

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

5th July 2001

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Southerd (Chair), Councillor Taylor (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Bambrick, Brooks, Carroll, Pabla, and Rose.

Conservative Group

Councillors Bale and , Mrs. Walton.

In Attendance

Councillors Stone (Labour Group) and Councillor Mrs Wheeler (Conservative Group).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Shepherd and Whyman (Labour Group).

DS/1. **MINUTES**

The Open and Exempt Minutes of the Planning and Economic Development Committee Meeting held on 19th April 2001 were taken as read, approved as true records and signed by the Chair.

DS/2. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

At the Chair's request, the Planning Services Manager gave a brief outline of the revised Planning Policy Guidance document "PPG3". The Chair also explained that a presentation would be made to a future meeting of this Committee on sustainable urban drainage systems.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

DS/3. **BEST VALUE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

It was reported that, following the Best Value Review of the Development Control function and the inspection process, an implementation plan had been prepared to respond to the issues raised. A copy of the plan, which had been compiled by various officers involved in the Development Control function was appended to the report.

Delivery of the Plan was dependent upon retaining the current staffing levels. It required additional staffing resources to achieve objectives related to crime prevention, improved access to new buildings for people with disabilities and improved sustainability of buildings. The projected scale for this Building Control Officer post was Principal Officer Grade 2 and the financial implications were reported. It was noted that the Building Control function

had made a surplus of £100,000 over the last three years which could meet the cost of employing such an officer. However, the income generated from the Building Control function formed part of the Council's overall budgets and therefore any additional expenditure would require a corresponding saving elsewhere.

RESOLVED:

That the Plan be adopted and the necessary additional resources be considered as part of the continuing refocusing and reprioritising exercise.

DS/4. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME – PLAY EQUIPMENT**

It was reported that £30,000 had been allocated in the current capital programme for new play equipment and safety surfacing. At its meeting on 7th December 2000 the Leisure Services Committee had approved projects to dismantle play equipment at the Granville/Frederick Street, Recreation Ground, Woodville and to provide new play equipment at the Main Street, Hilton Recreation Ground. The renovation of urban parks had been identified as a key objective of the Leisure Services Committee and officers have been working closely with "Friends of Groups" in Newhall and Eureka Parks. A major capital project was to be submitted for renovation of the Newhall Park with a funding application to Waste Recycling Environmental. A capital contribution of £15,000 was proposed towards this project for the provision of new play equipment within the Newhall Park. The Castle Gresley Community Group also sought to improve play facilities at the Arthur Street Recreation Ground and had offered to contribute a maximum of £2,000 towards the erection of new play equipment.

Members questioned the criteria applied in determining the allocation of funding for new play equipment. There was a discussion on the provision of equipment for Hilton and the possibility of funding being allocated from the planning gain agreement associated with the new residential development in Hilton. An explanation was provided that resources from the agreement would be released upon occupation of a specified number of properties and the Planning Services Manager agreed to circulate information to Hilton Parish Council on the projected date when resources would become available under the terms of the agreement.

RESOLVED:

That the Members approve the programme of capital spending on new play equipment and safe surfacing as outlined in the report.

DS/5. **CEMETERIES – CONSULTATION AND ADDITIONAL FEES AND CHARGES**

Members were reminded that an important element of the Best Value process was engaging stakeholders and clients on the quality of services provided. The highly sensitive nature of cemetery services meant that consultation would need to be undertaken with great care. Discussions had been held with other authorities and had identified that a questionnaire was circulated to chief mourners within a month of the funeral. A draft questionnaire had been prepared and a copy was appended to the report for the Committee's consideration.

The current cemetery fees and charges had been approved as part of the budgetary process. There was no specified fee for excavation of a 'common grave' which was provided when the deceased was destitute and had no immediate family. To date there had never been a requirement to provide a common grave although it was felt prudent to set a fee and the amount proposed was £189.00.

In discussing the consultation on burial provision, it was suggested that liaison be undertaken with the Bretby Crematorium. It was also proposed that the consultation be undertaken with an appropriate mourner rather than chief mourner given the sensitivity of this service area.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approves proposals to consult with appropriate mourners and approves the fee proposed for the provision of a common grave.

T. SOUTHERD

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 7.00 p.m.