



Report of the Head of Scrutiny Support and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Culture and Leisure)

Date: 16th July 2007

Subject: Request for Scrutiny – Wharfemeadows Park Fence

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Scrutiny Board (Culture and Leisure) has received a request for scrutiny from the Wharfemeadows Action Group relating to the proposed fencing arrangements within Wharfemeadows Park and the implications city wide. Attached to this report is the letter outlining the request for scrutiny from the Wharfemeadows Action Group.
- 1.2 Members of the Wharfemeadows Action Group will be in attendance to present the request and briefly answer any questions for clarification from the Board.
- 1.3 Should the Board decide to include this request on its work programme, terms of reference will be drawn up and submitted to the September Board meeting, along with initial information determined by Members.

2.0 Background to the request

- 2.1 Following recommendations made by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents the Executive Board made a decision to erect a fence around an expanse of water in Wharfemeadows Park, Otley, on 9th February 2007. However, this decision prompted local protests.

- 2.2 A group was formed, known as the Wharfemeadows Action Group, to oppose the plans. This group has submitted a deputation to full Council (18th April 2007) and has also been involved in discussions with the relevant Area Committee.
- 2.3 On 16th May 2007 the Executive Board agreed to revised proposals taking into account objections raised, whilst still putting in place measures to restrict unauthorised access to the river edge.
- 2.4 This modified decision remains the focus of objections to the Council via the Wharfemeadows Action Group. Whilst the impetus has arisen from a local scheme, Members may wish to note that the Council's Water Safety Policy covers two other sites and that the Council's approach to risk management is a pertinent city-wide concern.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1 Following the presentation from the Wharfemeadows Action Group, Members may wish to ask questions for clarification and then decide whether to proceed with an inquiry. It should be noted that fuller information will be provided at the beginning of the inquiry and at this stage the Board is asked to assess whether in principle they wish to place the inquiry on to the work programme.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are requested to decide whether further scrutiny is required on this issue and if so, to schedule it into the work programme.