

Playspace Sub-Committee – 21 July 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Playspace Sub-Committee** held on **21 July 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr T Livings

Cllr P F A Webster (in the Chair)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs J R Lumley and D G Stansby.

SUBSTITUTE

C J Lumley

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts	- Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
D Timson	- Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
M Martin	- Committee Administrator

7 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs T Livings and J R Lumley each declared a personal interest in the discussions around playspaces by virtue of being Members of Rayleigh Town Council.

9 PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which sought Members' views on a basis for negotiating contributions from Parish and Town Councils towards the cost of playspace provision and also sought views with regard to the future discussions with Parish and Town Councils.

During Member debate the following was noted:-

- The overriding aim was to build a partnership with Parish/Town Councils with a view to enhancing facilities for their local communities and to enable them to have more involvement in their provision.

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- These discussions related to the actual playspace areas only and not to the remainder of the open space facilities which would continue to be maintained by the District Council.
- The District Council's total budget for 2003/04 for the maintenance of open spaces and playspaces had been a net figure of £774,000.
- The playspace element of this figure was £130,000, of which £80,000 was attributable to maintenance and £50,000 to capital.
- The Council's repair and maintenance functions worked well and any contributions from Parish/Town Councils could be fed into this budget, so that playspaces would continue to be maintained to current standards.

Members of the Sub-Committee were in agreement that it would recommend that Parish/Town Councils be requested to make a financial contribution to the provision of playspaces where they existed within their area and that the Parish Liaison Sub-Committee should be requested to seek their views on the most appropriate way of taking the matter forward.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 19 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

10 CONTRIBUTION FORMULA

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt appendix to the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which reported back on the Sub-Committee's earlier request for a formula that could be used to engage with the Parish/Town Councils to enable funding of the maintenance costs associated with playspaces. This to be introduced over a two-year period and to be based on cost/number of playspaces in each Parish with the provision of an allowance for Councils that already provided their own facility. Parishes without a playspace would be excluded.

Members of the Sub-Committee agreed with the proposed formula but felt that the following playspaces should be deleted from the discussions as they constituted amenities which, by virtue of their situation, attracted visitors from beyond the immediate locality.

- Sweyne Park, Rayleigh
- Hockley Woods, Hockley
- Pooles Lane, Hullbridge

Members of the Sub-Committee further noted that:-

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- the problems associated with one of the playspaces continued to be monitored and an alternative site may need to be considered.
- all new equipment identified in last year's programme had been installed and a press notice would be issued.

Recommended to the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee

That this Council requests Parish/Town Councils to make a financial contribution to the provision of playspaces to be introduced over a two-year period based on the number of playspaces in each Parish and with the following provisos;

- the playspaces sited at Sweyne Park, Rayleigh; Hockley Woods, Hockley and Pooles Lane, Hullbridge be excluded.
- the provision of an allowance for those Councils that already provided their own facility. (CD(F&ES))

Resolved

That the Parish Liaison Sub-Committee be requested to seek Parish views on the most appropriate way of taking the matter forward. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and closed at 11.40 am.

Chairman

Date