

Churchfield Play Area

Background

In March 2017 an Annual Inspection by the Play Inspection Company identified several issues with the new play area in Churchfields including:

Item	Finding	Action	Risk
Supernova	The wet pour is crumbling in areas.	Monitor for any further deterioration and repair as required.	L
Swings – Pendulum Swing	The wet pour is crumbling in areas.	Monitor for any further deterioration and repair as required.	L
Crawling tunnel	Sharp split in the tunnel.	Remove as required	L
See Saw	The wet pour is crumbling in areas.	Monitor for any further deterioration and repair as required.	L
Swings – 2 bay (2 flat, 2 cradle)	The seat has minor damage or wear	Monitor for any further deterioration and repair as required.	L

Although all these areas were considered by the inspector to be low risk it was agreed that TC would contact the contractor about the issues as they may be still under warranty.

Summary

As the contract was let in parts each partner blamed the other. The play equipment supplier (tunnel) blamed the way the tunnel was installed and the installer blamed the design of the tunnel.

The play surface is not wet pour but rubber mulch which is not designed for hard wear area. It was used to keep the price down, and is out of the warranty period of 12 months.

The play equipment supplier agreed to provide a new tunnel and swing, under warranty, but would need to charge for delivery. The swing seat can be fitted by the Facilities Manager but the tunnel would need to be fitted by the contractor.

TC has approached 3 play surface companies for quotes to replace the play surfaces with wet pour in the hard wear areas:

Company	Size sq m	Depth mm	price per m	Total	Comment
A	10	40	127.80	1,278.00	Red, Green or Blue
B - 1	41	50	57.00	2,337.00	Black
B - 2	41	50	69.80	2,862.00	Red, Green or Blue
C	40	50-60	64.43	2,577.00	Black

The cheapest option, with the best coverage, would be B1 at £57 per m². Council may wish to consider making the new surface a feature by using coloured wet pour at £69.80 per m².

Options

Option 1 – leave and review again next year as all low risk.

Option 2 – Repair tunnel & swing with the minimum repairs to the soft surface (10m²).

Option 3 – Repair tunnel & swing with 41m² surface repair in black

Option 4 – Repair tunnel & swing with 41m² surface repair in colour

Description	cost	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
New Tunnel (delivery only)	100.00	0	100.00	100.00	100.00
New swing (delivery only)	15.00	0	15.00	15.00	15.00
Refit the tunnel	850.00	0	850.00	850.00	850.00
Surface	see chart	0	1,278.00	2,337.00	2,862.00
		0	2,243.00	3,302.00	3,827.00

All costs are subject to VAT.

Recommendation

Option 4 – This gives maximum coverage of the areas that take the most wear and make these areas into a feature.

Although Option 1 would save money in this financial year the costs in future years are bound to increase. Previous experience shows that once the rubber mulch is damaged children will pick at it and make the damaged area larger therefore needing a larger repair.