



COUNCIL MEETING

17 MARCH 2016

**ADOPTION AND MAINTENANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE
SYSTEMS, OPEN SPACE AND PLAY AREAS ON NEW
DEVELOPMENTS**

Jane Robinson, Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Council acquiring, subject to conditions, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), open and/or play areas from residential developers.
2. The Council's current policy approach to open space and play area maintenance is to actively encourage developers to transfer open and/or play space provided within residential developments to the Council, subject to the developer paying a commuted sum equivalent to a maximum of twenty years future maintenance of the land and fixed play equipment. The Council will thereafter maintain these areas in perpetuity.
3. The Council's current approach to maintenance of open space and play areas is unsustainable for the lifetime maintenance of the areas concerned given the reduction in resources to maintain and manage our open spaces and play areas. In addition, following the adoption of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan and strengthening of national planning policy on SuDS, SuDS are now required in new developments of 10 or more houses (major development). Therefore an updated maintenance model for the upkeep of open space and play areas and a new model for the maintenance of SuDS is now required.
4. The effect of the new policy is that in new residential developments, the cost of future maintenance of SuDS, open space and play areas will no longer be met by the developer and the Council thereafter. Instead, the maintenance costs will be met equally by the property owners of the development, via the payment of an estate rent charge. For developments of 10 houses or more, that payment will be made to a Management Company who will be responsible for maintaining the land. For developments of less than 10 houses (minor development), the estate rent charge will be payable to the Council who will be responsible for maintaining the land.
6. The Cabinet has considered the facts and issues arising from the report including alternative options and took all relevant advice before formulating their recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. It is recommended that Council adopts the Adoption and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems, open space and play areas on new developments Policy at Appendix 2 of the attached report in respect of new residential developments