

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 JULY 2019	AGENDA ITEM:	XX
TITLE:	UPDATE ON THE APPROVED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME FOR LEISURE, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES 2018-2020		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR ROWLAND	PORTFOLIO:	CULTURE, HERITAGE AND RECREATION
SERVICE:	CULTURE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the status of the leisure, parks and open spaces schemes funded by Section 106 receipts and funded from the 15% local element of the Community Infrastructure Levy approved by Policy Committee on 26th November 2018.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress in relation to the projects funded by developer contributions.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2018 - 2021 'Shaping Reading's Future' sets out the Council's priorities which include keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe and promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading.
- 3.2 Reading's Open Spaces Strategy includes a number of objectives that together continues to protect and improve the choice, quality and accessibility of public open space.
- 3.3 The Council's Capital programme was approved as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy in February 2019. The programme includes an allocation

to carry out improvements to the open space and play provision in the Borough albeit the projects referred to include those funded from previous year's programmes. Funds secured from developer contributions support the financing of the programme.

- 3.4 In 2018 a full review of all playgrounds was carried out highlighting all investment needs and subsequently a £2.8million programme over five years was developed to fund the current investment gap. £1.6m has been formally approved for 2019-22. Much of this funding is specifically intended to improve further access for all to the Council's playgrounds. Sites earmarked for new investment in fully-inclusive play equipment over this 3-year period include Palmer Park. A report on the programme of work will come forward later in the year.
- 3.5 Not all sites across the Borough are suitable for play equipment. However, where the provision of new play equipment/features is included, the Council will ensure that an appropriate component of accessible play equipment is provided.

4. APPROVED SCHEMES

4.1 S106 SCHEMES:

The table below lists the schemes which were approved by Housing Neighbourhood and Leisure (HNL) Committee in March 2018.

PROPOSED LEISURE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

2018-2020 Schemes	Estimated Cost £,000	Ward	Status
Arthur Newbery Park	£26,500	Kentwood	Completed
Balmore Walk	£6,900	Thames	Completed
Blagrave Rec Ground - Play Area	£4,500	Tilehurst	Completed
Cintra Park - Play and Sports Area	£70,000	Redlands	Completed (Further CIL funding awarded)
Clayfield Copse	£1,800	Peppard	Completed
Eldon Square	£7,800	Redlands	Commenced Spring 2019
Fobney Island Tree Work	£33,300	Whitley	Completed

Forbury Gardens	£50,000	Abbey	Ongoing
Katesgrove School Play Area	£19,500	Katesgrove	Completed
Kensington Road Recreation Ground	£5,000	Battle	Completed
Long Barn Lane Recreation Ground	£4,900	Katesgrove	Completed (Further CIL funding awarded)
Palmer Park	£116,200	Park	Completed
Prospect Park Sports Pitches/Courts	£77,200	Southcote	Completed (Further CIL funding awarded)
Rabson's Recreation Ground Play Area	£14,800	Church	Ongoing
Robert Hewett Recreation Ground	£10,600	Minster	Completed
Thames Parks	£294,100	Abbey, Caversham & Thames	Ongoing
Victoria Recreation Ground	£43,600	Abbey	Commencement Summer 2019
ESTIMATED TOTAL:	£786,700		

A more detailed description and an update on the status of each project referenced in the table above, including those which are still ongoing can be found at Appendix 1.

Also in Appendix 1 is an update on S106 schemes that have been added to the portfolio since the report to HNL Committee in March 2018.

4.2 CIL SCHEMES:

Following the public consultation last year on how the allocation of the 15% local element of the Community Infrastructure Levy should be spent, Members approved the following open space improvements:

- Avon Place Play Area Improvements (£100,000)
- Ivydene Play Area Improvements (£100,000)
- Cintra Park Play Area Improvements (£95,000)
- Coley Recreation Ground Outdoor Gym (£65,000)
- Prospect Park (£88,000)

- Long Barn Lane Outdoor Gym and Teen Facilities (£155,000)

A more detailed description and an update on each of the CIL schemes referenced above can be found at Appendix 1.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 Improving the quality of sport and leisure facilities supports a number of Corporate Plan aims mainly:

- Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe.
- Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading.

