



# Media Release

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DATE: 24 December 2004

## **PADDLING POOLS**

**PADDLING POOLS** were temporarily closed earlier this year because of new health and safety regulations, although funding was eventually found to keep them open during the summer holidays. Cabinet will now be considering the options available for the summer season of 2005 when it meets on 5 January.

There are three municipal paddling pools in the district. Borrage Green, Ripon, Bebra Gardens, Knaresborough and Valley Gardens, Harrogate.

Prior to the new guidance and legislation coming into force, the council filled the pools at the start of the week, chlorinated manually and tested twice a day to see if they were at the required concentration of chlorination. They were then drained down and cleaned as necessary.

This has worked well over the years and no problems have been reported. But under this new guidance, pool water microbiological testing and supervision of pools means that the council must carry out similar levels of testing for paddling pools as it does for swimming pools. Added to that, they must also consider as a safety measure the staffing of pools when they are open to the general public and draining them each evening.

Councillor Pat Jones, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Amenity Services, said: “We managed to re-open the pools earlier this year because we had leisure staff willing to transfer their duties to working at the pools and carry out these new procedures. However, they did so without toilet, refreshment facilities or shelter. We were particularly grateful to them but these are all things we will have to consider. We have done some research among other authorities. York, Scarborough and Leeds closed their paddling pools sometime ago. Others are in a similar position as ourselves whereby they are considering their position on the provision of paddling pools.”

The options open to the council all have significant cost implications. Included in the options are:

- Constructing water treatment facility, staffing the pools and providing them with shelter. Estimate £223,000 plus running costs of £45,220.
- Provide an active water feature as an alternative to the paddling pools £224,250
- Removing the paddling pools and re-landscaping the area £15,500

A full copy of the report has been issued to the media but copies are available from Lynne Mee as above. Cabinet will meet at 5.30 pm on 5 January 2005 at the Council Offices, Crescent Gardens.