

**REPORT FROM:** CORPORATE DIRECTOR

**TO:** POLICY and RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 16th JANUARY 2019

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

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To provide an update on the transfer of parks and responses to the request for a 100% contribution to grounds maintenance; to outline the position on the County Council's proposed upgrade of Mainline route bus shelters; to seek approval for the transfer of a piece of amenity land to Barrowford parish council; and to consider further the future programme of transfers.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the position on the responses to the request for 100% parks grounds maintenance contributions and on future transfers be noted.
- (2) That the position on the County Council refurbishment of mainline route bus shelters be noted.
- (3) That the transfer of amenity land at Dickey Nook to Barrowford parish council be approved.
- (4) That the future programme be discussed further with parish and town councils.

**REASON**

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

**Parks**

1. This part of the report sets out 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 100% reduction in grounds maintenance in 2020/21. The request was made to them following the decision at the Council meeting on September. At the time of writing most have not yet agreed their budgets and precepts and any updates will be reported at the meeting.

2. Members will be aware that the transfers of **Letcliffe Park, Victory Park and Valley Gardens** to Barnoldswick Town Council were completed in April 2018. In 2019/20 the Town Council funded the 75% reduction in grounds maintenance with the Council's Grounds Maintenance Team continuing to undertake that work. Its decision on contribution in 2020/21 is awaited.
3. **Alkincoats Park** was transferred to Colne Town Council in December. The Town Council carried out a tendering exercise for its grounds maintenance and has appointed an external contractor instead of the Council's Grounds Maintenance Team with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January. As a consequence this will mean a reduction in the number of temporary staff taken on for the summer months.
4. It is expected that the transfer of **Barrowford Memorial Park** and **Pendle Heritage Centre** to Barrowford Parish Council will be completed very shortly. This follows on from the recent completion of the new lease of the Heritage Centre. Barrowford Parish Council will continue to employ the Council's Grounds Maintenance Team. Its decision on its contribution in 2020/21 is awaited.
5. During 2019 meetings took place with Trawden Forest Parish Council on the possible transfer of **Ball Grove Park** by April 2020 and further information on costs etc. has been provided. In 2019/20 it agreed to fund the 75% grounds maintenance contribution. Its decisions on transfer and grounds maintenance contribution for 2020/21 are awaited.
6. Similarly meetings took place with Nelson Town Council on the possible transfers of **Marsden, Walverden and Victoria** parks and further information has been provided. In 2019/20 it funded 44% of the grounds maintenance cost ( Barrowford parish council also made a "voluntary" contribution in respect of that part of Victoria park in its area). The net effect was that the amount of grounds maintenance undertaken was correspondingly reduced. The Town Council's decisions on transfers and grounds maintenance contribution for 2020/21 are awaited.
7. Brierfield Town Council has so far not given any indication that it is in a position to take a transfer of **Heyhead Park**. In 2019/20 it made a contribution of 50% of the grounds maintenance cost rather than the 75% requested. As a result the amount of work undertaken was reduced accordingly. Its decisions on transfer and grounds maintenance contribution for 2020/21 are awaited.
8. Earby Town Council and Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council have not so far given an indication that they are in a position to take a transfer of **Sough Park**. In 2019/20 they paid the 75% contribution. Their decisions on transfer and grounds maintenance contribution for 2020/21 are awaited.

### **Refurbishment of Mainline bus shelters**

9. At its meeting in September the Committee approved a proposal from the County Council to refurbish the bus shelters on the mainline route from Burnley to Colne. It also requested it to include shelters through Earby and Barnoldswick, on which a response is awaited.
10. The County Council's tendering exercise for the work is nearing completion and it is expected that it will award a contract this month. Detailed discussion on the programme will then take place.

## **Transfer of amenity land to Barrowford parish council**

11. Barrowford parish council has requested that the Council transfer to it amenity land at Dickey Nook as shown on the attached plan. It is recommended this be approved.

### **Future programme**

12. As will be evident from the above there is still some way to go on the present programme and its priority of transfer of parks, notwithstanding recent progress.

13. Members of the Committee met last summer with representatives of parish and town councils on what might form the future programme. This included:

- Town centre sweeping
- Local car parks
- Cemeteries
- Colne market
- Colne Municipal Hall
- Sports pitches and playing fields provision
- Picnic sites

14. Parish and town councils were invited to put forward further suggestions though so far there has been little response to this.

15. The transfer of services and facilities continues to be relevant to the financial challenge facing the Council. In addition the recently announced decision of the Boundary Commission for a considerably smaller number of councillors and wards will have implications for the present area committee structure and role.

16. It is suggested that a further meeting with representatives of town and parish councils take place within the next few months.

## **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 100% Reduction in the parks' grounds maintenance budget in 2019/2020. Further discussions with them will focus on the future programme and related financial arrangements.

**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.