



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT

TOPIC – RELEASE OF OPEN SPACE FUNDS FOR ALL-WEATHER PITCH - WICKHAM

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

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Case Officer:

Committee Administrator: Nancy Graham, Tel: 01962 848 235, Email: ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990), Winchester City Council can require housing developers to provide public open space on new housing sites, in areas where there are deficiencies. Where it is not possible to provide the public open space on site the Council maintains a system which allows developers to pay a sum in lieu.

The sums are paid into separate pots according to the parish or settlement where the development has taken place and are then used by the parish councils to either purchase more land for open space or make improvements to existing outdoor recreational facilities.

The Council's Open Space Project Officer monitors the release of these funds to ensure that what is proposed by the parish council is an appropriate use of the fund with reference to the annually updated Open Space Strategy.

Wickham continues to have open space shortfalls. The Parish Council are proposing that in order to reduce this shortfall they contribute to the construction costs of a community all-weather multi-use sports area using £95,911 from the Open Space Fund.

DECISION

That the proposed release of £95,911 from the Open Space Fund to Wickham Parish Council is agreed.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Winchester City Council's Open Space Strategy 2012-13 assesses Wickham as being short of public open space when using the standard in The Local Plan (table 5 p99 and Policy RT.4)

The parish has a 1.7 Ha shortfall in children's play space and a 1.9 ha shortfall in sports space. The Open Space Strategy proposes that there be more play and sport facilities serving the town.

The proposal to contribute to the costs of installing an all-weather, multi-use-sports area at Wickham Church of England Primary School, adjacent to the Community Centre, is considered to be an appropriate use of the Fund.

The land is leased from Hampshire County Council (with a lease of 20 years) and planning permission for the facility was granted in October 2011.

The facility will be open from 8:30 - 9pm 7 days a week, every day of the year except Christmas Day. It will be used exclusively by the primary school until 4.15 every week day during term time, but available for community use from 8:30am - 9pm during school holidays.

The games area will be free for the community to use from 4:15 – 6pm every week day and from 8:30 – 12 noon at weekends and during school holidays and at all other times it isn't booked for formal use.

This is a new facility primarily for community informal recreational use, local football clubs Waltham Wolves and Wickham Dynamos have expressed an interest in using the facility and it is hoped to secure other local users that will allow young people to become involved with new clubs and organisations.

There will be no restrictions on who can book or use the facility.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

At the end of September 2012, Wickham's open space fund stood at £149,838. A release of £95,911 will reduce this to £53,927. The Open Space Project Officer will continue to work with the parish council to ensure these remaining funds are spent on other recreational outdoor facilities in Wickham with the objective of further reducing its open space deficit, before the Funding System is closed in April 2014 (OS31 refers).

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The Director of Operations and the Portfolio Holder for Environment have both been asked for their view as to the appropriateness of this fund release.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

n/a

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

n/a

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 22.11.12

Councillor Roger Huxstep – Portfolio Holder for Environment