

**REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR**

**TO: EXECUTIVE**

**DATE: 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017**

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## **TRANSFER OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To provide a general update on parks; to seek approval to formal disposals of pieces of land in Trawden Forest parish; to seek approval to the treatment of Primesite bus shelters; to consider the future programme in particular the Municipal Hall, Colne Market and the Borough's cemeteries.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the position on parks be noted.
- (2) That the following pieces of land in Trawden Forest Parish, namely land at Bannister Close/Holme Crescent; the whole length of the tram tracks from Church Street to Lane House; land at Lane House to the rear of the bus turnaround; land at the end of Duke Street, Winewall; two pieces of land adjacent to the Old Post Office, Cottontree; and land at Skipton Road at the side of the Victorian toilet (as shown on the accompanying plans) be declared surplus to requirements and transferred to Trawden Forest Parish Council for a nominal sum of £1 each, subject to a covenant prohibiting their disposal for a non-community use within 10 years.
- (3) That, subject to further negotiations with Primesite, repairs be carried out to the Primesite shelters as indicated, the cost to be met from the Community Projects Fund, and that the relevant town and parish councils be requested to take on future responsibility for them.
- (4) That the feasibility of transferring cemeteries be investigated and a report be submitted to a future meeting.
- (5) That Colne Town Council be informed that the Council is willing to enter into discussions with it about the transfer of the Municipal Hall and Colne Market early in the next financial year on the assumption that the transfers of the Town Hall and Primet Community Centre will have been completed in the near future.

## **REASON**

To continue the programme of transfers to town and parish councils.

### **Parks**

1. The Executive at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December agreed in principle to the transfer of Barrowford Memorial Park to Barrowford Parish Council and of Letcliffe Park, Valley Gardens and Victory Park to Barnoldswick Town Council by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
2. The Council at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December agreed a 25% reduction in the grounds maintenance budget for 2017/18 i.e. c£90,000 spread across the 11 parks proportionately.
3. Barrowford Parish Council and Barnoldswick Town Council have both confirmed that they will fund the 25% reduction in advance of the transfers of the parks listed above.
4. Nelson Town Council in respect of Marsden Park, Walverden Park and that part of Victoria Park within its area; Brierfield Town Council in respect of Heyhead Park; Trawden Forest Parish Council in respect of Ball Grove Park; and Earby Town Council and Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council in respect of Sough Park have all now indicated their general agreement to funding the 25% reduction in 2017/18. Meetings will be arranged with each of them to discuss future levels of maintenance and the possibility and timing of them taking transfers of the parks.
5. In the case of Alkincoats Park discussions are still underway with Colne Town Council on whether it will fund the 25% reduction and on its indication that it may consider a transfer of the park by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### **Miscellaneous pieces of land in Trawden**

6. The Executive in September 2016 when considering the disposal of miscellaneous pieces of land requested further discussions with Trawden Forest Parish Council on land at Bannister Close/Home Crescent; the whole length of the tram tracks from Church Street to Lane House; land at Lane House to the rear of the bus turnaround; land at the end of Duke Street Winewall; and two pieces of land adjacent to the Old Post Office, Cottontree.
7. Those discussions have now taken place and the Parish Council has agreed to the transfer of the pieces of land. It has also asked that a piece of land at Skipton Road at the side of the Victorian toilet be transferred to it. (Plans attached).
8. The Executive is asked to declare them all surplus to requirements and to transfer them to the Parish Council for a nominal sum and subject to the standard covenant that they not be disposed of for a non -community use for 10 years.

### **Bus shelters**

9. The Executive will be aware that the Primesite bus shelters were not included in the recent transfers to town and parish councils. The agreement with Primesite has now expired. We have asked them for their future intentions and their response is awaited.
10. Lancashire County Council and Transdev have also been asked if they wish to consider taking on responsibility for the shelters. At the time of writing no responses have been received. It seems likely that it will fall to the Council to deal with them.

11. Attached is a condition survey of the shelters carried out in January. It is clear that work needs to be carried out on most of them. The estimate is £500 for those in poor condition and £350 for those in average condition – an expected total of £9,400. Should it prove necessary to replace a shelter with a reasonable equivalent rather than carry out repairs, the estimate is £3,500 including removal and installation costs.
12. The way forward would appear to be that Pendle carries out this work using the Community Projects Fund and also pursues Primesite for a contribution to the cost. Assuming Primesite does not wish to retain them they would then be offered to town and parish councils in their improved condition.
13. It should be noted that Nelson Town Council has recently reiterated that it is not willing to take on bus shelters.

## **Future programme**

14. The Executive is asked to give some consideration to the future programme.
15. In recent discussions Colne Town Council has requested a formal indication from the Council as to the transfer to it of the Municipal Hall and Colne Market. The possibility of transfer has been aired on several occasions including at the Colne and District Committee.
16. Members will be aware that the Municipal Hall is leased to the Leisure Trust until 2028. Discussions are planned with the Trust early in the next financial year about its grant and activities in future years. Inevitably the future of the Municipal Hall will come into these.
17. Members will know that the management of markets is undertaken by Liberata as part of the Council's contract with them. The Council at its December meeting agreed to a 10 year extension of the contract from 2020 and the Strategic Director and Portfolio Holder for Finance were authorised to finalise the details of this. That work is likely to be completed soon following which a firm indication about transfer of the market can be given.
18. Members will also know that negotiations are continuing with the Town Council on the transfer of the Town Hall. In addition the transfer of Primet Community Centre is still outstanding. It is expected that both will be completed shortly.
19. Separately the Town Council has enquired about the possible transfer to it of Colne cemetery. The potential transfer of cemeteries was previously included in the future programme but the Executive resolved not to pursue it.
20. The cemetery service is a borough wide one which the Council may wish to retain. Apart from Colne the Council's other cemeteries are Ghyll, Barnoldswick; Barrowford (including Woodland); Earby; Nelson and Salterforth. None of the parish or town councils in question have so far indicated a wish to take them over.
21. If the Executive wishes to take this further then it is suggested it calls for a detailed report.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** The transfer of parks, bus shelters and miscellaneous pieces of land are central features of the Council's policy and programme of devolvement of facilities to town and parish councils. The Municipal Hall, Colne Market and cemeteries are potential additions to the policy and programme.

**Financial:** Contributions from town and parish councils will offset the 25% reduction in the parks' grounds maintenance budget in 2017/18. Further discussions with the councils will focus on financial arrangements in subsequent years together with the transfer of ownership.

The Community Projects Fund is available to meet the costs of repairs to the Primesite bus shelters

**Legal:** None arising from the report.

**Risk Management:** None arising from the report.

**Health and Safety:** None arising from the report.

**Sustainability:** None arising from the report.

**Community Safety:** None arising from the report.

**Equality and Diversity:** None arising from the report.

## **APPENDICES**

Plans of land in Trawden

Primesite bus shelters condition survey.