

Playground equipment

The last report prepared on the condition of the playground equipment on the Cricket indicated that material works were required to repair the equipment.

Suffolk recommended a supplier to complete the works at an estimate in excess of £11,000.

Much of the equipment is beyond its useful economic life and certain equipment does not meet current health and safety standards.

For comparison purposes the cost of the original equipment, purchased in 2003/4, was £21,000.

I have approached two suppliers:

- 1. School Furniture Direct of Pakenham**, Suffolk who specialise in school playground equipment. They surveyed the area and recommended that the equipment be replaced rather than repaired. They also recommended that the Council enter into an annual maintenance contract to avoid further deterioration.

They recommended eco-friendly replacement picnic tables and benches made out of recycled plastic – these would be largely maintenance free and have a longer life expectancy.

The quote is attached in Appendix 1. Total budget is £19,817, including £425 for an annual maintenance contract.
- 2. Playdale Playgrounds Ltd.** A much larger company with 42,000 sites worldwide. We currently have two pieces of equipment from Playdale – these were purchased three years ago and were the aerial runway and nest swing. I asked Playdale for a similar range of equipment to the School Furniture Direct quotation so that some comparison would be available to us. They have however offered their own views on what could be installed onto the site.

Playdale recommended that the Council remove the wooden installations at its own expense to reduce the total cost of installation.

Playdale offered two quotes, stages 1 and 2. Stage 1 is £19,917 and Stage 2 £12,406.12. Quotes are in Appendix 2.

It is clear from the quotes that different items are offered making a comparison complex. My personal view that Playdale offers a superior solution however they are probably more expensive.

My recommendation is that the Parish Council set up a separate working party to review both quotes and identify which of the elements offered in the quotes are needed so that a clear comparison can be made.

The Council needs to agree what budget it seeks to allocate to the project – all cost can be met from CIL monies.

Michael Walton

2nd November 2024