

Report Title	Playground Fund
Meeting	Executive
Meeting Date	27 th August 2026
Report Author	Assistant Director Operational Services
Directorate	Place
Lead Executive Member(s)	Cllr Zafar Ali
Wards Affected	Nelson & Brierfield
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	Public
Appendices (if any)	1. MHCLG funding prospectus 2. Map of potential playgrounds 3. Photos of playground sites 4. Playground funding proposal

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following notification that Nelson had been selected to receive £270,000 to upgrade or create 3 playgrounds, the report sets out to provide Members with details on the criteria for funding and recommendations for which play areas should be improved.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, the Executive is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note that the funding allocation as per the funding prospectus in *appendix 1* has been accepted.
- 2.2 Note the proposals set out within the Officers Expression of Interest has been returned to MHCLG prior to the deadline of 17th August 2026 and that funding shall be allocated to Poplar Street, Lomeshaye Park & Clough Head.

3. Information: The Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendations

- HM Government announced in the autumn budget 2025 of a non-competitive funding grant of £18 million, split between 66 local authority areas of the greatest need, to create, refurbish or improve three playgrounds. The funding is allocated specifically to the (Pendle) Nelson area
- The funding criteria is designed to improve children and young people's access to high-quality, accessible and inclusive playgrounds by:

- a) Increasing or improving playground provision in selected areas of greatest need.
 - b) Targeting places with higher levels of income deprivation affecting children and weaker existing playground provision, assessed through existing data on:
 - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index
 - Number of children per playground
 - Playground size
 - Children's travel distance to playgrounds
 - c) Supporting meaningful engagement with children, families and communities in site selection and design.
 - d) Improving the quality, accessibility, inclusivity and long-term sustainability of local playgrounds.
- 3.1 Officers within the Greenspaces team have carried out a condition survey of the existing playgrounds within the defined area in order to recommend which sites should be allocated funding. These are highlighted in *Appendix 2*.
- 3.2 Poplar Street, Lomeshaye Park and Clough Head in Nelson achieve the most funding criteria requirements (See *Appendix 4*), based on proximity of BUA (Built up area), condition of existing playground and potential to create viable improvements for the community.
- 3.3 Marsden Park, Victoria Park, Walverden Park, Hey Street, Cats Park (Netherfield Road) and Fleet Street playgrounds have all been considered but have not been recommended as they are either currently in good modern order or have recently been upgraded as part of the Nelson Town Deal funding.
- As part of this scheme, extensive consultation is required with residents, young people, families and relevant stakeholders such as Nelson Town council. This will be carried out by the greenspaces team and the community engagement officer, supported by input from playground manufacturers
 - The outcome of this funding scheme will be enhanced, high quality, modern play facilities with reduced ongoing day to day maintenance costs. Designs will target improved accessibility & inclusivity, safety for women and girls and being suitable for a wide range of age brackets.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (Priority 2 and Priority 4). Proud and connected communities and place. Housing and Healthy communities,

- 4.1 Enhancing our play facilities and green spaces will support the promotion of health and wellbeing activities within our communities

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

A funding allocation has been proposed of £240,000 as a capital grant alongside £30,000 revenue element to Pendle Borough Council. No direct contribution is required from Pendle Borough Council. Match funding may be awarded by Nelson Town Council of up to £10,000 towards the scheme at Poplar street.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

None arising directly from this report

5.3 Climate and Biodiversity Implications

None arising directly from this report

5.4 Human Resources Implications

None arising directly from this report

5.5 Equality and Diversity Implications

None arising directly from this report

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultations are to be held with residents, youth groups and community groups within the surrounding area of each park prior to redevelopment of the selected site.

7. Alternative Options Considered

None

8. Statutory Officer Sign off (please put an x in the relevant box below)

Section 151 Officer	x
Monitoring Officer	x

9. Background Documents

- Future Play investment in Nelson – Internal PBC research document created as part of the process of evaluation.
- Funding Prospectus (Appendix 1)
- [The Children's People and Nature Survey for England: 2024 update - GOV.UK](#)
- [Make Space for Girls](#)

Contact Officers

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