

Government funding for play parks will help council in Edinburgh

The council has an investment plan for the council owned play parks in the city and that is set to be improved by a promise of more money in the Scottish Budget.

The government budget is still in draft form and will not be approved by parliament until the New Year, but as it stands it contains a significant amount of funding to improve play facilities.



Cllr Finlay McFarlane advocating for play park funding ©2023
The Edinburgh Reporter

Cllr Finlay McFarlane, the SNP councillor for the City Centre, is keen to keep moving forward with investment in play which he said leads to “mental health, physical health, social cohesion and overall wellbeing benefits for the city’s young people”. He is calling for an updated report from council officers at [Thursday’s full council meeting](#).

It is almost five years since The Scottish Government established a five-year capital funding programme to ensure that children have access to quality play parks.

Cllr McFarlane explained that at the time of the last council report there was no indication whether any further grant

funding would be allocated after 2025 and he said: "This is why the draft budget £10million was welcome."

The last time this matter was discussed was in February 2024 at the Culture and Communities committee. The papers are at this link: [Item 7.5 – Playparks Investment.pdf](#). Appendix 1 details the Edinburgh share and Cllr McFarlane concedes the city has actually done quite well in previous years.

Funding for play parks was allocated as

- £0.419m 2023/24
- £1.216m 2024/25 and
- £2.027m 2025/26

Appendix 2 details the parks that the council is or has been upgrading and these include the three most expensive projects – £312,172 for Montgomery Street Park, £219,875 for Princes Street Gardens and £200,000 for Burdiehouse Valley Park.

Cllr McFarlane said: "From the newly renovated Montgomery Street Park to the fabulous inclusive play equipment installed in Princes Street Gardens we are really seeing the value of the SNP Scottish Government's multi-million pound investment in young people here in Edinburgh.

"With the draft budget committing a further £10million to councils around Scotland I am excited to see even more playpark projects delivered to boost our communities.

"In the City Centre Ward I represent, young people and their families have been engaged in a consultation to imagine what a fully refurbished play park would look like in Dumbiedykes and I am truly excited to see their feedback become a reality.

"Of course – for this money to be allocated to Edinburgh, alongside the welcome boost in funding for council services, MSPs will have to get behind the SNP budget in February."



The Friends of Montgomery Street Park worked to try to save the historic helter skelter but ultimately it was unsafe and had to be removed during the upgrading of the park. Cllr James Dalglish left and Cllr Jack Caldwell second left joined members of the Friends group to try to save it – but it was in vain. PHOTO Alan Simpson