

Report to Council/Business Case – Public Works Loan Hinderwell Play Park	
Context:	<p>Hinderwell is a rural and coastal village. Fortunately, it remains a working community, with several small businesses and working farms. Housing is largely structured on both sides of the A174, a busy road, linking the Teesside area with Whitby. The village primary school serves both Hinderwell and Runswick Bay families as well as children from the moorland villages to the south west. There is very limited space for children to play safely outside of the school day: the play park, which is sited on a minor road adjacent to a housing estate, is the only provision.</p>
Key issues/evidence leading to decision to apply for the loan:	<p>Whilst regular inspections have informed investment in maintenance and repairs, equipment in the play park has deteriorated and is no longer fit for purpose. Some has been condemned. There is only minor provision for pre-school children and little to keep them engaged in either individual or social engagement.</p> <p>The need to improve the facilities has been a priority for the parish council for several years. Unfortunately, the demands on the funding available to the PC has not enabled us to effect the necessary improvements.</p>
Consultation process & outcomes:	<p>An open discussion took place on 11 May 2023 at the Annual Parish Meeting, which was attended by residents at which the needs, estimated costs and benefits of the project were explored. The response from attendees, as well as committee members was very positive.</p> <p>The parish council subsequently deployed an independent person (as suggested at that forum) to manage a consultation process, involving the children in the school, as well as families. Her report is attached.</p> <p>The outcome of this process confirmed that the park is currently underused, as a result of the limited and outdated facilities. It also evidenced strong support for improvements and a recognition that the potential improvement work would lead to increased use of what could be an excellent asset, not least in terms of safeguarding, promoting healthy lifestyles for children and young people, as well as addressing isolation issues for young parents.</p> <p>Children were involved in the decision-making with regard to the most appropriate pieces of play equipment which would engage them.</p>
Funding: (See attached budget spreadsheet)	<p>The parish council has budget control systems in place, which are overseen by the PC Finance Committee. In the light of increasing costs, the Precept has been increased to address the need to fund the basic community services which we provide and cover salary costs.</p> <p>It is not intended that we increase the precept to pay for the improvements to the play park.</p> <p>Efforts have been made to access funds from other sources, including “Levelling Up” funding, the National Lottery, local industries and benefactors.</p>

<p>Communication:</p>	<p>The parish council makes every effort to be transparent and keep residents well-informed: this is evidenced by parishioners’ regular attendance at meetings. Members of the public have, over several years, highlighted the need for improving the play park. Prior to every council meeting, we provide opportunities for representations to be made and all such input is taken into account in decision-making.</p> <p>Meetings of meetings are posted on the PC website as well as on notice boards. This document has also been posted on the website and the attention of residents brought to it by means of social media.</p> <p>The “Resolution to Borrow” was discussed at length at the PC meeting on 04.04.2024, recorded in the meeting minutes which were posted on the website and on notice boards on 08.04.2024.</p> <p>Our intention is to provide an ongoing dedicated website page, highlighting updates to the project and associated documentation. The project will also be a standing item on the PC agenda and therefore open to scrutiny via the minutes.</p> <p>A press release has been prepared and will be issued once funding is confirmed.</p>
<p>Costings:</p>	<p>To loan £15,000 over ten years would cost a total of £19,135.20 at rates valid on 02.04.24. Repayments of £956.76 at 6 monthly intervals would be required</p>
<p>Loan Affordability:</p>	<p>Careful consideration has been given to mitigation factors. The parish council takes a prudent and pragmatic approach to budget management and if required to do so, would be able to draw upon reserves in the face of any future financial difficulty. (Evidence of current reserves attached). We would also give serious consideration to increasing the precept to honour the responsibility to pay back the loan</p>