5.2 Better quality leisure facilities have the potential to increase participation in sports and physical activity with a direct impact on health and well-being of the population thereby contributing to improving achievement against the desired outcomes of the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Where appropriate, consultation and engagement with local communities and interest groups has been undertaken prior to each of the projects funded through S106 payments.

6.2 Ward Councillors have been consulted on all projects within their Ward.

6.3 A public consultation was carried out last summer on how the allocation of the 15% local element of the Community Infrastructure Levy should be spent. Approval for the individual schemes was granted at Policy Committee on 26th November 2018.

6.4 Prior to the implementation of CIL schemes, residents, user groups and Ward Councillors will be notified and encouraged to participate in the final selection process of equipment to be installed.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 7.2 It is not considered that a further Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required related to the information presented in this report which seeks to update Members on approved projects. It should be noted that an equality impact assessment was completed in relation to the allocation of 15% CIL local Funds as part of the November 2018 Policy Committee report.
- 7.3 As indicated above in Paragraph 3.5, enhancements to play areas and the provision of new equipment will offer inclusive play features that encourage active participation by as wide a range of users as possible. Key partners will be involved at the design stage.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 All schemes funded by S106 receipts have been implemented in accordance with the terms of the individual legal agreements.
- 8.2 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations provides the framework for the use of CIL contributions. The protocol sets out how the allocations of CIL will be administered which is in line with those regulations.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 In relation to play and open space, the Council's approved Capital Programme (February 2019) details funding to complete an extensive programme of replacement and upgrade of playground equipment and additionally a programme of improvement works to parks and open spaces is planned for 2019/20 and future years.
- 9.2 Funds for the enhancements set out in this report are from developer contributions, either Section 106 or 15% CIL. The final application and approval of the individual S106 receipts will be made in the normal way, as part of the financial year-end process. In relation to the future allocation of CIL it is considered that the results from the consultation completed in the Summer of 2018 will remain relevant for a year and that decisions on the allocation of 15% Local CIL for funds received up to March and September 2019 will be informed by the outcomes reported to Policy Committee In November 2018. A further and similar public consultation may be undertaken in July 2020.
- 9.3 It is anticipated that any operational non-capital costs that are associated with individual programmes and schemes will be met within existing approved budgets.
- 9.4 The funds and allocations set out in this report span a number of capital programme years. The 18/19 capital outturn will reconcile the outstanding and yet to complete projects set out in this paper with the Council's 19/20 capital programme and related carry forward requests from the 18/19 programme.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee - 18th November 2015

10.2 Policy Committee - 26th November 2018

10.3 Reading Open Spaces Strategy (adopted March 2007)

11. APPENDIX 1

S106 SCHEMES:

- 11.1 Outlined below is a brief description of each scheme referenced in the table in Paragraph 4 of this report along with an update on each project. Where the status of a project is classified as "COMPLETED", physical work has been completed, but funding is yet to be applied to each scheme.

ARTHUR NEWBERY PARK (£26,500)

- 11.2 Originally known as Hare Moor, this 26 acre site in Kentwood Ward was gifted by Arthur Newbery to the mayor of Reading as an open space for the people of Reading in 1932. It is one of Reading's oldest parks and was once part of Kentwood Common. The park slopes steeply down to the north with far stretching views across the valley and River Thames. There is a large and well used children's play area in the hollow in the centre of the park. Additional equipment is needed to cater for the increased use arising from new developments in the locality.
- 11.3 **Update:** Two new items of equipment were installed in the play area last summer. These included a large jeep style vehicle with a slide and a new spring ride both of which have been very well received by the local community. There was a small amount of funding remaining and this enabled some boundary improvements along Armour Hill to be carried out.
- 11.4 **Status:** Project completed.

BALMORE WALK (£6,900)

- 11.5 This site in Thames Ward is both a through route used by commuters and school children as an off road route to school. It is also a very popular park for dog walking. The area makes a significant contribution to the townscape because of its elevated position and proximity to central Caversham. There is an opportunity to plant and establish trees to replace old and ailing trees before they fail.
- 11.6 **Update:** During the winter months a number of new trees were planted including replacement cherry and crab apple, and new Scots pine and tulip trees.
- 11.7 **Status:** Project completed.

