

Play Area Equipment, Apparatus & Site

Renewal, Replacement & Maintenance Policy 2014

**Introduction**

Melton Borough Council provides a play infrastructure for its residents mostly within the Melton Mowbray town area for toddlers and children under 16. It is also responsible for the management and development of a number of outdoor recreation and leisure sites suitable for all ages including Melton Country Park. The sites and facilities vary in magnitude and type considerably from simple footways through the Country park, to well-equipped play areas and Multi Use Games Area facilities.

The effective and efficient management of these facilities requires a consistent and reliable inspection and maintenance regime, together with a detailed and accurate renewal and replacement programme

**Statement of Policy**

To ensure the councils infrastructure of outdoor play areas , green open spaces recreational and leisure sites are safe and appropriately maintained and equipped

**Aims of Policy**

To ensure the council play area and outdoor recreational sites are well maintained and provide leisure facilities that meet the requirements and aspirations of residents throughout the Borough as well as being suitable and attractive for tourists and visitors

**Equipment Renewal & Replacement Programme**

This Policy will provide guidance for the provision and management of the council's play sites & equipment. The policy is intended to encourage accountability, a better understanding of play area requirements and costs and act as a guide to the on-going procurement programme.

Key considerations in regards to correctly maintaining the councils play area provision are

- Regular and appropriate inspections and maintenance regimes.
- In play areas - inclusion and use of equipment and apparatus suitable for each site and expected user group
- All existing equipment and apparatus to meets all Health and Safety requirements

- All further renewal or replacements purchases ( as all existing equipment ) and in addition to carry a 'Kitemark' (or similar) quality guarantee and /or is obtained through a reputable established specialist supplier with appropriate guarantees of longevity and expected fitness for purpose for supplied equipment and apparatus
- Procurement assessment will consider whole life costs and not just purchase costs and accordingly incorporate the factors: on-going spare part cost / availability, ease and cost of maintenance, recommended service requirements, installation and decommissioning costs.

### **Other Procurement Considerations**

On occasions equipment that needs renewing or replacing will either no longer be available , obsolete , viewed as no longer appropriate or suitable for a particular site or an alternative is sought to the existing equipment or apparatus due to it prematurely failing , a play equipment regulation change makes an alternative purchase preferable , then considerations for selection will include - equipment that fits / is an appropriate adjunct to other apparatus on site, in keeping with equipment that is i.e. traditional or contemporary, wooden , metal construct etc.

All purchases will also consider the potential to future proofing of selection, council play strategies and long term play provision requirements linked to expected /potential residential development.

In addition, there will be detailed discussions with other internal discussions with colleagues in:-

- Leisure & Culture
- Community Safety
- Community Policy
- Housing (repairs and management)

This is to ensure that any equipment suggested for replacement, refurbishment or de-commissioned takes into account wider impacts on the community and how they are used.

### **DDA Accessibility and Availability**

From 2015 the council will proactively increase the accessibility and inclusiveness of play sites as and when opportunities arise for those with restricted abilities ( less abled) , so as to proactively include for the less abled, suitable access , suitable lead and internal paths , suitable gates and signage and specific / special play equipment purposefully designed for that user group .

### **Monitoring & Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and appropriate, if changes are required, they will be reported to members with justification for their consideration

### **Disposal**

Play equipment and apparatus that reaches the end of its operational life , due to age and condition does not hold any reuse value , and accordingly disposal shall always include the maximum recycling of materials as can be achieved and the achievement of the maximum associated income from that process.

### **Retention beyond expectation**

There will be occasions where a programmed renewal or replacement will not be required due to the existing equipment or apparatus remaining fully compliant with statutory health and safety requirements and to be in a general good condition. In such cases the renewal and replacement programme will be amended in accordance with its revised expected life in service.