

ASSET REVIEW – PARISH TRANSFERS – MALVERN ROAD, LABURNAM GROVE AND WOOD AVENUE HOCKLEY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the Parishes' response to the proposed transfer of play areas and open spaces the subject of recent asset review and the terms of the transfer.

2 EXPLANATION

- 2.1 Following recent consideration as part of the asset review of play areas in Malvern Road and Laburnum Grove, and surplus Metropolitan Green belt land in Wood Avenue, the Council resolved to offer the sites to the respective Parish Councils (Minutes 232/00 refer).
- 2.2 The sites are shown hatched on the appended plans A, B and C. Malvern Road play area is in the Parish of Ashingdon. The remaining sites are within Hockley Parish.
- 2.3 The Parish Councils have indicated that they would be interested in taking over the responsibility for the play areas, and, in respect of the Green Belt land in Beckney Avenue, acquiring it for public open space purposes.
- 2.4 The transfer of these areas would be subject to appropriate terms and conditions as to their use and maintenance and can be achieved as in other recent Parish Transfers of recreational areas by way of long leases at a notional pepper corn rental. However given the limited value of the green belt land in view of its notation and dispersal there may be benefit in the Council disposing of the freehold in this instance at market value and subject to appropriate covenants, if the Parish wish to proceed on this basis.

3 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Complaints of nuisance associated with the Laburnum Grove play area were identified in the consultation responses. This will be the subject of separate report to the community safety sub-committee. Management of these areas as local facilities by the Parish Council however may assist in addressing this issue.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Appropriate management and stewardships may enhance the appearance of the green belt sites.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Malvern Road and Laburnum Grove sites are presently maintained under the provisions of the Grounds Maintenance contract. As with recent Parish transfers it would be appropriate to continue this arrangement until the expiry of the current contract on 31st March 2001, with the Parish Councils assuming full responsibility for the maintenance thereafter.

Officer time associated with the conveyancing transactions is estimated at between 8 - 12 hours.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None specific

7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Parish Councils have agreed in principle to accept the offer of the transfer of the play spaces, and a formal response on the surplus green belt land is awaited.

8 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) To transfer the Laburnum Grove and Malvern Road play spaces to Hockley Parish Council and Ashingdon Parish Council respectively, on a long lease for 125 years at a peppercorn rent, and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services deems fit.
- (2) To transfer the Metropolitan Green Belt land off Beckney Avenue, Hockley to Hockley Parish Council, either at open market value, or on a long lease for 125 years at a peppercorn rent, and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services deems fit.

Albert Bugeja

Head of Legal Services

Background Papers:

None

For further information please contact Charles Thomas on:-

Tel:- 01702 318132

E-Mail:- charles.thomas@rochford.gov.uk