BLAGRAVE RECREATION GROUND PLAY AREA (£4,500)

- 11.8 This medium sized site in Tilehurst Ward is a popular and well used local facility in the centre of Tilehurst village, next to Park Lane School. The recreation ground is managed by Reading Borough Council as Trustees for the Blagrove Recreation Ground. There are two separate play areas within

the park which cater for differing age groups. The funding will be used to contribute towards new self-closing access gates and safety surfacing.

11.9 **Update:** Three new yellow self-closing gates have been installed in the play areas. Their bright colour enables those with visual impairments to distinguish the gates from the perimeter fencing more readily. There was insufficient funding to contribute towards safety surfacing and so the remaining £675 was used to purchase new bin liners.

11.10 **Status:** Project completed.

CINTRA PARK PLAYGROUND AND SPORTS AREA (£70,000)

11.11 Situated a short distance to the south and east of the town centre in Redlands Ward, this park serves a large populated area, including local schools and community groups. The park has undergone a number of improvements over the last five years including landscaping, completion of a perimeter path and new outdoor fitness stations. The playground and sports area are now in need of investment.

11.12 **Update:** The artificial floodlit pitch has been completely refurbished and includes new perimeter fencing and gates. A new item of equipment has been installed in the play area along with new rubber surfacing which replaced the loose-fill (bark). This is a long term investment as there is no longer a requirement for an annual top up of the loose fill surfacing. Two new yellow self-closing gates have also been installed in the play area. As with Blagrove Recreation Ground above, their bright colour enables those with visual impairments to distinguish the gates from the perimeter fencing more readily. The area between the meeting shelter and the basketball court has been re-landscaped and old fragments of tarmac surfacing have been broken up and laid to grass. A linking path to the ballcourt has also been constructed. Finally, minor changes to the fencing around the recycling area have improved the entrance and car park on the Northumberland Avenue boundary. Further CIL funding has been approved for the park which is set out at para 13.5.

11.13 **Status:** Project completed.

CLAYFIELD COPSE (£1,800)

11.14 Clayfield Copse became Reading's first Local Nature Reserve in 1991. The ancient woodland in Peppard Ward was once part of the Caversham House Estate whose landscapes were designed by Capability Brown. It is a much valued local amenity and may dog owners drive to the site to walk. The funding will be used on new tree planting to replace dead and fallen trees and improvements to the car park.

11.15 **Update:** Agreed works have been carried out.

11.16 **Status:** Project completed.

**ELDON SQUARE (ALSO KNOWN AS KING GEORGE V MEMORIAL GARDENS)
(£7,800)**

- 11.17 Eldon Square was Reading's first conservation area, designated in 1972. The Gardens, which are listed, are situated within the town centre area in Redlands Ward and are surrounded on three sides by Bath stone detached and semi-detached buildings. They are completely enclosed by Grade II listed railings and contain mature trees, shrubs and a large statue of the first Marquess of Reading who died in 1935. The Gardens are very well used by local residents, including students. Landscape improvements are required to increase security along with low level additional planting.
- 11.18 **Update:** We are in discussion with a residents group who are proposing to support the maintenance of the gardens.
- 11.19 **Status:** Project not started yet.

FOBNEY ISLAND TREE WORK (£33,300)

- 11.20 Tree work, including coppicing, to improve access to Fobney Island Nature Reserve and its river habitat is ongoing.
- 11.21 **Update:** Significant work over a two year period has been undertaken within the nature reserve to open up views and improve access.
- 11.22 **Status:** Project completed.

FORBURY GARDENS (£50,000)

- 11.23 Capital investment is needed periodically at Forbury Gardens for the Council to meet its contractual obligation to keep the site for 25 years to the high standard to which it was restored in 2004. The fountain has been damaged and the sump and pond need cleaning. The pond also requires re-lining. Repeated damage is being done to the lawns with park users walking across the bull-nosed grass areas at path junctions. Where low fencing was installed, this problem does not occur. Matching low fencing needs to be installed, in a double line of granite setts, at the junction nearest the café where there is constant pedestrian traffic. The stone pillars at the main entrance require specialist stone and flint work and modifications are needed to protect these pillars into the future.
- 11.24 **Update:** The bandstand has been repainted but requires further work to replace a pillar which is full of dry rot. A temporary repair was used to get the stand ready in time for the opening of the Abbey Ruins. The pond walls have been rebuilt into rounded peaks to prevent them being walked on. The sump and the pumping chambers have been re-rendered, the pond relined and the cracked fountain repaired and turned on. There may be a need to explore the connecting chambers as there is the possibility that there is a leak somewhere in the system.

