

Playspace Sub-Committee – 6 July 2005

Minutes of the meeting of the **Playspace Sub-Committee** held on **6 July 2005** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D G Stansby

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr T Livings

Cllr P F A Webster

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllr Mrs S A Harper and Mrs M S Vince.

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts	-	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
D Timson	-	Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
R Tatton-Bennett	-	Principal Engineer
S Garland	-	Community Safety Officer
C Milton-White	-	Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator
J Bostock	-	Principal Committee Administrator

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs M A Weir	-	Rochford Parish Council
M Hughes	-	Essex County Youth Service
J Vickers	-	Detached Work Co-ordinator, Essex County Youth Service
PC Routh	-	Essex Police

16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 March 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17 SUTTON COURT DRIVE PLAYSPLACE

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) on progress, information from residents and suggested ways forward for the Sutton Court Drive Playspace.

Prior to detailed discussion, the Chairman confirmed that the Sub-Committee had always intended to ensure all interested parties were consulted and kept informed of the process.

PC Routh reported on the number of incidents in the vicinity of the playspace requiring Police attendance since 1 April. The Sub-Committee accepted that quality of life issues could be associated with the congregation of youths at playspaces and that damage could be caused by ball games.

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In considering this matter, Members noted that:-

- Subject to appropriate indemnity, a local resident remained willing to lock/unlock the playspace facility.
- To minimise financial impact on the Parish Council, an arrangement could be introduced whereby works commence subject to the Parish agreeing to source any immediate shortfall in their own financial contribution via next year's precept.
- Over time, the Parish Council had investigated the feasibility for play-space provision in a number of areas in the Sutton Court Drive area of Rochford.
- Notwithstanding that it would need to give detailed consideration to overall funding, the Parish Council was likely to support the Phase 1 proposal as identified in the report. It should be possible for the Parish Council to consider the matter in detail and report back to the District before the end of the month.
- Of the Youth Service questionnaires that had been returned there was an indication that young people would appreciate the playspace being opened as frequently as possible and that there was respect for the concerns of the community. There was also an indication that it would be appreciated if the teen shelter was either improved to give greater protection from the weather or replaced with one offering such protection.
- Separate open/closing times for the two parts of the playspace may be worth consideration.
- Teen shelter replacement would cost approximately £12,000. There were differing opinions about the merits of a shelter.
- Phase 1 proposals did not include the introduction of netting to catch high balls. Whilst risk/safety issues could be associated with the introduction of such netting, possibilities could be investigated by District Officers.
- The Authority's Byelaws did not prohibit ball games.
- The organisers of any site fund-raising activities, such as a fete, would need to ensure appropriate insurance cover was in place.
- As long as activities could be directly related to youth work, the County Youth Service would be happy to work with the young people of the area in exploring funding possibilities. 57 South Street would be available.

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- There would need to be specific costing of any alternative design proposals around Phase 2.

During debate it was recognised that, whilst the community had many desires on aspects such as the ideal location for a playspace, it is important for the District and Parish Council to work together in bringing appropriate realistic solutions at the current location.

It was observed that the interest being shown by the youngsters of the area was commendable and there would be clear merit in involving them as much as possible.

A Member confirmed that an Essex Police leaflet setting out the parameters associated with obtaining funding of up to £750 for projects run by 18 to 25 year-olds would be passed to the Essex Youth Service representatives.

The Sub-Committee concurred with the view of the Chairman that the Parish Council should now be asked to develop final recommendations based on a contribution from the Parish of 50% of costs and it was:-

Resolved that Rochford Parish Council be asked to consider the options and develop final recommendations for the Sutton Court Playspace (including arrangements for locking/unlocking) on the basis that it will contribute 50% towards the cost of any improvements considered necessary. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 4.55pm.

Chairman

Date