

**PROVISION OF PLAY FACILITIES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE
(Report by the Service Development Manager)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 1st June 2010 the Overview And Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) request an update on the investigations into
- a) provision of Group Insurance for Parish Councils
 - b) the feasibility of combining ROSPA safety inspections

2. PROVISION OF GROUP INSURANCE FOR PARISH COUNCILS

- 2.1 The options for group insurance schemes have been investigated. The Council's Insurance Service and Insurance Broker was been contacted and the issues discussed.
- 2.2 As Huntingdonshire District Council is not a broker it is unable to advise on or arrange insurance for third parties. To do so could mean falling foul of financial regulations.
- 2.3 The Council's Insurance Service and Insurance Broker are of the opinion that play equipment insurance is too small a risk for an insurer to consider in isolation. Play equipment would generally be seen to be part of a Parish Council's overall insurance portfolio.
- 2.4 It is unlikely that insurers would consider offering cover across a number of Parishes, as each play facility and Parish Council would have differing levels of risk. What may be of advantage for Parishes, however, would be to seek economies of scale by coming together, similar to a consortium, and seeking individual quotes for their entire insurance portfolio. This has already been done at District and County level and has produced financial savings. There may be opportunities to do this through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC)
- 2.5 The Council's insurance brokers, are aware of some Parish Council's obtaining play equipment cover within their overall portfolio, and are prepared to speak to individual Parish Council's to explain how this has been achieved.

3. FEASIBILITY OF COMBINED ROSPA SAFETY INSPECTIONS

- 3.1 ROSPA have been contacted and are willing to undertake inspections for Parish and Town councils at the same time as those undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council, provided that the inspections are grouped together to minimise travel between sites.

- 3.2 They currently undertake Annual inspections for Parish and Towns in the Cambridgeshire county area in April of any year on the following basis;

Individual Inspection report per site with 5 items of equipment = £63 +vat
Additional items of equipment £3 each

- 3.3 In 2008 the cost to Huntingdonshire District Council for a single report on all our sites worked out at £47.50 per site. Inspections are due again this coming October and a quotation is pending. The charge is expected to be greater than previous. The lower cost benefit arises from having a single report on all sites rather than separate individual reports.
- 3.4 Assuming a difference of £15 between the two charging frameworks, this difference is effectively part of ROSPA's overhead cost involved in arranging the inspection, writing the report and invoicing their client.
- 3.5 Huntingdonshire District Council could arrange for Town and Parish Council inspections to be part of its own report. This would require staff time spent on communications with the third party, collecting data on the site, formatting the information and producing maps for ROSPA, contact with ROSPA on the inspection day(s), forwarding the results and finally invoicing the third party.
- 3.6 Even allowing for an optimistic total time of 45 minutes per parish, the cost to HDC required to be added to the invoice would be at least £15 per site. This excludes the cost to HDC for the invoicing which currently averages £30.
- 3.7 As the difference between the two charging frameworks is so low, there is no benefit to either authority by grouping Parish and Town council inspections with Huntingdonshire District Council inspections.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Insurance experts have indicated that Huntingdon District Council is not in a position to organise group insurance for third tier authorities.
- 4.2 The ROSPA charge to Parish and Town councils for play equipment inspections remains competitive and it is unlikely that Huntingdonshire District Council could provide the service significantly cheaper.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ROSPA Play Safety Leaflet

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