

REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide a further update on the transfer of parks and responses to the request for a 75% contribution to grounds maintenance; and to consider a request from Barnoldswick Town Council for the transfer of pieces of land.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the position on the responses to the request for 75% parks grounds maintenance contributions be noted in particular those cases where less than 75% is to be contributed and the amount of maintenance undertaken will be correspondingly reduced.
- (2) That the Corporate Director commence discussions with Colne, Trawden Forest and Nelson councils on the transfer of the parks in their areas.
- (3) That the transfer of the pieces of land requested by Barnoldswick Town Council be agreed in principle apart from the Harrison Street amenity area and the garage sites; and the Corporate Director undertake discussions with the Town Council on them.

REASON

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

Parks

1. This is a further update on the position on transfers of the parks and also the related question of parish and town council responses to the request from the Council to meet the 75% reduction in grounds maintenance in 2019/20. The request was made to parish and town councils on 26th September.
2. The Committee has been previously informed that the transfers of **Letcliffe Park, Victory Park and Valley Gardens** to Barnoldswick Town Council were completed in April 2018.

The Town Council has agreed to fund the 75% reduction in grounds maintenance. The Council's Grounds Maintenance Team is continuing to undertake that work.

3. The Committee has also previously been advised that the transfer of **Barrowford Memorial Park** and Pendle Heritage Centre to Barrowford Parish Council subject to a new lease of the Heritage Centre is on course to be completed soon. Barrowford Parish Council has agreed to fund the 75% reduction. The Council's Grounds Maintenance Team will continue to undertake that work.
4. Colne Town Council has now confirmed that it wishes to take a transfer of **Alkincoats Park** during 2019/20. Timing will mean that it will ask the Council to continue to do the grounds maintenance for around the first six months of 2019/20. It is offering to contribute 25% of the annual cost which represents 50% of the cost of the first six months.
5. It is also understood that for the longer term it will seek tenders for the grounds maintenance work and the Council's Grounds Maintenance Team would be able to bid for the work.
6. Trawden Forest Parish Council has agreed to fund the 75% grounds maintenance contribution for **Ball Grove Park**. It has also indicated that it wishes to start discussions with a view to transfer in 2019/20.
7. Nelson Town Council has indicated that it wishes to start discussions for the transfer of **Marsden, Walverden and Victoria Parks** in 2020/21. As regards contribution towards grounds maintenance, it is offering 44% in 2019/20.
8. The Town Council considers that it should not in any event pay towards the grounds maintenance of that part of Victoria Park which lies within Barrowford. For 2018/19 Barrowford Parish Council made a payment for this on a voluntary basis and is willing to do so again for 2019/20 though it is not committing to the principle of responsibility.
9. The decision of Brierfield Town Council is that it will not pay the 75% contribution for **Heyhead Park** but will continue to make the 50% contribution. The impact will be that the Council will reduce the level of maintenance carried out accordingly. It is understood that the Town Council does not yet feel in a position to consider a transfer of the park.
10. A formal response on the 75% contribution is awaited from Earby Town Council and Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council in respect of **Sough Park**. It is understood that they do not yet feel in a position to take a transfer of the park.

Land in Barnoldswick

11. Barnoldswick Town Council has requested the transfer to it of the following:
 - Bank Street – open space land around the play area
 - Coates Avenue – open space land around the play area
 - Amenity area at Harrison Street
 - Town Square
 - Memorial Gardens
 - Clough Park
 - Various garage sites
 - Town Green
 - Recreation ground at end of Priory Way

12. Officers consider the Council can look favourably on the requests apart from the amenity area at Harrison Street which is seen as a potential residential site, and the garage sites.
13. In 2016 the Executive and the Transfer of Services and Facilities to Town and Parish Councils Committee considered the transfer of garage sites and concluded that they should not be transferred as it would represent a significant loss of income. If the Barnoldswick sites were transferred the lost income would be £37,651 per annum.
14. Furthermore transfer of garage sites to just one town council would cast doubt on the viability and practicality of the management service provided by Liberata to the Council.
15. Officers therefore reiterate their previous recommendation that they not be transferred.

IMPLICATIONS

- Policy:** The continuing development of the transfer and devolvement of services facilities to town and parish councils is a fundamental feature of the Council's Strategic Plan.
- Financial:** Contributions from town and parish councils will offset the 75% reduction in the parks' grounds maintenance budget in 2019/2020.
- 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.