

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

PLAY AREA ADDITIONS - BPC(11)21

1. At the meeting on 9th September it was agreed to seek a detailed estimate of costs for the installation of two springers in the play area and to submit a bid for support from the South West Area Board for 50% of the cost of the project.

2. Subsequently the attached paper was circulated to Councillors (8th October). This paper set out detailed estimates from three suppliers, which were higher than previously indicated, and sought views on how to proceed. In particular it asked for confirmation that Councillors:

- (a) wished to proceed with this project taking account of the higher costings;
- (b) agreed that this should include bonded rubber mulch safety surfacing; and
- (c) that a grant application be submitted to SWWAB based on the quote submitted by Outdoor Play South West.

On 9th October I emailed Councillors re-opening the issue of applying to SWWAB for a grant in the light of the size of the Council's reserves.

3. Responses received to these communications indicated general support for proceeding with the project, including the better safety surfacing, on the basis of the quotation received from OPSW, without applying for grant support from the SWWAB. I have since responded to OPSW accepting their quote and asking for an indication of the timetable for implementation. I have yet to receive a reply and will report further at the meeting.

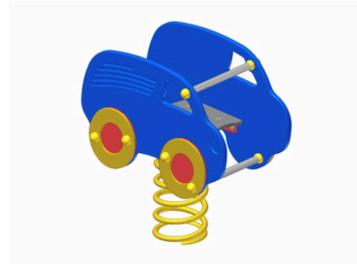
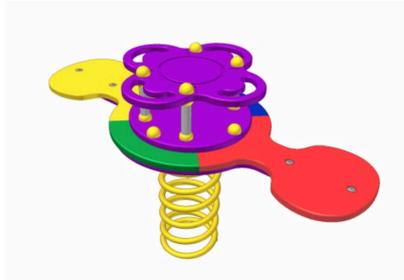
4. The purpose of this paper is to seek retrospective approval to the above. I therefore recommend:

- (i) that the Council accept the quotation received from OPSW of £4,890 (plus vat) for the provision of two springers with bonded mulch safety surfacing; and**
- (ii) that the costs of this project be met from the Council's reserves.**

Mike Ash
Clerk

October 2021

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA – ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT



1. At the meeting in September it was agreed **to seek a detailed estimate of costs for the provision of two “springers” (as above) for the Play Area and to submit a bid for support from the South West Area Board for 50% of the cost of the project.** The purpose of this note is to present some additional information and to seek views on whether to go ahead as agreed or to discuss further at the meeting in November.

2. On further consideration there are two aspects of the discussion in September that were unsatisfactory:

- (i) I relied on cost estimates quoted on suppliers websites. Having now received some detailed costings it is clear that the figures quoted in the paper circulated for the September meeting were significant under estimates. It is clear that costs are rising steeply and those quoted on websites (the basis for my estimate) are very out of date.
- (ii) The information presented in the paper was based on an initial consideration of the project based on what can be provided by Outdoor Play South West (who have provided all our recent play equipment). However, it is necessary to come to a firm view on a preferred supplier and cost before submitting a grant bid to SWWAB. Our Financial Rules require the consideration of three quotes before reaching a final decision.

3. Before agreeing expenditure for projects costing over £500 competitive quotations need to be obtained. The problem with this is, as we have found with other play equipment, that it is very difficult to exactly match comparable specifications. However, I have obtained three quotations for broadly similar project specifications (ie two springers - one a see-saw and the other a vehicle – everyone has slightly different designs), with safety surfacing. The results are set out in the following table (all prices exclude vat).

	Fawns	Outdoor Play South West	Playdale
Provision of	£3120	£3802	£3320

springers, including installation			
Safety surfacing	?	£1088	£2802
Total		£4890	£6122

4. I need to explain the position on safety surfacing. The Parish Council has taken the view with all recent installations that we will provide bonded rubber mulch (BRM) safety surfacing. This is more expensive than “grasslock” surfacing (rubber mesh that grass grows through) but is both safer and easier to maintain. Both Fawns and Playdale consider that BRM is not necessary for springers (because they are lower to the ground). Fawns would not provide a price and said that we would need to get a quote from another company. Playdale provided a price but this is so high I think it reflects their unwillingness to provide BRM.

5 Whilst the Fawns quote for the basic provision is slightly lower than the rest, I suspect that the addition of a quote for BRM from a separate company (which I have not obtained) will almost certainly push the total above that from OPSW. In considering value for money the Parish Council is not obliged to take the lowest quote and our experience of working with OPSW has been very good (in terms of quality of product, installation and after care). On balance then my recommendation is to continue with the OPSW quotation as the basis of our bid to SWWAB.

6. If that is accepted the total cost of the project (ex vat) would be £4890. The Parish Council can afford this but it is nevertheless worth applying for a 50% grant from SWWAB. If approved that would leave £2445 for the Parish Council. The next SWWAB meeting is in December and any grant application would need to go in by the day after our next meeting. So if you wish to discuss this further (both in terms of whether to go ahead given the higher costs and which company to choose) there is time to do that in November. Alternatively, if you are happy with what I set out above, I will get the grant application in without waiting for our November meeting.

Conclusion

7. I am therefore **seeking confirmation**, in the light of the additional information provided in this note, that:

(d) you would still wish to proceed with this project taking account of the higher costings set out above;

(e) that you agree that this should include bonded rubber mulch safety surfacing; and

(f) that I proceed now and submit a grant application to SWWAB based on the quote from OPSW.

Alternatively, if you wish to discuss further, I will place this on the agenda for the meeting on November.

Mike Ash
October 2021