

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD

<b>Portfolio Holder:</b> Councillor Mrs J French, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder ARP, Parking Decriminalisation, Parks & Open Spaces and Car Parks	<b>Service:</b> Leisure Services
<b>Lead Officers:</b> Phil Hughes, Head of Leisure Services/SRO March Future High Street Project, Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer	<b>Delegated Power Being Exercised:</b> Part 3 - Responsibilities for Functions; Table 5, paragraph 10 which permits the portfolio holder and leader of the council to authorise the approval of the Council's acquisition of goods, services and works (whether following a procurement exercise or otherwise), and entry into the associated financial and legal agreements between the value £100,001 and £500,000.
<b>Subject of Decision:</b> To approve the removal of the damaged and out of use play equipment at the Station Road recreation ground in Whittlesey and remediate the space back to grass.	

### **Decision to be taken:**

To approve the removal of play equipment that has been out of use due to vandalism for the past 18 months (and many times previously due to vandalism) with remediation of the space back to grass.

### **Decision:**

To remove the Station Road play area and remediate the space back to grass at a cost in the region of £15k, due to consistent vandalism and the high cost of maintaining the play area.

### **Reason for the Decision:**

This play area has suffered consistent vandalism since opening. Maintenance of the equipment and particularly the safety surfacing is expensive and repairs and reopening then result in further vandalism and closure pending more maintenance work.

As this play area is a few hundred metres from the larger play area on Manor Field, closure and removal of this currently closed facility will not impact on community access to play areas and will reduce wasting public funds on an area that will continue to be vandalised.

### **Alternative Options Considered (if appropriate):**

1. Fix the currently vandalised play surface at a cost of approximately £25,000 - £30,000
2. Add CCTV to the current area at a cost of a further £20,000 (due to power requirements)

### **Background/Reports/Information considered and attached:**

N/A

**Financial Implications**

Reduced initial spend on fixing safety surfacing.

Reduced annual spend on constant maintenance issues due to vandalism.

**Any Other Implications**

Public perception of the removal of the equipment might, initially, be negative. However, this equipment has been out of use for some 18 months and there have been zero complaints in 2025 regarding the space.

Considering the close location of the Manor Field play area, the community has access to a play area around the corner.

**Portfolio Holder's Signature:**

Cllr Jan French, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Open Spaces

**Date:**

17 July 2025

**Please forward to Democratic Services upon completion**

**For Office Use Only**

**Date copy passed to Democratic Services** 17/07/25

**Implementation Date:**  
**(if not called-in)**  
**(Allow 5 clear working days after publication of decision)**

Circulation: Democratic Services, Portfolio Holder, Officer and Accountancy.