

Open Spaces – Public Health & Safety

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Deputy Leader Councillor George Clements
Portfolio Holder Councillor Hugh Branney
LEAD OFFICER: Keith Parker, Head of Leisure and Environmental
Services
REPORT AUTHOR: Toni Magean, Open Spaces Manager

Summary and Recommendation:

This report advises Executive's of unexpected service demands placed upon the Open Spaces unit and its budgets to undertake the urgent health & safety works as identified in table 1.

Recommendation
That:

- a) Executive note the report, and that
- b) Option 3.3 is agreed and funding be made available from reserves to undertake the actions highlighted in table 1

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Council's Open Spaces unit deliver frontline environmental services to the public ranging from parks maintenance to enforcement action. These services are delivered within the agreed annual service plan and committed budgets.
- 1.2 In discharging its services, four service areas have been highlighted as requiring urgent attention due to public health and safety concerns :-

Table 1

	Location	Risk	Action required	Cost
a)	Jacktrees Road Play Area	Significant damage to fencing allowing dogs to access the play area - Failing to provide protection to children using the play area	Installation of 250m substantial dog proof fencing	£7,000

b)	Kells Play Area	Significant damage to surfacing under play equipment - Failing to provide protection for children using the play equipment	Installation of 300 sq m Safety Surfacing	£20,000
c)	Lancashire Road Car Park, Millom	Surfacing very uneven and broken in many places- resulting in uneven and hazardous walking/parking surface	Replace 550 sq m car parking surface	£9,500
Total				£36,500

- 1.3 Temporary short-term measures have been put in place to protect the public through the use of protective barriers to cordons.
- 1.4 The funding to deliver the above works cannot be contained within the Open Spaces committed operational budgets for 2008/9 and therefore Executive is asked for agreement for funding to be made available from reserves.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 The council priorities for 2008/9 include providing high quality open spaces and making Copeland a safer place to be.
- 2.2 It is a statutory requirement for the council to take appropriate action to minimise risks to public safety.
- 2.3 The public health & safety issues raised in this report are outside the current Open Spaces resource provision and its budgets.
- 2.4 The health & safety concerns raised in the report are one-off costs.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 To do nothing

This would leave the council in a vulnerable position and open litigation

3.2 To Support A and C and to remove play equipment from the Kells play area resulting from the damaged safety surfacing

Costs for removal of play equipment will be contained within existing resources. This option will reduce overall costs to £16,500 though the Kells ward will be left with a significant reduction in its children play provision.

3.3 To support A,B & C

This option will resolve the health and safety concerns highlighted in the table 1.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that funding of £36,500 is made available from the Council's reserves to rectify the health and safety concerns described in this report.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 5.1 Items (a) and (b), totalling £27,000, could be funded from the capital reserve. Item (c) £9,500 can be funded from unallocated revenue underspend in 2007/08.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 If the recommendation is accepted, the current risks will be managed.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 The programme of works identified in this report supports the council's quality of life objectives

List of Appendices - none

List of Consultees:

Cllr George Clements
Cllr Hugh Branney
Corporate Team

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Impact on Crime and Disorder	High quality open space provision contribute to the reduction of perceptions and acts of crime
Impact on Sustainability	Open Spaces services contribute to environmental sustainability
Impact on Rural Proofing	Nil
Health and Safety Implications	Identified in paragraph 1.2
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Identified in paragraph 1.2
Children and Young Persons Implications	Identified in paragraph 1.2 and 3.2
Human Rights Act Implications	None
Monitoring Officer comments	Supports action to reduce potential for claims against the Council.
S151 Officer comments	Funding is available from existing capital reserves and the unallocated revenue underspend in 2007/08.

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision No