BRIEFING NOTE

Parkland Management Committee – Progress Report No 2

1. The purpose of this Note is to brief Members of the Parkland Management Committee on progress to date and the expected activity.

2. Meetings: The following have taken place:
(a) On 11 January 2017 the Clerk met representatives of the landowners of the Little Park parkland and detailed matters of access were discussed and subsequently reported to Finance + General Purposes Committee and to Council (Minute C16/098.3 - 23 February 2017)
(b) On 11 January 2017 the clerk joined Tony Whitbread (Sussex Wildlife Trust) for a walkabout through the parkland areas and the woodland area.
(c) On 23 February 2017 the Clerk attended a meeting with the owner of the Highfield Drive Parkland and examined the site.
(d) On 2 March 2017 the Clerk, Maintenance Officer and Assistant Clerk (3) visited Ashurst Wood playing fields to inspect typical fencing, path and steps work for rural areas.
(e) On 6 March 2017 A meeting was held with some residents of College Lane and Highfield Drive whose homes back onto Highfield Drive Parkland. 27 residents attended along with the Chairman and Vice-chairman of Council. A brief presentation was followed by an opportunity for questions. The main issues concerned the treatment of the boundaries of the parkland.
(f) The Parkland Advisory Board has met once (14 March 2017).

3. Highfield Drive Parkland: The following matters have taken place:

- Schedule of preparatory works has been prepared
- Detailed layout plans for Contract 1 (fences, gates and paths) have been prepared and tender documents have been prepared (together with Contract 2 – Little Park) with the intention of tenders being received 20 April 2017 and work starting in June/July 2017. The Parkland Advisory Board (meeting 14 March 2017) approved the layout. *(Highfield Drive Sketch Layout – Contract 1 – ATTACHED)*
- Land transfer Deed has been signed and is currently with solicitors. However, a matter has been raised concerning the overflow pipe from 'Little Dragons' a house on the SW boundary of the parkland. The overflow was into the proposed built area by Rydons Homes but at some point has been diverted into the parkland area. Rydons have requested that the transfer deed be adjusted to reflect this change and the matter is currently being reviewed by the Council's solicitor. It is not thought that this is a significant issue as the overflow pipe is not in regular use and is only an emergency feature. *(Ref: Little Dragons ltr 7 March 2017)*

4. Little Park Parkland : The following matters have taken place:

- Land transfer Deed has been signed and is currently with solicitors, awaiting action by Bovis Homes.
- Schedule of preparatory works has been prepared.
- Marchants Close access: Following discussion with the landowner of the access adjacent road it has been agreed that it would be preferable for safety reasons to allow pedestrian access alongside, but not on the metalled road. To facilitate this a combined footpath and boardwalk would be constructed to connect Marchants Close with the western edge of the parkland. The Committee is asked to note the sketch design which is being considered. A meeting was due to be held with MSDC Tree Officer on 14 March 2017, to discuss a suitable route for the path, to minimise impact on the ancient woodland but unfortunately he did not attend and another meeting is being arranged. *(Ref: Marchants Close access design sketch - Feb 2017 ATTACHED)*
- Detailed layout plans for Contract 2 (fences, gates and paths) have been prepared and tender documents have been prepared (together with Contract 1 – Highfield Drive) with the intention of tenders being received 20 April 2017 and work starting in June/July 2017. The Parkland Advisory Board (meeting 14 March 2017) approved the layout. *(Little Park Contract 2 – sketch layout ATTACHED)*
- Bovis homes have raised a matter of the introduction of an open ditch (swale) over a distance of about 30m across the woodland at Tilleys Copse, within the intended ownership of the Parish Council. This is a detailed surface water drainage matter which was not identified at the time of the s106 Agreement when planning permission was granted, but has emerged in the detailed design process. The Transfer Deed for the land should be adjusted to reflect this change. The matter has been discussed between the Clerk and Chairman of the Committee and agreed that the Council has no option but to agree to the request, which appears to carry the additional responsibility of maintain the swale within the Council's ownership. In the context of the general maintenance requirements of the woodland and its culverts and ditches, this is a small requirement. The Council's solicitors have therefore been advised that the Parish Council has no objection to this change to the transfer. The modification will require further signing on behalf of the Council. *(Ref: Bovis email 3 March 2017, Bovis drawings HRRP-541 (ATTACHED) , 535, 542; Mayo Wynne Baxter email 10 March 2017)*

RECOMMENDATION: The Parkland Management Committee is asked to note this progress report No 2.

Stephen Hoyles
CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
15 March 2017