	Approach Town and Parish Council to determine whether they are willing to provide additional financial support to maintain / develop play provision in their local area.  Business sponsorship / involvement to be discussed with individual organisations and within forum opportunities.
Agreed Success Measure:	Third parties contribute towards costs of maintaining, renewing or developing outdoor play provision.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	This area of work will commence when we have completed the analysis of play provision utilising the principles agreed at Cabinet on the 17 <sup>th</sup> July 25.
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	N/A

<b>Recommendation 3:</b>	<b>Regarding future proposals by developers for new outdoor play spaces, SBC does not adopt any site installed by a developer which contravenes the key outcomes from this review.</b>
Responsibility:	Graham Clingan / Keith Mathews
Date:	At draft strategy
Agreed Action:	Liaise with Planning to ensure developers are aware of these requirements ( <i>note: SBC currently would request a commuted lump sum to cover maintenance and replacement after 25 years, but timber equipment may need replacing in 15yrs</i> ).
Agreed Success Measure:	Terms for adoption agreed via strategy.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	First stage of Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Outdoor Play Provision 2025 agreed by Cabinet 17/7/25. Strategy contains several principles designed to address developer site adoption.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle 5: New or improved play facilities should only be considered where there are significant 'gaps' in provision, or where existing sites have poor play value.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle 6: We aim to limit the overall scale of provision to a level which is sustainable in terms of Council resources for management and maintenance.</li> <li>Principle 8: The Council will only support the development of new play provision if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it aligns with our strategic aims (in accordance with Principles 4 to 6)</li> <li>external capital funding can be secured</li> <li>it will achieve 'good' or 'excellent' play value (based on RoSPA assessment)</li> <li>funding is secured to cover inspection and maintenance for the anticipated lifespan of the equipment (e.g. a commuted lump sum if the site is to be title-transferred to the Council).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>1 (Fully Achieved)</b>
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	<a href="https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf">https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf</a>

<b>Recommendation 4:</b>	<b>SBC considers support of existing play areas before any additional outdoor play spaces are agreed / approved.</b>
Responsibility:	Graham Clingan / Neil Mitchell
Date:	At draft strategy
Agreed Action:	To be discussed with Planning in the Stakeholder Group which is to be established as part of this review process.
Agreed Success Measure:	Principles agreed via strategy.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	<p>First stage of Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Outdoor Play Provision 2025 agreed by Cabinet 17/7/25. Strategy contains several principles designed to support existing play areas before new spaces are agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle 5: New or improved play facilities should only be considered where there are significant 'gaps' in provision, or where existing sites have poor play value.</li> <li>Principle 11: Where resources allow, we will seek to deliver measures that enhance the value of existing provision, such as improved toilets and changing places, landscaping and improved access and security</li> </ul>
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>1 (Fully Achieved)</b>
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	<a href="https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf">https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf</a>

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<b>Recommendation 5:</b>	<b>Regarding inequality of outdoor play provision across the Borough, SBC clarifies where it is deemed there is little / no provision and possible steps to address these inequalities (including, in exceptional cases, the provision of new play spaces).</b>
Responsibility:	Graham Clingan
Date:	At draft strategy
Agreed Action:	To be addressed through the proposed Strategy (see 7).
Agreed Success Measure:	Principles agreed via strategy.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	First stage of Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Outdoor Play Provision 2025 agreed by Cabinet 17/7/25. The strategy document highlights areas of inequalities and over provision. Following cabinets decision, officers are preparing the second stage of the strategy document which will identify specific sites in which to invest, and which may be decommissioned at the end of equipment life.
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	<a href="https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf">https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf</a>

<b>Recommendation 6:</b>	<b>As part of a required rationalisation process in relation to the existing outdoor play offer:</b>	
	<b>a) Informed by the recent (March 2024) RoSPA assessments and an analysis of the distribution of existing outdoor play provision, proposals for the removal / repurposing of sites be developed with the aim of reducing pressure on the overall parks budget.</b>	
Responsibility:	Graham Clingan	Graham Clingan
Date:	31 July 2024	31 December 2024
Agreed Action:	Recommendations to be formulated on the basis of that analysis and to form part of the proposed strategy (see 7).	Recommendations to be formulated on the basis of that analysis and to form part of the proposed strategy (see 7).
Agreed Success Measure:	Analysis of distribution.	Overlay financial breakdown.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	First stage of Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Outdoor Play Provision 2025 agreed by Cabinet 17/7/25. Strategy contains several principles designed to	

