

Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing	yes	29/12/2025
Commissioner engagement (if report focused on issues of concern to Commissioners such as Finance, Assets etc)	yes	29/12/2025
Relevant Group Head review	yes	29/12/2025
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)		
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee	yes	29/12/2025
	Reviewed by	
Finance comments (circulate to Finance)	EG	26/1/2026
Risk comments (circulate to Lee O’Neil)	LO	30/1/2026
Legal comments (circulate to Legal team)	LH	30/01/2026
HR comments (if applicable)		n/a

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	L Heron	30/01/2026
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	T Collier	22/1/2026
Confirm final report cleared by MAT	Due at MAT 3/3/26	

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Date of meeting **Thursday 19 March 2026**

Title	<i>Halliford Recreation Ground</i>
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	<i>Jackie Taylor Group Head Neighbourhood Services</i>
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	Not applicable
Corporate Priority	Community Environment Services
Recommendations	<p>Committee is asked to: Authorise the Group Head Neighbourhood Services to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relocate the play facility in the recreation ground from its current position in a wooded area to the open space within the same park. 2. Undertake all necessary ground works to facilitate the move. 3. Undertake ground restoration and tree planting in the wooded area once the equipment and fencing have been removed.
Reason for Recommendation	The current play facility is situated within a wooded area of Halliford Recreation Ground, where several mature trees close to the play area boundary pose a potential safety risk. To avoid the loss of these valuable trees, it is recommended that they remain in situ and that the play area is relocated to a more open area within the park.

1. Executive summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current play facility is located within a predominantly wooded area of the park. • Several large, mature trees are situated along the boundary of the play area fencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal risk assessments have identified that the presence of these large mature trees within the wooded area, despite their healthy condition, presents an ongoing risk to the safety of play area users.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proximity of these large trees presents a potential safety risk to users of the play facility. • Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding has already been allocated to replace the existing outdated play equipment. • Relocating the play facility to another area of the park would reduce tree-related risks while enabling the planned investment to be delivered safely. 	
<p>This is what we want to do about it</p>	<p>These are the next steps</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-site the play facility from its current location within the recreation ground to an alternative open area within the same park. • Dispose of the existing play equipment and procure and install new play equipment which has been awarded CIL funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further discuss relocation options with the planning team. • Undertake a ground survey to confirm the absence of underground services within the area allocated for the new play facility. • Procure and install the new play equipment. • Restore the ground following the removal of the existing play equipment and fencing.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 The play facility within Halliford Recreation Ground is due to be replaced, as the existing equipment, constructed of wood is ageing and has reached the end of its serviceable life.
- 2.2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £80,000 was approved by the CIL Board and subsequently agreed by the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee on Monday 13 October 2025, to support the procurement, purchase, and installation of new play equipment.
- 2.3 The current play facility is located within what has become a predominantly wooded area, with several large but healthy mature trees in proximity.
- 2.4 The existing location of the play area has access challenges for the public users especially those with pushchairs or individuals with mobility challenges. The new location is proposed to be close to the existing car park and in more open area and near a footpath.
- 2.5 A recent risk assessment identified concerns relating to the large mature oak trees situated along the boundary of the play area. Although these trees appear visually healthy, they pose an ongoing risk to users of the play facility due to falling debris, deadwood, and other unforeseen factors that could result in limb failure.
- 2.6 Removing this risk from the existing location of the playground would require the removal of these mature trees. While this may be appropriate if the trees

were in poor health, given their good condition and environmental value, this is not considered to be the most appropriate or sustainable option.

- 2.7 Halliford Recreation Ground comprises a mix of dense wooded areas that support biodiversity and wildlife, areas of uncut grass, and open parkland that is used by residents, visitors and dog walkers.
- 2.8 Re-siting the play facility within another area of the park would not adversely impact dog walkers, as the play area would remain fenced and the remaining open parkland would continue to provide sufficient space for all users of the recreation ground.
- 2.9 A map showing the existing and proposed play area locations is attached at **Appendix 1**. This demonstrates that the relocation will not negatively impact play provision and will, in fact, enhance the facility by reducing issues currently experienced at the existing site, such as tree debris and bird fouling caused by the proximity of mature trees.
- 2.10 We have undertaken a pre app consultation with planning who has responded as below:

“I would like to note that the entire Halliford Park is in the Green Belt. The understanding is that the proposal is for re-location of an existing children playground due to safety concerns (to reduce antisocial behaviour and potential tree hazards) and there are also currently access challenges for the public users especially those with pushchairs or individuals with mobility challenges. The new location is shown close to the existing car park and in more open area and near a footpath.

