



Media Release

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SPLASHING SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Paddling pools to reopen

NEWS that the district’s paddling pools had to be closed because of health and safety guidelines, caused a lot of dismay for parents and children who were looking forward to using them now that the weather has improved. But Harrogate Council’s parks and open spaces chiefs have today confirmed that the finance required and new staffing arrangements needed have been put in place and the paddling pools will re-open on Saturday, 24 July.

In carrying out renewed risk assessments, the council was forced to close the paddling pools on 12 July until arrangements could be put in place to staff the pools and to drain them each evening to prevent any accidents occurring.

Councillor Pat Jones, Cabinet Member of Leisure and Amenity Services said: “There were concerns about the closure and many people told us that these pools have been used for years without problems. That may be the case but we have to follow national health and safety guidance, however, unpalatable it may be.

“I am pleased to say that staff in the Leisure and Amenity Services Department have gone flat out this week to help us re-open the pools. Financially it is going to cost the council somewhere in the region of £10,000 which we have found, but we couldn’t re-open the pools without the support of our staff. Over fifteen of our leisure staff have come forward to offer to work at the paddling pools to supervise their use.

“Apart from training, ordering materials and making health and safety assessments, we have also had to think about the facilities needed for our staff during their shift. We have managed this in Harrogate and Ripon but Bebra Gardens in Knaresborough has caused problems because of its position and we can’t get any shelter or toilet facilities close to the pool side. We have got round this by having staff work split shifts in Knaresborough.”

The pools will re-open on 24 July and, as usual, will remain open during good weather between 11.00 am and 5.00 pm until the end of the school holidays on 5 September. The paddling pools are located in Valley Gardens, Harrogate, Bebra Gardens, Knaresborough and Borrage Green, Ripon.

These arrangements have been introduced to ensure that there is no risk to children using the facilities. The council is asking users of the facilities to assist the staff and to act reasonably and do as instructed. ENDS

Technical information is available from Patrick Kilburn, Head of Parks and Open Spaces on 01423 556704.