

Cabinet – 10 October 2023

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

1) Mr B

At the last Cabinet meeting I asked for information about the Play Area in Compass Gardens, SWF. My question was not answered, so I would like to ask it again. How much extra land was incorporated into the Compass Gardens play area when it was remodelled, since we established at the last meeting the town had lost nearly 1000 square metres of play area at Saltcoats Park?

Also, Councillor Moore used a document from 2012 to base the provision of play and other facilities at Chelmsford's SWF parks. Does the councillor agree with me that it is time to come up with some new ideas for our parks? This is now the 2nd LibDem administration since the Tories adopted this plan, and now SWF and Chelmsford have both got adopted plans in place which aspire to greater things. Losing play space to general parkland is not an upgrade.

While I'm sure we will be pointed to future CIL money from the development north of the Burnham Road to fund new facilities, this won't arrive for some years – the developers haven't even begun work. Is it not right to use some of the district's capital budget to enhance our park facilities now? Currently this administration has allocated less than 1% of the non-earmarked capital money to projects in SWF which has nearly 10% of the district's population.

I would argue that a new toddlers' play space adjacent to the play area in Compass Gardens is one project the Council should be moving forward on. There are others, and I would invite Councillor Moore and her officers to ask our residents what facilities they actually want – something I did at the start of this year.