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	<p>manage our assets in a sustainable manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle 6: We aim to limit the overall scale of provision to a level which is sustainable in terms of Council resources for management and maintenance.</li> </ul> <p>Cabinet resolved that: The requirement of additional revenue funding of £150,000 per annum from 2026/27 onwards be noted. This would enable the Council to retain approximately 30-35 play areas in good condition, in addition to the new play area at Stockton Waterfront urban park. Approximately 7 to 12 play areas would be subject to removal of play equipment at end of life and repurposing of sites for recreational open space. Funding would be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan Update &amp; Strategy report to Council in February 2026.</p>	
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>	
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	<a href="https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-%20Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf">https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s18385/Appendix%20A%20-%20Strategy%20for%20Stockton-on-Tees%20Borough%20Council%20Outdoor%20Play%20Provision%202025%201.pdf</a>	
	<b>b) Complementing sub-section a), SBC undertakes a piece of work around those sites requiring more urgent attention to ascertain costs of either removing the play area or raising it to an appropriate standard.</b>	
Responsibility:	Steve Bowerbank	
Date:	Compiled list by 30 June 2024	
Agreed Action:	List of sites requiring urgent attention to be compiled (and note of sites already earmarked for refurbishment, e.g. Newham Grange Park).	
Agreed Success Measure:	List compiled which feeds into analysis and strategy development.	
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	All play areas have been assessed and tables developed identifying individual items of equipment at each site, the play value of each item, it's life expectancy and replacement costs (including surfacing). This information will be	

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	invaluable with the development of the second phase of strategy to be presented to Cabinet.	
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>	
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	N/A	
	<b>c) Further detail be provided around the anticipated longer-term maintenance requirements of the new Stockton waterfront park and the impact that this may have on the available funds for maintaining other existing outdoor play spaces.</b>	
Responsibility:	Town team	
Date:	Compiled and submitted by September 2024	
Agreed Action:	Costs to be identified and potential impact on other play spaces to be assessed.	
Agreed Success Measure:	Provision of information which clearly demonstrates long term maintenance obligations including warranty consideration.	
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	An inspection and maintenance package is being negotiated with the play park contractor. This will form a multi-year package purchased up front using a capital allocation.	
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>	
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	N/A	
	<b>d) With due regard to the SBC Powering Our Future initiative, appropriate consultation (particularly with Stockton Parent Carer Forum and SBC Ward Councillors) is conducted around any proposed changes to existing outdoor play provision.</b>	
Responsibility:	Keith Mathews	Graham Clingan
Date:	n/a	Dec 2024 - Feb 2025
Agreed Action:	Appropriate consultation to be carried out in relation to current planned developments.	Consultation process for changes identified in proposed strategy to be developed as part of the process for strategy delivery.
Agreed Success Measure:	Ongoing, fully developed process.	Process confirmed as part of strategy development.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	Consultation is embedded for new play provision. We will consult with stakeholders when considering	

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	outcomes for specific sites affected by the strategy principles.	
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>	
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	N/A	

<b>Recommendation 7:</b>	<p><b>Reflecting the main outcomes from this review, SBC develops and publishes an outdoor play provision strategy which includes the following elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Council's aims in relation to the provision of outdoor play spaces.</b></li> <li>• <b>The locations and assessments of existing and outdoor play provision, as well as any planned developments.</b></li> <li>• <b>The key challenges associated with providing these spaces.</b></li> <li>• <b>How the Council will seek to address these key challenges (including guiding principles).</b></li> <li>• <b>Timelines for action and who will be accountable.</b></li> </ul>		
Responsibility:	Graham Clingan	Graham Clingan	Graham Clingan
Date:	28 February 2025	31 March 2025	31 May 2025
Agreed Action:	Develop draft strategy for internal consultation.	External consultation / engagement regarding any major changes to play area provision.	Final strategy published.
Agreed Success Measure:	Draft strategy circulated for comment.	Draft strategy circulated for comment.	Draft strategy circulated for comment.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	First stage of Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Outdoor Play Provision 2025 agreed by Cabinet 17/7/25. Second part of strategy will be submitted to cabinet identifying which sites are affected after applying the principles and data.		
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	<b>2 (On-Track)</b>		

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Recommendation 8:	This final report be shared with the SBC Planning Committee for information only.
Responsibility:	Gary Woods
Date:	June 2024
Agreed Action:	Share final Action Plan and Strategy with SBC Planning.
Agreed Success Measure:	Circulated strategy document.
Evidence of Progress (July 2025):	The Committee’s final report was circulated to the SBC Planning Committee in June 2024. The associated Action Plan and new outdoor play provision strategy will be shared with the SBC Planning Committee for information once the latter is agreed.
Assessment of Progress (July 2025): (include explanation if required)	2 (On-Track)
Evidence of Impact (July 2025):	n/a

Assessment of Progress Gradings:	1 Fully Achieved	2 On-Track	3 Slipped	4 Not Achieved
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