Within the submitted information, it is indicated that most of the equipment including fencing will be moved across as well as adding an additional item (The new piece of equipment– multi play tower-no more than 4m in height). From the shown location, the new location will be well away from any residential properties and sets further back from the existing play area in terms of visual impact when viewed from Upper Halliford Road. It was also indicated that the existing playground will be reinstated with fruit trees. Furthermore, the Council’s Tree Officer raised no objection to your proposal for the new location on tree grounds. Although, he highlighted to you on site that you should set the playground further away from the adjacent Yew tree as the berry fruits are poisonous (to prevent children try eating them from the grounds).

Taking into account the proposal relates to a relocation of an existing playground and is away from residential properties, we are in a view that the proposed works can be carried under the Permitted Development under Class A, Part 12 (Development by local authorities), Schedule 2 of the GPDO and as such no planning permission will be required.”

3. Options appraisal and proposal

3.1 Option 1 (Preferred Option)

The Committee is asked to agree that, following a procurement exercise, the new play equipment be installed in the proposed new location (**as shown in Appendix 1**). Once the new facility has been installed and brought into use, the existing play

facility would be removed, and restoration works, including the planting of new trees, would be undertaken to reinstate the former site as green space.

3.2 Option 2 (not recommended)

An alternative option would be to remove the trees that pose a potential risk to users of the play area. This option is not recommended, as the trees located along the boundary of the existing play area are currently in good health and are of significant environmental value. They contribute to wildlife habitats, support biodiversity, and provide carbon sequestration benefits due to their maturity and number.

4. Risk implications

4.1 Option 1:

Low risk. Relocating the play facility reduces tree-related safety risks to users, avoids the need for tree removal, and preserves environmental benefits. Any risks are limited to standard procurement and installation processes, which will be managed through existing controls.

The new location will be positioned at a safe distance from existing berry-producing trees in this area of the park to avoid potential hazards to play area users

Option 2:

Higher risk. Retaining the play facility in its current location would require the removal of mature trees, leading to environmental loss, potential objections, and reputational risk. If trees are retained, ongoing safety risks to users would remain, requiring continued monitoring and maintenance.

5. Financial implications

5.1 Funding for the procurement and installation of the new play equipment has already been authorised by the CIL Board. The existing fencing would be relocated to the proposed new site, and any additional costs due to the relocation of the play area, beyond the approved CIL funding of £80,000 would be covered from existing play area improvement budgets.

5.2 Due to the high number of new play areas that have recently been, and continue to be, installed as a direct result of CIL funding, we anticipate that overall play area maintenance costs will be lower in 2026/27. This budget is therefore expected to cover any additional costs arising directly from the relocation of the play area at Halliford Park.

6. Legal comments

6.1 Advice and assistance from the Legal Team will be obtained in the review of the legal title to the proposed new site to ascertain all and any covenants or restrictions to which the land might be subject.

6.2 Advice and assistance from the Legal team will be obtained in the preparation of contracts associated with the proposed works.

Corporate implications

7. S151 Officer comments

7.1 The Section 151 Officers confirms that all financial implications have been taken into account and that the recommendations are fully funded within the Capital Programme and Revenue Budget,

8. Monitoring Officer comments

- 8.1 The Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

9. Procurement comments

- 9.1 Relevant procurement implications have been addressed in the report to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 13 October 2026 but there are no procurement implications arising directly from this report.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 The recommended proposals to relocate and upgrade the play facility will have a positive impact on equality and diversity by providing a safe, accessible, and inclusive play environment for children of all abilities.
- 10.2 The new equipment will comply with current accessibility standards, ensuring children with disabilities can use the facility safely and comfortably. Mitigation measures include careful site design to maintain level access paths, appropriate surfacing, and consideration of inclusive play features.
- 10.3 Additionally, the relocation will not restrict access for any user group, including dog walkers or residents, and the restored former site will continue to provide open green space for public use.

11. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

In conclusion, the relocation of the play facility within Halliford Recreation Ground represents the most balanced and sustainable approach. It enables the Council to deliver the planned investment in new play equipment using the approved CIL funding, while significantly reducing safety risks to users and avoiding the unnecessary removal of mature, environmentally valuable trees. The preferred option therefore provides a safer, more resilient play facility and supports the long-term environmental and recreational objectives of the park.

12. Other considerations

- 12.1 There are none.

13. Timetable for implementation

- 13.1 Funding and approval for the procurement of the new play equipment have already been secured. Subject to approval from the Environment & Sustainability, the procurement process will commence as soon as possible to ensure timely delivery and installation of the new facility. This new play area is expected to be delivered in early Summer 2026

14. Contact

- 14.1 Jackie Taylor Group Head Neighbourhood Services 01784 446418

Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices: Appendix 1 Site map

APPENDIX 1

