

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 9 January 2023

Title: Smoke Free Oxfordshire by 2025 – Smoke Free Parks

Contact Officer: Town Clerk - Sharon Groth

Background

As part of the delivery of the County's Tobacco Control Strategy and the ambition to become a smoke free County by 2025 (five years ahead of the national 2030 target), Oxfordshire County Council are supporting smokefree initiatives including smokefree homes, cars, play parks and school gates.

Current Situation

What's a smoke free County?

For a county to be classed as smokefree, the smoking prevalence for the population must be below 5%. Currently it is 10.2% in Oxfordshire (November 2022).

Town and Parish councils are uniquely placed to support this vital work by partnering with Oxfordshire County Council to help work across local communities to promote smokefree environments, particularly the smokefree playparks initiative and the smokefree community fund.

Smoke Free Oxfordshire can provide free signage and implementation support for any Parish or Town Council owned park/playground to create a smokefree environment for local children.

Playparks/playgrounds in Oxfordshire are priority areas OCC would like to become smokefree and it would like to work with District, Parish, and Town Councils to create smokefree playparks/playgrounds.

OCC will provide free signage and implementation support for any Parish or Town Council owned park/playground to create a smokefree environment for local children playing in the area. Some proposed examples of signage are in the attached appendix.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Having a smoke free policy would support the Council's environmental aspirations.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Whilst signage would be fairly easy to implement, the Council wouldn't necessarily have the powers or resources to enforce areas to be smoke free, it would have to be self-policing.

Financial implications

Smokefree Community Fund

The Smokefree Community Fund aims to provide financial support, with funding of £150-£1000 available to Town/ Parish Councils and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations who want to create smokefree spaces and/or hold smokefree events.

Suggestions from OCC/Smokefree Oxfordshire include - creating a smokefree policy for your premises, removing ashtrays or smoking shelters, or get the community to create some smokefree signage. If holding events that children and young people will be attending, consider making the event smokefree to protect children from the harms of second-hand smoke.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider implementing smokefree zones within the Council's play areas/recreation grounds and making an application for funding as suggested in the report.

