

Roundtable Meeting between Wiltshire Council, Bradford on Avon Town Council and the Friends of Barton Farm

Re: Section 106 funding for Play Parks, Bradford on Avon

Monday 6 June 2011, Town Council Offices

1. Introductions:

Representing Bradford on Avon Town Council - Cllr Peter Leach, Cllr John Potter, Cllr Paul Skidmore, Cllr Vicky Landell-Mills, Sandra Bartlett (Assistant Town Clerk)

Representing Wiltshire Council - Cllr Malcolm Hewson, Cllr Rosemary Brown, Steve Ibbetson (Technical Manager), Colin Brown (Play and Leisure Strategy Officer), Peter Dunford (Community Area Manager)

Representing the Friends of Barton Farm – Alison Brown, Louise Weissel

2. Background

The meeting had been called following presentations and debate at the Bradford on Avon Area Board regarding two proposed schemes for play park improvements in the town at Victory Field and at Barton Farm, there being a perception that the schemes were in competition with each other for resources. It was agreed that a strategic approach was needed to issues of play provision and that the Section 106 contributions from the Kingston Mill development for public recreational uses should be seen to be allocated transparently to the benefit of the whole community.

Councillor Leach commented that the Town Council had developed the plans and consulted independently on the Victory Field proposals because it was the landowner there. The proposals by the Friends of Barton Farm concerned land in the ownership of Wiltshire Council which was beyond the jurisdiction of the Town Council. He was happy to twin track any future public consultations given that the public were mostly unaware and probably unconcerned about the complexities of the land ownership of recreation facilities in the town.

3. What is Section 106 money ?

Steve Ibbetson explained that developer obligations under the Town and Country Planning Act include contributions towards public amenities such as highways, education and other community infrastructure, including the provision of public open space, play parks and sporting facilities as appropriate. The Kingston Mill development did not include recreational facilities within the curtilage of the scheme but will instead provide commuted payments towards off-site projects in the vicinity (defined as 5-10 minutes walking distance) to achieve these same aims.

As the Council's Technical Manager responsible for the disbursement of S106 contributions, Steve explained that he would be looking to support recreational investment which could demonstrate benefit to a full range of ages – from pre-school, primary, teenage to adult –

and that eligible locations would include Barton Farm, Culver Close and Victory Field sites. This funding could support 'additional' play provision but not the maintenance of 'existing' facilities.

Critical factors are whether a project meets community needs, whether its construction is feasible, whether it represents good value for money and whether it is sustainable in the longer term.

4. What money is available now and in the future ?

Steve confirmed that monies currently available for amenity land and play equipment are:

Bradford South

Kingston Mills – for the provision and maintenance of Public Open Space in the vicinity of the development within 5 years - £ 104, 705.69 – monies not yet available

St Margaret's Street - £ 9, 039.04 – not started – monies not yet available

Bradford North

Berryfield Road – towards offsite open space in the locality of the development –

£ 16, 500 – monies now available

The estimated cost of the schemes at Victory Field and at Barton Farm are both of the order of £ 100,000 a piece, as currently specified. Therefore there are insufficient funds to wholly fund both projects. It was suggested that the available funding could help lever in additional funds from external sources and that local fundraising or sponsorship could supplement this. Landfill Tax Credits and the Cotswolds AONB were mentioned as possible local sources of finance.

5. Play Strategy and Provision in Bradford on Avon

Colin Brown confirmed that there is no agreed play area strategy, per se, and that proposals would be judged on their own merits. It is proposed to carry out an audit of Open Space, Sports Pitches and Play Areas across Wiltshire later this year.

6. Discussion about what is needed and the proposals for Victory Field and Barton Farm Play Areas

Alison Brown reported that the FOBF had had a meeting on site with the Environment Agency who had not raised objection to the proposals. The project would provide for a range of ages - from toddlers to teenagers and families – with elements which included seating and a climbing fence.

Sandra Bartlett reported that the Victory Field Play Area would be upgraded for use primarily by toddlers and the basketball court would be converted to a multi-use games area (MUGA)

for older children. Further consultation was planned, including with the children at Fitzmaurice Primary School.

Councillor Hewson considered that the projects were complementary and not duplicating provision. He wanted to see both projects come to fruition.

Councillor Leach also expressed support for both schemes and suggested that the Town Council would be prepared to combine further consultation required on the Victory Field proposals with further consultation for the Barton Farm Play Area in order to twin-track the projects and to facilitate a more strategic consultation with the community.

The suggestion was raised that elements of one project could become adopted as elements of the other project e.g. the outdoor gym proposed at the basketball court at Victory Field might better be provided as a trim trail at Barton Farm.

#### 7. Agreement on a Way Forward

Councillor Leach stated that the Town Council would be prepared to 'slow down' progress with the Victory Field scheme slightly in order to let the Barton Farm scheme 'catch up'.

It was agreed that the FOBF should write to the landowner, Wiltshire Council, to gain consent to build on their land. The letter should also ascertain whether Wiltshire Council would be prepared to take on project management and seek permitted development on its own land, or whether it would require the FOBF to apply for planning permission as a third party. Advice via Elly Townsend, previously, had suggested that the project would not need planning permission. **ACTION: Alison Brown/ Louise Weissel**

Steve Ibbetson offered to support this process and to direct the letter to the relevant manager/s responsible for these decisions at Wiltshire Council. **ACTION: Steve Ibbetson**

Councillor Leach stated that the Town Council would be prepared to write a letter to the FOBF to be submitted in support of the application. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

To cement this new collaboration the FOBF would be invited to join the Project Board overseeing the Victory Field improvements. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

Further consultation on these proposals is planned as part of the St Laurence Street Party on 24 September. A joint consultation stand at the event would be appropriate. **ACTION: Town Clerk / FOBF**

#### 8. Next Meeting

Monday 4 July, Town Council Offices at 9.30am