
REPORT TO:	COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:	11
DATE OF MEETING:	10 TH JANUARY 2002	CATEGORY:	DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN	
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CHRIS MASON (5794)	DOC:	
SUBJECT:	DEVELOPMENT OF NEWHALL PARK	REF: CS07	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	NEWHALL & MIDWAY	TERMS OF REFERENCE:	

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the contents of the report be noted and that approval be given in principle to the 'Friends of Newhall Park (FONP)' being allowed to use the site's pavilion as a community facility.
- 1.2 That authority be given to use £2750 of monies, already allocated by the Council to the project, to meet the landfill operators levy on an award made to the FONP by WREN.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To inform Members of the progress made in efforts to secure funding for new recreation facilities in Newhall Park.
- 2.2 To seek permission to issue a license for the 'FONP' to use the old pavilion for community based activities.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 Through the efforts of the partnership involving the Council and the FONP, funding has now been secured to deliver the key elements of the improvements project. FONP continue to make a major contribution to improving the condition and usage of the Park. To accommodate them in a permanent base and provide for other community groups, they are seeking permission to use the old pavilion on a permanent basis.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 Members may recall that improvements to Newhall Park were identified as a Key Task in the recently approved 'Service Plan'.
- 4.2 At a previous meeting Members were advised of a joint project with the 'FONP' to carry out major works at the site to the value of £75,500. The key elements in the project are the provision of new play areas, the creation of a quiet area, the provision

of new footpaths linking the Park's facilities and the production of murals in the play, and on the old pavilion. At the meeting of Development Services Committee on 5th July 2001, Members approved £15,000 from this year's capital allocation for play equipment and safety surfacing, as the Council's contribution to the project.

- 4.3 Over recent months the excellent news has been received that the 'FONP' have been awarded £25,000 by WREN and that the partnership has been allocated £30,000 from the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfields Regeneration Partnership as an SRB6 award. The securing of this finance effectively means that the project can now be progressed.
- 4.4 Unfortunately, long term absence in the Facilities and Development unit mean that there is a shortage of staff resources available to undertake the necessary procurement and detailed design work. Because of the need to complete the project and spend some of the capital by the first quarter of next year (for SRB6) other options are currently being explored for the undertaking of this work. The Partnership has identified the first week in June 2002 as a likely completion date.
- 4.5 The FONP have had a major impact on improving the Park and are an excellent example of how community involvement and commitment can bring about major improvements in the quality of provision. They have undertaken a number of special events including bulb planting days with local schools and are planning to organise a special music event to coincide with the completion of the improvements project.
- 4.6 The group have also been keen to find a base in the Park that can be used by themselves and other local community groups. They were originally offered the temporary Guide Hut on the Park but have declined this offer because the building is in a very poor state of repair and Planning Consent covering the siting of the building on the Park had been allowed to expire. It is now likely that efforts will be made to have this building removed from the site.
- 4.7 Members may recall that the Youth Service, were previously licensed to use the old pavilion. They have since terminated this agreement. The FONP have now requested permission to use the facility on a permanent basis. From an operational viewpoint the Council no longer requires the facility. The FONP would use the facility for their own activities and make it available to other organisations, including the Bowls Club that use the site.
- 4.8 The basic principle in the agreement with the Youth Service was that they had responsibility for the maintenance and decoration of the internal structure with the Council retaining responsibility for the external structure. At this stage Members' approval to the principle of licensing the facility is requested. If this is given, Legal Services will then be requested to produce a detailed license.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 If Members approve in principle the use of the pavilion by the FONP, it is anticipated that this will be made available at a peppercorn rent.
- 5.2 When awarding grant aid, WREN requires applicants to name a third party to reimburse 11% of the grant awarded. This is linked to how landfill operators claim their allowance from the government and also includes a compulsory levy to ENTRUST and support to the running costs of the Environmental Body. Permission is therefore sought to allocate £2750 from the Council's contribution to the scheme to cover this cost. This does not require an additional financial commitment on the

Council's behalf. The project can be reconfigured to take account of this slight reduction in capital.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 The basis of the report is very much about community involvement and the benefits that can arise from this involvement.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 Taking into account the levy that needs to be paid on the FONP's award from WREN, £67,500 of funding has been attracted by the partnership towards new facilities in Newhall Park. This means that progress can now be made on installing new play equipment and creating a 'quiet area'. The partnership is working towards a completion date for the project of June 2003.

8.2 To continue their work in the Park, the FONP have requested permission to use the old pavilion in the Park as a venue for their own and other community activities at the site.

9.0 Background Papers

9.1 Letter from 'Friends of Newhall Park' , File 68 TS

