

REPORT OF LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Meeting held 9 November 1999)

1. OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION (DEVELOPERS' CONTRIBUTIONS) (REPORT B) (MINUTE NO. 4)

The Committee has agreed the allocation of £25,000 from Developers' Contributions to enable feasibility work to take place for Open Space schemes in the Totton and Eling, and Hythe and Dibden areas. It is the intention of the Council to work with all those Towns and Parishes which have Developers' Contributions so as to mutually agree a schedule of schemes for implementation. Liaison with Parish and Town Councils has continued. The general response has been very positive, and those contacted appear to perceive the process as a valuable means of clarifying aspirations and priorities, and strengthening the partnership. Appreciation has been expressed for the efforts currently being made by District Council.

Attention has been focused on those Parishes where the greatest sums of Developers' Contributions for open space are held. The seven Parishes for which the greatest sums are held have all now been contacted, these are: Totton and Eling, New Milton, Ringwood, Marchwood, Lymington and Pennington, Fordingbridge and Hythe and Dibden.

The planning process ensures that wherever possible, open space / footpaths / cycle ways are provided directly by the developer, rather than via the Developers' Contributions fund. However, for those schemes where it falls to the Councils to undertake the implementation, funded wholly or partly by Developers' Contributions, significant resources are often required for feasibility and project planning work.

To date, agreement to allocate funding from Developers' Contributions for essential feasibility work has been obtained from two local Councils (Totton and Eling and Hythe and Dibden). This approach will be continued with other local Councils to release adequate feasibility funding to enable work to progress on agreed priority schemes.

The provision of open space through this process contributes to the Government's Crime and Disorder initiative. The achievement of a satisfactory quantity and quality of open space to meet the needs of the community, especially children and young people, plays a vital role in providing suitable recreational outlets for energies which may otherwise be expressed in anti-social ways.

The Committee noted that, at a recent Annual General Meeting of the Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils, members of the Association called for Developers' Contributions to be paid directly to Parish and Town Councils, as they felt they were best placed to determine local priorities. Members noted that in this District, all schemes were the subject of joint working and mutually agreed priorities, in proper consultation between this Council and the Parishes.

2. MARL LANE / ALLEN WATER DRIVE CYCLE WAY EXTENSION, FORDINGBRIDGE: DEVELOPERS' CONTRIBUTIONS (REPORT C) (MINUTE NO. 5)

The Committee has agreed that the sum of £10,000 be allocated from Developers' Contributions to enable the implementation of a cycle way extension at Marl Lane / Allen Water Drive, Fordingbridge.

Linden Homes have recently laid a new cycle way extending from their site on Station Road along the route of the former railway line to the bridge at Marl Lane. This route will shortly be transferred to this Council and then Fordingbridge Parish Council under the usual long lease arrangements. The proposed cycle way extension will then continue Linden Homes' route northwards from Marl Lane over existing public open space and join onto Allen Water Drive, thereby making a valuable connection between the two residential areas.

The scheme will improve public access amenity around the outer edge of Fordingbridge and will promote cycling as an alternative means of transport to the car.

3. CLAYFIELDS SPORTS CENTRE, DIBDEN: PROPOSED MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS (REPORT D) (MINUTE NO. 6)

At the June 1999 meeting of the Leisure Services Committee it was agreed that Officers undertake further negotiations with Hythe and Dibden Parish Council with a view to forming a partnership arrangement for the management of Clayfields Sports Centre, Dibden. Clayfields is currently managed by the Hythe and Dibden Parish Council, who employ a number of staff on a rota basis to take bookings and supervise users. The maintenance of the buildings and pitches is undertaken by the Parish Council's maintenance teams.

Since June, further progress has been made in formalising a partnership arrangement to provide for the more effective management of a community recreation facility and to build on the strong relationship which already exists.

Following extensive discussions with the Parish Council, the proposal is for Applemore Recreation Centre to take over responsibility for day to day management and supervision of Clayfields, marketing, bookings, collection of fees and charges, internal maintenance of the building, daily cleaning, and preparation for use.

The Parish Council will retain responsibility for external maintenance, upkeep of pitches, grass cutting and external landscaped areas. The basis of the financial arrangements has been that any partnership must benefit both Councils financially. The Parish Council will pay a management fee to the District Council which will be less than the current deficit the Parish Council incurs. There has been a need for additional part-time hours to provide both a management presence on site and day to day operational management support, which will be achieved by the creation of two new posts for a fixed term of 3 years, as follows:-

- New Duty Officer (20 hours per week)
- Leisure Attendant (30 hours per week, covered by a number of individuals)

**Cllr J A G Hutchins, JP
Chairman**