

## **TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **REPORT OF THE REVIEW SUPPORT MANAGER TO THE EXECUTIVE – 10 MARCH 2004**

#### **PROPOSED REDUCTION IN PLAY AREA GRANTS AWARDED TO PARISH COUNCILS – REFERENCE BACK FOLLOWING A CALL IN**

##### **Purpose of Report**

To report the outcome of the call in concerning the proposed reduction in play area grants awarded to Parish Councils which was considered at a recent meeting of the Review Board.

##### **Background**

At a meeting of the Health and Leisure Review Panel last November, a review of various grant schemes administered by the Leisure Development Team took place. Two of the recommended changes, namely the priority to be given to funding young people's facilities ahead of children's play equipment and the level of future play area grants awards, had not been supported by the Review Panel.

As a result, these matters were referred to the last meeting of the Executive where it was agreed the proposed changes should be implemented. This would mean that from April 2005, the capital grant for play equipment would be reduced from 85% of the project cost to 33%.

This decision was called in by the Chairman of the Review Board (Councillor Henley) and Councillor Stone on the basis that the cut in the level of grants proposed would have a detrimental affect on the rural areas of Taunton Deane.

The call in was considered at the Review Board at its meeting on 26 February 2004.

Whilst some members strongly felt that a grant of only 33% would actively discourage some Parish Councils from raising the balance necessary to provide new, or replace existing play facilities, others held the view that the number of other potential sources of funding would make it possible to "draw down" the money needed.

It was eventually resolved that:-

"(a) The Executive be recommended to reduce the capital grant payable to Parish Councils for play equipment from 85% to 66%;

- (b) such a reduction to be for a period of two years to enable the implications to be assessed and to determine how accessible other sources of funding were”.

The Review Board did however accept that priority should be given to older children’s/youth’s facilities. Proposals to increase the play grant budget from £21,000 to £31,000 from 2005/2006 were also supported.

### Recommendation

The Executive is requested to consider the recommendations of the Review Board.

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