

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

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FINAL SPLASH PARK DECISION POSTPONED

Following extensive investigations and the publication of an expert technical study, next week's Public Cabinet meeting (21 July) will invite private or community organisations to submit detailed proposals for taking over and running the Splash Park facility in Belvedere.

If no serious proposals are submitted then the facility will be closed and transformed into a children's play area.

Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Environment and Leisure, Cllr Peter Craske said; "This isn't an easy decision to take. No one wants to see the Splash Park closed, but we really have little choice.

The expert report is clear, the level of costs needed to keep the splash park running are just too high for the Council to continue bearing, in this exceptionally challenging financial climate.

"We're not talking about a 'one off' cost here – we would need to find as much as £300,000 to make the park usable again and then an annual cost to keep it running. We cannot justify spending our Council Tax payers' money in this way when we are having to make savings on so many other services.

"We know how that many people love the park and that's why we are giving organisations the chance to put forward a serious business case. They will have to be able to demonstrate to everyone how they plan to run and maintain the park. If the right business and the right plan comes along the park may still have a future."

A final decision on the future of the Splash Park will be taken in the Winter. The timetable has been designed to allow organisations time to come up with a sustainable plan that adequately addresses the issues raised in the recent technical study.

Cllr Craske continues; "Taxpayers won't accept a 'quick fix' plan. That wouldn't be fair to local people or anyone else in the Borough. We are looking for an organisation that can provide a real future for the splash park."

If no organisation shows an interest in running the park, or the proposals fail to meet

the Council's requirements, the decision in Winter will see the park converted into a 'dry' children's play area.

To see the full Public Cabinet Report that includes the specialist study visit
www.bexley.gov.uk/agendasanddecisions

ENDS

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