11.25 New low level bow top fencing has been installed around the Verdun Oak and at the entrance to the park (opposite the Courts) as well as around the old cannon mound. The sign at the top of the mound is still to be repainted and the gravel also needs topping up. We are currently seeking quotes for the painting of the gates and railings around the whole site as they are in very poor condition. It is our intention to purchase bird/bat boxes and place them in the gardens as part of a bio diversity project. The flint walls throughout the site require constant maintenance due to the nature of their construction and funding is regularly used for this purpose. Reinstatement works to repair the damage to the edges of lawns throughout the gardens after last year's summer heat is still to be carried out.

11.26 **Status:** Project ongoing.

KATESGROVE SCHOOL PLAY AREA (£19,500)

11.27 This popular dual use facility is particularly heavily used. Throughout the term time, the school has exclusive use of the play area. During the evenings, weekends and holiday periods, the play area and adjacent hard court area is available for public use. New safety surfacing has recently been installed in the play area.

11.28 **Status:** Project completed.

KENSINGTON ROAD RECREATION GROUND (£5,000)

11.29 This popular park in Battle Ward has undergone a number of improvements in recent years including an extension to the play area, a new ballcourt, fitness stations and a perimeter path. Further infrastructure improvements including new furniture and boundary enhancements are required.

11.30 **Update:** Enhancements to the boundary were carried out following the relocation of the recycling banks from the car park. This has enabled the creation of additional car parking spaces.

11.31 **Status:** Project completed.

LONGBARN LANE RECREATION GROUND (£4,900)

11.32 Situated to the south of the town in Katesgrove Ward, this recreation ground serves a population of higher than average deprivation. The surrounding area consists of high density housing and higher than average levels of anti-social behaviour amongst young people. The site has a history of abuse and any new infrastructure needs to be particularly robust. New furniture is required.

11.33 **Update:** Instead of new furniture, new safety surfacing was installed under one of the most popular and well used pieces of play equipment. Once this was carried out the remaining funding was used to improve the main entrance to the park and install a new "welcome to" sign. Further CIL

funding has been approved for the recreation ground which is set out at para 13.14.

11.34 **Status:** Project completed.

LOUSEHILL COPSE (£40,500)

11.35 Situated in Norcot Ward, Lousehill Copse is a small, well-hidden natural woodland surrounded by housing tucked away along Tay Road with mature oak and hazel woodlands. It is designated as a Wild Life Heritage Site and in 1992 became part of West Reading Woodlands Local Nature Reserve. There are a number of pedestrian entrances leading into the copse which contain anemones, bluebells, violets and several species of rare plants in boggy areas. Infrastructure requirements include the upgrade of the path network, habitat and biodiversity improvements along with access improvements.

11.36 **Update:** Work on this scheme started in 2013 (with a then budget of £21,000). Since this time a further £19,500 has become available resulting in the total amount specified above. A significant amount of work has been carried out including the improvement of the footpath surfaces, creation of steps on the steepest slopes within the woodland, enlargement of the pond, installation of a pond dipping platform, clearance of the pond of rubbish, reducing the amount of reeds in the pond, coppicing and creating a clearing to open up views.

11.37 **Status:** Project ongoing.

PALMER PARK (£116,200)

11.38 As Reading's second largest and only park in Park Ward, Palmer Park serves one of the most densely settled areas of the town, there is constant pressure to improve/extend facilities to meet the growing demand from users. Investment options will be developed with the proposals to invest in the Council's indoor sports facilities in mind, and the impact these may have on the open space.

11.39 **Update:** Investment has been as made to both indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Last summer the three artificial turf pitches were refurbished and a new internal fencing system separating the pitches was installed. In December new fitness equipment was installed in the gym within the stadium.

11.40 **Status:** Project completed.

