

CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP - PARKS AND GREEN SPACES
13th SEPTEMBER 2011

Notes of Meeting

Present:

Councillors: Cllr Gary Hopkins, Cllr Ron Stone, Cllr Mark Weston,
Cllr Tess Green

Officers: Tracey Morgan, Richard Fletcher, Patricia Jones

1. The notes of the meeting held on the 5th September 2011 and 7th September

- to be circulated in advance of the next meeting.

2. Assumptions for Income and Expenditure Presentation

The group considered a model prepared by officers detailing assumptions for income and expenditure based on :-

- Cost of reaching Fair
- Investment made 2008 to present
- Total amount of Section 106 money held for Local Capital Improvements as at 31st August 2011
- Predicted grant income per NP
- CIL £5 million x 17yrs x 27% income x 33% local allocation
- Allocation of core funding per NP
- Value (average) of land sale income available per NP

It was confirmed that the model:-

- recognises the decisions made by Cabinet
- should include Destination sites (£70k)
- Section 106 money in column C refers to Parks only
- The model needs to be reconfigured in the future based on NP decisions

3. Example of Eastville NHPS and changes to the percentages subject to sales

The group considered the model circulated at the meeting (flood risk and officer saved sites taken out of the equation). It was noted that the NP would lose 4% of the disposal due to Lodge Hill not being disposed of.

The group then considered a number of scenarios based on possible decisions by the NP. It was noted that if the NP sells everything other than Lodge Hill, the NP gets 96% of the 70%.

There was general agreement the strategic aims of the strategy and the ability to deliver were key. Wherever possible, there should be something for everyone and those areas with little green space should be protected.

There was further discussion on the Assumptions for Income and Expenditure Model.

It was noted that the Predicted Grant Income per NP column includes provision and project management costs but does not allow for maintenance. Officers therefore highlighted this as a shortfall area. £1.9 million is currently allocated for maintenance and this translates to £50k across the NPs across the year. It was agreed that the NPs needed clear guidance that for insurance purposes, a contingency fund of 12%-15% would be needed to top up the maintenance budget.

Development could lead to anything up to 96% of CIL coming back to NPs for local priorities, or on a sliding scale, down to nothing, depending on what they decide.

When the group formally decides how the NP issue/recommendations should be approached, concise and clear guidance would be included and training for members made available.

Establishing the priorities of the NPs was also considered important and it should be made clear what funding is available centrally for strategic issues, like sports, so that the NPs are aware what they need/don't need to allocate money for.

The proposal gives NPs the ability to save sites, but in doing so, reduces the ability to get 70% of the total back.

Councillor Weston pointed out that in the event of Snowdon Road being saved, the NP would lose at least 40% because of the fiscal value put on the site. Councillor Weston indicated that it was his view that the non-contentious sites should also be referred back to the NPs. Councillor Green disagreed with this on the basis that this would compound the complicated issues that the NPs were required to consider.

Councillor Hopkins stated that the income from disposals was needed to kick-start the strategy. His concern was if an area takes a perverse view, this would severely affect the money available to the authority. TM also

pointed out that referring all of the sites back to the NPs would delay the site allocations process and it would not be possible to do the calculation to determine what the incentive scheme should be.

Councillor Weston maintained that the NPs should have a say in what sites they keep. Councillor Stone stated that giving the NPs simple clear guidance would enable them to make informed decisions. He stated that the NPs should receive details of the original sale potential and funding, details of how much money they were potentially turning down, and the potential of partial redevelopment. He concluded however that the danger of referring all the sites back, could mean that the NPs decide to sell nothing.

In summary, Councillor Stone and Councillor Green were in agreement that the non-contentious sites should not be referred to the NPs. Councillor Weston stated he would need to consult further with his group.

Councillor Hopkins concluded that the progress of the strategic aims were of key importance and that given the concessions already made by his group, he sought assurance that that the group would adopt a sensible approach that looked after the strategic side of the strategy.

4. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 21st September @ 3.00pm.