

Report of: Director of Children's Services

Report to: The Executive Board

Date: 9th January 2013

Subject: Allerton Fields

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Roundhay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Outline the Council response to the Deputation brought by the "Friends of Allerton Grange Group" in respect of the Allerton Fields site.
2. It has been agreed that the Allerton Fields site will be transferred from Children's Services to the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate.

Recommendations

1. The Executive Board is requested to note the response to the Deputation in respect of Allerton Fields, and agree transfer of the grounds from Children's Services to Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate.

1. Purpose of this report:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the response to the Deputation brought to Council by the "Friends of Allerton Grange " group in September 2012 in respect of the Allerton Fields site. In addition this report details the ongoing discussions between Council Directorates regarding ownership and maintenance of the Allerton Fields site.

2. Background information

2. 1 In September 2009, the new Allerton Grange School was completed as part of the Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF). The project released part of the

former school site (former pitches off Lidgett Lane/Talbot Avenue) that was no longer required for secondary or educational purposes.

- 2.2 The original intention at Allerton Grange was that once the former school site was reinstated by the BSF contractor, the area known as Allerton Fields would be declared surplus to educational requirements. "The Friends of Allerton Grange " made it known that they would like the Council to consider how the pitches could be used for future community purposes.
- 2.3 This was subsequently followed by a report to Area Committee and a Deputation to Council in 2010, which sought the transfer of Allerton Fields from the former Education Leeds to Environment and Neighbourhoods. However at that time Allerton Fields was being considered as a potential location for a new Primary School for the Roundhay area.
- 2.4 The Allerton Fields site was subsequently not utilised for new educational provision in the Roundhay area and has remained vested with Children Services, with ad-hoc grounds maintenance being carried out on by Environment and Neighbourhoods on the Allerton Fields site.
- 2.5 On 12th September a further Deputation was taken by the "Friends of Allerton Grange " group seeking that Children Services declare the site surplus to requirements and transfer the fields to Environment and Neighbourhoods, to ensure adequate future maintenance for community use.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 In September 2009, the new Allerton Grange School was completed as part of the Leeds Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF). The project released part of the former school site that was no longer required for educational purposes. Although vested with Children Services this land is surplus to Directorate requirements and discussions have taken place within the Council regarding the future ownership and maintenance of this site.
- 3.2 These discussions have involved Children Services, Corporate Property Management and Environment and Neighbourhoods. Although ad-hoc maintenance has been carried out by Environment and Neighbourhoods and funded by Children Services, the state of the grounds is the cause of frequent neighbour complaints.
- 3.3 On the 12th September the "Friends of Allerton Grange" group took their second Deputation to Council seeking that Children Services declare the site surplus to Directorate requirements, and transfer Allerton Fields to Environment and Neighbourhoods.
- 3.4 The site is a former sports pitch, and as such is covered by the appropriate planning designation (N6). As a requirement of the planning conditions attached to the Building Schools for the Future Development (BSF), the site is available for local community use and is accessible by the public.

- 3.5 It has been agreed that the land will be transferred to the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate and properly maintained.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The future useage and maintenance of the Allerton Fields site has been the subject of discussion with local ward Councillors and the local community group, the Friends of Allerton Grange.

4.2 Equality and Diversity/ Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening form has been completed and submitted to the Equality Team in connection with Allerton Fields and the potential transfer of land ownership and maintenance of the site. The Screening process has determined that it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in relation to this report.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The Building Schools for the Future Project enabled Leeds City Council to meet their statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and will make a positive contribution towards the modernisation of the school estate across the city.

4.4 Resources and Value for money

- 4.4.1 As Allerton Fields no longer accommodates an operational school there is no revenue budget attached to the site for the annual ground maintenance requirements.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to information and Call In

- 4.5.1 The report is for information and advises the Executive Board of the Council's response to the deputation; and notes the ongoing discussions across the Council; and how the short term maintenance issue will be addressed.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 The key risk is the need for clarity on responsibility for funding the maintenance of surplus land. It is proposed that the Council's Asset Management Board considers this issue and makes proposals to the Council's Strategic Investment Board.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 It has been agreed that the Allerton Fields site be transferred from Children's Services to Environment and Neighbourhoods.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Board is requested to note the response to the Deputation in respect of Allerton Fields, and the ongoing discussions between Council Directorates regarding future ownership and maintenance of the site.

6.2 The Executive Board is asked to note the transfer of the Allerton Fields site from Children's Services to Environment and Neighbourhoods.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.