PROSPECT PARK SPORTS PITCHES/COURTS (£77,200)

11.41 The sports pitches that double up as tennis courts at Prospect Park and which opened in 2007 have reached the end of their life and are in need of refurbishment. In 2017 the five 3G artificial courts (on the opposite side of

the main drive) were refurbished as they too, had been open for 10 years and had reached the end of their life. Further CIL funding has been approved for the park which is set out at para 13.18.

11.42 **Update:** The sports pitches (tennis and football) underwent a complete refurbishment last summer.

11.43 **Status:** Project completed.

RABSON'S RECREATION GROUND - PLAY AREA (£14,800)

11.44 In 2010 the playground underwent a complete refurbishment and extension. Situated in Church Ward, it is now the largest and most well used in the south Reading area. This small pot of funding will enable improvements to the retaining log feature in the play area.

11.45 **Update:** The log feature in the play area was replaced last summer leaving some funding for the refurbishment of the tennis court area due to be completed this summer.

11.46 **Status:** Project ongoing.

ROBERT HEWETT RECREATION GROUND (£10,600)

11.47 This popular park along the Tilehurst Road in Minster Ward is particularly well used by families. Since its refurbishment in 2009 it has attracted large numbers of children with their parents/carers. The internal path network needs resurfacing in places where the roots from some of the mature trees are breaking up the tarmac. In addition new railings along the front of the recreation ground are needed.

11.48 **Update:** Insufficient funding to carry out all the work referenced above necessitated prioritising the most urgent elements required. The replacement of the railings along the front wall adjacent to the Tilehurst Road was given priority and once completed highlighted the poor condition of the brick wall underneath the railings. As a consequence, the remaining funding was invested in re-pointing and re-rendering the wall.

11.49 **Status:** Project completed.

THAMES PARKS (£294,100)

11.50 The Thames Parks provide the largest single area of publicly accessible open space in the Borough - approximately 80 hectares - which border the River Thames as it flows through Reading. The Thames Parks Plan (adopted in March 2005) provides a strategy for the management of these riverside parks and identifies investment needs for the individual parks. As in previous reports, the ongoing implementation of the Thames Parks Plan remains a priority. It is recommended that these funds are used to continue to

implement the Plan including replacing the house footprint at Caversham Court.

11.51 **Update:** Significant riverbank work has been carried along the River Thames including the replacement of the old wooden mooring structure by the Tesco Superstore which is now a robust and durable style of recycled decking. In Hills Meadow an area of riverbank next to the tea barge has been rebuilt and re-profiled. A new electrical supply to the gate has been installed to the tennis courts at Christchurch Meadows and following the planting of a new line of trees outside the tennis courts alongside George Street, a new root barrier has been installed to prevent tree roots from pushing up through the tennis court surface. New tree planting has also been carried out along the Thames Promenade. A new entrance and gate into Kings Meadow has been created/installed next to the new changing pavilion. Work is due to start shortly on new stonework for the house footprint at Caversham Court.

11.52 **Status:** Project ongoing.

VICTORIA RECREATION GROUND (£43,600)

11.53 Adjacent to the new Civitas Primary Academy in Abbey Ward, this valued open space is in need of significant landscaping and additional seating.

11.54 **Update:** Some landscaping and tree planting has been undertaken. Facilities to support both school and community sport/recreational activity is still to be installed along with potential relocation of the play area to reduce the instance of anti-social behaviour.

11.55 **Status:** Project underway.

12. S106 SCHEMES ADDED TO PORTFOLIO SINCE REPORT TO HNL COMMITTEE IN MARCH 2018

12.1 A recent review of unallocated S106 funding highlighted several developments with unspent funds. The following schemes were as a consequence of two separate approved planning applications and date back to 2003 and 1996 respectively.

LORENZO QUELCH PLAY AREA (£3,897.78)

12.2 The play area on Addington Road known as Lorenzo Quelch was installed by the developers of the newest housing (on Addington Road) and subsequently transferred to the Council with a commuted sum for its maintenance. These unallocated funds will be spent on new furniture with the remainder being added towards the ongoing maintenance of the play area.

12.3 **Update:** New seats have been installed in the play area and remaining funds will be transferred to the Parks Team as a commuted sum for the ongoing maintenance of the area.

12.4 **Status:** Project completed.

