

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

4 NOVEMBER 2025

Report Title: Bradwell Dingle Play and Recreational Facility Improvements

Submitted by: Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery

Portfolios: Sustainable Environment

Ward(s) affected: Bradwell

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes ☐	No ☒
To endorse the detailed scheme for improvements to play and recreational facilities at Bradwell Dingle			
<u>Recommendation</u> That Cabinet: 1. Receives the report and endorses the detailed scheme for improvements to play and recreational facilities at Bradwell Dingle. 2. Authorises the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment to award a consultancy contract to undertake further consultation, detailed design and delivery of the project.			
<u>Reasons</u> To deliver play and recreational facility improvements to Bradwell Dingle in line with the needs of residents and users of the site			

1. Background

1.1 At the meeting of 10th September 2024, Cabinet resolved to:

- Approve the principle of the scheme for play and recreational facilities at Bradwell Dingle
- Authorise officers to appoint a consultant to undertake further consultation, detailed design, and delivery of the project
- Approve the use of the allocated £412,419 Section 106 funding for the delivery of the project
- Delegate to the Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery to approve the detailed design in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment
- Authorise officers to seek and accept the best value tender for the delivery of the project

- 1.2** Since this time, a consultant has been appointed to progress the project and has completed the consultation and detailed design work. A tender package has also been prepared and tenders will be invited for the construction of the play and recreational facilities, which are due to be returned and evaluated in December 2025, with a view to commencing work on site in February 2026. The estimated contract period is 18 weeks with a view to the facilities being open for use in May/June 2026.

2. Issues

- 2.1** The latest stage of consultation was carried out by the consultants over the summer of 2025 and reached out to local residents, ward members, the Friends of Bradwell Dingle and the wider community via an online survey and onsite engagement. The results were collated into a report which is attached to this report at Appendix 1, and informed the detailed design of the proposed scheme. The main themes are summarised as follows:

- 2.1.1** Between 16th July and 14th September 2025, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council asked people for their views on proposed improvements to Bradwell Dingle. This involved an on-site consultation carried out by Awscape Ltd followed by an online consultation.

2.1.2 General Feedback

In total 126 people gave feedback on the proposals.

- 89% of those who responded live in Bradwell. Others live local to the area.
- 43% of those who responded use the park on a daily basis with 27% on a weekly basis.
- 67% of those who responded used the park for walking the dog, with 50% saying they use it for walking and exercise and 49% saying they use the play area.
- On accessibility 81% of respondents said they found it easy to access. One in six (16 %) did not, stating gates are hard to open and access with pushchairs, gates not wheelchair friendly, paths and surfacing uneven.
- 72% would like to see a new wheeled area with 77% opting for a pump track.
- 84% of those who responded would like to see outdoor gym equipment.
- 81% of those who responded would like to see a community garden.
- 98% of those who responded would like to see new benches.
- 84% of those who responded said they would like to see the community more involved in the park through organized projects.

People felt most positive about:

- Changes to the park and facilities.
- People being involved in the park and respecting the park.
- A community space.

For people who felt negative, the reasons were:

- Anti-social behaviour and vandalism will continue.
- Motorbikes accessing the park.

2.2 The proposed scheme took this feedback into account and includes:

- Replacement of the removed skatepark with a tarmac surfaced pumptrack that is suitable for all age groups and abilities, is robust in construction, low in maintenance and as far as possible, less likely to be subject to vandalism.
- Removal of the sheltered seating, replacing with layered open stone / concrete seating.
- Replacement of the play area, which is outdated, with a new and larger play area for all ages and abilities, to be inclusive, robust and a focal point of Bradwell Dingle.
- Creating easier access for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs, electric disability scooters by removing the gates, and replacing them with open access and large bollard / monoliths displaying the name of the park. This will prevent vehicular access but will not stop motorbikes. Through research it has become clear that other forms of barriers such as gates, chicanes, kissing gates, A Frame, or K Frame barriers do not prevent motorbikes but do create barriers for pedestrians, wheelchair users, the elderly, people with disabilities and cyclists.

The exception to this will be retaining and renovating the existing gate on Oakdene Avenue where access is straight onto the road.

- The development of a Community Garden. This will be subject to a committee being formed to oversee the group, safety guidelines, public liability insurance, lease agreements etc.
- Repairs and maintenance to improve surveillance and safety for users through lighting repairs (NuLBC to undertake), lifting of tree branches to create better sight lines through the park, clearing of scrub to remove intimidating areas especially at the entrance adjacent to Oakdene Avenue and Cauldon Avenue.
- Installation of new vandal resistant benches with backrests to replace the damaged and degraded existing benches. Installation of two concrete picnic benches.
- Installation of new outdoor exercise area with equipment for cardio and strength workouts.
- Introduction of concrete table tennis table.
- Area for nature play, wildflowers and biodiversity.

2.3 A general layout plan is included in the report in Appendix 1, but as the pump track, play area and general landscaping elements of the project will be 3 separate design and build tenders, final details will not be available until the successful tenders have been received, evaluated and awarded. At this stage, further community engagement will take place in the form of “you said, we did” promotion of the final detailed scheme online.

2.4 The current estimated cost of the proposed scheme is £365,980, which when added to the consultancy commission costs of £38,850, is within the available approved budget of £412,419. The cost will be refined during the tender process, and there is capacity within the approved budget for any minor increases.

2.5 The scheme is programmed to commence on site in January/February 2026 with an estimated completion date of May/June 2026, at which point the improved facilities will be available for community use. Bradwell Dingle is included on the list of green spaces which are to be protected under the Council’s Fields in Trust programme, and will be progressed in a future phase of designation.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That Cabinet receives the report and endorses the detailed scheme for improvements to play and recreational facilities at Bradwell Dingle.
- 3.2 Authorises the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment to award a consultancy contract to undertake further consultation, detailed design and delivery of the project.

4. Reasons

- 4.1 To deliver play and recreational facility improvements to Bradwell Dingle in line with the needs of residents and users of the site.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 Various options for the range of play and recreational facilities were considered and consulted on as part of the development of the project.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal or statutory implications arising from this report.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 There are no negative implications arising from this report, the improved facilities should improve access and usability of the site for users. The consultation process engaged with users and potential users.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 A capital sum of £412,419 has been secured and received specifically for open space improvements to Bradwell Dingle through a Section 106 Agreement from the nearby Knype Way development. A further sum is due to be paid towards the maintenance of the improvements, from the same agreement, upon occupation of the first dwelling.
- 8.2 The current estimated cost of the scheme is £365,980 and the consultancy commission cost is £38,850, making a total of £404,830. This is within the available approved budget of £412,419.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 The risks associated with the development of the project were highlighted in the September 2024 report, and have been successfully mitigated.
- 9.2 The remaining risk is failure to complete the construction of the scheme on time and within budget and this will be mitigated via robust tender evaluation, value engineering and contract management procedures.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council ☒

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council ☒

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

One Sustainable Council ☒

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 The decision is not a key decision as only one ward is impacted by the proposals.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 10th September 2024

14. List of Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Bradwell Dingle Report

15. Background Papers

15.1 None