

Record of Decision

Notice of Motion - King George V Memorial Playing Fields - Fields in Trust

Decision Taker

Mayor on 18 January 2017

Decision

That the Council should not, at this time, pursue a Deed of Dedication with the Fields in Trust to protect the King George V Playing Fields from development as it would be contrary to existing Council policy (namely the Corporate Asset Management Plan) by restricting and/or reducing the current or future value of the asset.

Reason for the Decision

Placing a Deed of Dedication on King George V Playing Fields, Watcombe with a Fields in Trust would be contrary to the Council's Policy Framework i.e. the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2015-2019 which states that the Council will not restrict or reduce the current or future value of its assets through the use of contractual restrictions, covenants or peppercorn rents.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on Tuesday, 31 January 2017 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The submitted report provided background information in respect of a notice of motion submitted to the Council on 27 October 2016 asking the Mayor to instruct officers to investigate the logistics and process to undertake a Deed of Dedication with the Fields in Trust to protect the King George V Playing Fields in Watcombe. The Mayor had referred the motion to the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) for consideration with public consultation (to include Torbay Sports Council and Torquay Golf Club).

The Notice of Motion set out that in 1936 land was purchased adjoining Easterfield Lane with funds from the Department of Health amounting to £19,000. At the time the King George V (KGV) Foundation was set up, the Council decided to set aside two of the purchased acres specifically as part of the Torquay National Memorial to his late Majesty King George V. It was the intention the land was to be adopted and that the two fields in question be allocated and dedicated for ever as playing fields for young children and organised games.

The land in question is not currently protected by the Fields in Trust charity and was therefore never properly "allocated and dedicated for ever as playing fields for young children and organised games".

On 25 February 2016 the Council approved the Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2015 ~ 2019 which set out a number of 'Asset Management Principles' that ensures the Council will manage its assets strategically, look to continuously maintain and improve assets, release value and minimise cost and provide accurate data for informed decision making.

The Corporate Asset Management Plan is explicit and states that due to the current financial challenges facing the Council that unless there is specific approval at Full Council to the contrary, the Council will not restrict or reduce the current or future value of its assets through the use of contractual restrictions, covenants or peppercorn rents.

Oral representations were heard from Tim Aggett from Torquay Golf Club (in support of protecting the fields for use for sport) and Robert Loxton from SPORT TORBAY (formerly known as Torbay Sports Council), Tracey Dawson and David Ward (members of the public) against the proposal to take no action at this time to register the fields as a Field in Trust.

The Mayor considered the oral representations made at the meeting and the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) made on 18 January 2017 and his decision is set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

23 January 2017

Signed: _____
Mayor of Torbay

Date: 23 January 2017