OXFORD ROAD COMMUNITY GARDEN (£3,586.75)

- 12.5 Following the development of the retail park along the Oxford Road (now containing Lidl and MacDonald's), some of the land to the rear of the site was given back to the Council from the developers as a community garden. The land is owned by the Council's Leisure Department but managed and maintained by the "Oxford Road Community Garden". This is a non-for-profit organisation and income collected from annual subscriptions from local residents is used for general maintenance, purchase of gardening tools, third-party liability insurance for organised working parties on site etc.
- 12.6 **Update:** The funding will be used to assist the volunteer group in maintaining the land and further to meetings and discussion with representatives; it is likely to include tree work, habitat improvements, purchase of equipment and interpretation boards.

12.7 **Status:** Project underway.

13. CIL SCHEMES

- 13.1 The following CIL funded schemes were approved by Policy Committee on 26th November 2018 following the public consultation carried out last summer. This is the first time that the process for the allocation of 15% CIL has taken place.

AVON PLACE PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS (£100,000)

- 13.2 Situated to the east of the town centre in Abbey Ward, this small play area lies amid a very densely populated area alongside the River Kennet. The site is owned by the Council's Housing Department and the Parks Team are responsible for the maintenance of the play equipment.
- 13.3 **Update:** The play area at Avon Place will be relocated, and an entirely new and larger play area provided at Canal Way. This is being designed primarily for toddler play, although some equipment for juniors will be included, to provide for families with children of a range of ages. Landscaping and furniture is being included to turn this area into a park for local residents. Consultation is being undertaken by the Housing Department.
- 13.4 **Status:** Project underway.

CINTRA PARK PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS (£95,000)

- 13.5 Following the investment last year in refurbishing the artificial turf pitch at Cintra Park, the play area is now in need of improvement. Last summer, one item of failing equipment was removed and replaced with a modern swing unit. Much of the remaining equipment needs replacing.
- 13.6 **Update:** Options on new equipment are being prepared for consultation with Ward Councillors.
- 13.7 **Status:** Project expected to start next year.

COLEY RECREATION GROUND OUTDOOR GYM (£65,000)

- 13.8 Coley Recreation Ground is a medium sized park (6.33 hectares) situated within a large housing estate to the south west of Reading's town centre in Minster Ward. There is a perimeter road running around the park and the whole area is overlooked by housing. The park provides a number of sporting and recreational facilities including grass football pitches, changing pavilion, artificial cricket wicket, multi-use games area, tennis court and children's play area. To complement the existing facilities we are looking to install a new outdoor gym to encourage active participation in physical activity all year round.
- 13.9 **Update:** Tendering process underway. Expected completion - autumn 2019.
- 13.10 **Status:** Project underway.

IVYDENE PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS (£100,000)

- 13.11 This play area is situated in Battle Ward at the western end of Portman Road and serves a very large populated area to the west of Reading's town centre. Whilst in working order, the equipment is old and the whole site is in need of refurbishment and reconfiguration.
- 13.12 **Update:** Tendering process underway. Expected completion - autumn 2019.
- 13.13 **Status:** Project underway.

LONG BARN LANE OUTDOOR GYM /TEEN FACILITIES (£155,000)

- 13.14 Long Barn Lane Recreation Ground is a neighbourhood park (3.29 hectares) situated to the south of Reading's town centre in Katesgrove Ward. It is surrounded by housing on all sides and despite it being primarily used as a through-route; it is popular with local residents. The park does provide a number of sporting and recreational activities including a multi-use games wall with tarmac surface for football and basketball, a small (fenced) children's play area for toddlers, a BMX track and a selection of items of play equipment for children over 8 years of age. The recreation ground serves a population of higher than average deprivation and higher than average levels of anti-social behaviour.

- 13.15 To support more constructive use of the site, Reading Borough Council is seeking to install additional facilities comprising a new outdoor gym/fitness area to encourage active participation in physical activity all year round with a particular focus on teenagers.
- 13.16 **Update:** A design brief and specification will be prepared in consultation with Ward Councillors in order for manufacturers to submit proposals for public consultation.
- 13.17 **Status:** Project expected to start next year.

PROSPECT PARK (£88,000)

- 13.18 This will be the subject of a separate report.