

DECISION NOTICE - CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY RELATED
Key Executive Decision taken by an OFFICER

KEY DECISION Subject: Closure of equipment and car parks in open spaces

DECISION TAKER:

Name: Richard Protheroe

Job Title: Strategic Director

Signature:

Date:

REASON WHY THIS DECISION DID NOT APPEAR ON THE FORWARD PLAN AND THE URGENCY PROVISIONS WERE NOT FOLLOWED:

This key decision was taken as part of the Council's emergency response to the national Coronavirus Emergency. Due to the necessary speed of decision taking at this time it was not possible to comply with the Council's Constitution that includes the requirement to give 28 days' notice of the decision to be taken; publish details 5 clear days before the decision was taken; publish the decision within 2 days of it being taken; and provide the 5 day call-in period before implementation. Nor was it possible to comply with the Urgency provisions in the Constitution.

DECISION TAKEN:

Closure of Play areas, outdoor gyms and car parks in parks.

Playgrounds and car parks (except for vehicles displaying disabled badges) have been closed by erecting notices (24/03/20).

Outdoor gym equipment has been fenced off (08/04/20 to 15/04/20).

Safety inspections will continue to be carried out.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- To discourage non-essential customer journeys that could lead to the spreading of COVID-19
- To discourage public gatherings that breach social distancing rules.
- To prevent virus spread through contact with contaminated surfaces.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED:

- Closure of open space was considered but this is not recommended by Government.

- Physical closure of car parks is not possible without also excluding residents with disabilities.
- Fencing off play areas is not practical.
- Regular cleaning of equipment is not practical.
- Removing benches from use has been considered but would have a disproportionate impact on the elderly and people with disabilities (see equalities section).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of hiring fencing will be approximately £150 per week. Most signage is laminated with minimal cost. 30 signs on ACM board have been purchased at a cost of about £400. There will be some overtime costs for staff working over the Easter bank holiday.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

None identified

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

EIA screening

Characteristic	Differential Impact
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the closure of play equipment will be greater on young people. • The impact of taking benches out of use would be greater on older people.
Disability	The impact of taking benches out of use would be greater on people with disabilities.
Gender	None
Gender re-assignment	None
Marriage or civil partnership	None
Pregnancy or maternity	None
Race	None
Religion	None
Sexual orientation	None

Evaluation

The risks related to play areas and benches include contact with contaminated surfaces and the breach of social distancing rules.

For play areas there will be significant hand contact with surfaces and there is a high probability that young people to play together. On balance the disproportionate impact is acceptable given the risks.

For benches hand contact will be low to moderate and it likely that breaches of social distancing rules will be infrequent. Generally people do not like to share benches. On balance the impact is unacceptable given the risks.

CONSULTATIONS:

SBC internal COVID Business Continuity Cell - concur
Strategic Leadership Team - concur
Council Leader (Sharon Taylor) and Portfolio Holder (John Gardiner) - concur

Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

I agree that this decision was reasonable in all the circumstances, was urgent and could not reasonably be deferred

I further agree that any delay likely to be caused by the call -in process would prejudice the Council's or the public interest and that the decision should not therefore be subject to call-in.

Signed:

Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date:

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION: 24/03/20 – 8 /4/20