

(iii) Accessible Play

This Council:

Acknowledges the Essential Role of Play: Believes that opportunities for outdoor play should be accessible to and inclusive of all children and young people. Recognizes its role in ensuring this is the case for playgrounds under its control and in promoting high standards of inclusivity in playgrounds maintained by other bodies, including parish councils.

Addresses Accessibility Concerns: Notes that not all current playgrounds meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, including but not limited to children and young people using wheelchairs or special educational needs, including but not limited to children and young people with autism, and commits to addressing these gaps, where practical and possible.

Playgrounds as Essential Community Hubs: All children and young people have a right to play, which should be supported and reflected in our playgrounds, where practical and possible. They are essential for community engagement and childhood development and the Council must do what it can to encourage providers to design and build playgrounds with inclusivity as a foundational principle. The Council will lead by example and when our playgrounds need replacing, where it is practical and possible, we will incorporate inclusivity as a foundational principle.

This Council resolves to:

1. Undertake an independent audit of all playgrounds within this Council' ownership or control, to assess levels of inclusive provision and identify areas needing improvement.
2. Write to all Parish Councils and invite them to submit to the Council, playgrounds within their control for the same independent audit. The Cost of the independent audit, for Parish Council controlled playgrounds, will be met by this Council and will be carried out at the same time as the Council's independent audit.
3. Approve a budget of up to £25,000 to implement 1) and 2) above.
4. Receive a report to the Finance & Assets Committee detailing the outcomes of the audit.
5. Develop an inclusive Playground Strategy which will include (but is not limited to):
 - a) How the Council will respond to the independent audit in the short, medium and long-term to achieve, where practical and possible, an outcome of inclusive playgrounds that are within this Council's control.
 - b) Possible funding opportunities to deliver a) above.
 - c) A Toolkit for achieving Inclusive Playgrounds, based on the standards and principles relevant at the time of delivery, which will be used by the Council and available for use by other providers.
 - d) A communications strategy to promote Inclusive Playgrounds which will include raising awareness of the importance of Inclusive Playgrounds and possible sources of funding to external providers.

6. Work closely with its planning department to encourage Inclusive Playgrounds into the planning and approval processes for new developments. Ensure, where developers agree, that new playgrounds meet high standards of inclusivity from the outset.

7. Explore the feasibility of developing a planning policy, through the new Local Plan, to include a requirement to deliver Inclusive Playgrounds.

8. Ensure the local community is made aware of accessible features and inclusive equipment in local playgrounds via effective channels, including the Council's website, social media platforms, and information boards.

Proposer: Cllr Chika Akinwale

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