

**Blaby District Council  
Council**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	19 November 2024
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Transfer of Public Open Space</b> This is not a Key Decision and is not on the Forward Plan
<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Cllr. Nigel Grundy - Neighbourhood Services &amp; Assets</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Neighbourhood Services & Assets Group Manager
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	All Priorities: A Place to Live; A Place to Work; A Place to Visit; People Strategy; Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

**1. What is this report about?**

- 1.1 To seek authority to transfer land assets to Parish Councils for improved community use.

**2. Recommendation(s) to Council**

- 2.1 That Council approve the disposal of land at Southey Close recreation ground and Jubilee Park to Enderby Parish Council and disposal of Holt Crescent allotments to Thurlaston Parish Council.
- 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Executive Director (S151) in consultation with the Neighbourhood Services and Assets Portfolio holder and Finance, People and Performance Portfolio holder to agree terms and finalise the disposals of the land assets detailed in 2.1.

**3. Reason for Decisions Recommended**

- 3.1 Transfer of land listed in 2.1 is a recommendation within the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy 2024-2034.
- 3.2 The recommendations seek to transfer open space to Parishes where there is no potential for development of the land and in so doing reduce maintenance costs and liability to the Council.

## **4. Matters to consider**

### **4.1 Background**

The District Council have recently developed a Parks and Open Strategy 2024- 2034 with a strategic vision to ensure that Blaby District Council owned parks and open spaces are sustainable, high quality, accessible and continue to provide value to people, place, and nature.

A key objective of the strategy is to review all strategic parks and open spaces owned by Blaby District Council and recommend the best ownership and management for their respective communities.

As part of this continuous review the Council have identified 3 open space sites recommended for transfer to the respective local parish council: Holt Crescent allotment site, Thurlaston; Jubilee Park and Southey Close recreation ground in Enderby.

Parish Councils have an in depth understanding of local needs, and the availability to access funding opportunities which has the potential to provide a vast range of benefits to its residents, visitors, and park users. In addition, it allows for the Parish Council to take control of the site offering opportunities for consistency in maintenance regimes, community events, activities, and much more.

Further to an offer in principle to transfer land, the following Parish Councils have expressed an interest in taking ownership of the following:

#### **Holt Crescent Allotment site, Thurlaston**

Thurlaston Parish Council has expressed an interest to take ownership of the allotment site located at Holt Crescent LT384762 (Plan Appendix A) which will remain as allotment land in perpetuity.

The land has received a valuation of £15,000 based on it being retained as an allotment site. The site has been deemed not to have any development potential and it is unlikely that the land would obtain the valuation figure if advertised for sale as allotment land. It is therefore proposed that the site be transferred to the parish to be retained as allotment land in perpetuity for a nominal value of £1.00.

#### **Jubilee Park and Southey Close Recreation Ground, Enderby**

Enderby Parish Council has expressed an interest to take ownership of two sites, Southey Close recreation ground LT384463 and Jubilee Park that consists of two titles LT384520 & LT383921 (Plan Appendix B & C). Both of these sites will transfer on the basis of remaining as open space in perpetuity. It is proposed that the land be transferred at a nominal value of £1.00. For Jubilee Park the transfer includes the car park which is included within the same title.

The land has been valued on the basis of a restricted valuation ensuring the land is retained as public open space in perpetuity by a public body. The valuations are nominal and are valued at £2,650 per site. None of the above assets are deemed to have development potential. Therefore the land will be transferred with a condition for the land to remain as public open space in perpetuity. It is proposed that the land be transferred at a nominal value of £1.00.

The Council will be required to advertise the open space for sale by way of a Public Notice in a local newspaper in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 s123 prior to transfer should Council accept the recommendations.

## 4.2 Proposal(s)

- To proceed with the transfers outlined in 4.1; and for the terms of the transfer for each site to be agreed and finalised by the Executive Director (S151 officer) in consultation with the respective Portfolio Holders for Assets and Finance.

## 4.3 Relevant Consultations

Consultation was undertaken during the development of the Parks & Open Strategy that subsequently identified the transfers of Southey Close and Jubilee Park as a Strategic Objective.

Internal consultants: Working group, Tourism, Planning, Environmental Services, SLT, Informal Cabinet, Scrutiny, Full Council.

External consultants: Leicestershire County Council, The Environmental Partnership (TEP) Parish/Town Councils.

## 4.4 Significant Issues

There are no significant issues to report.

# 5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

- 5.1 The transfer will have the potential to reduce operational costs to the Parks and Open Spaces Team and free up time from the cessation of grounds maintenance obligations. In monetary terms the table below provides an illustration of the potential revenue savings.

	Current year	2025/26
<b>Revenue Savings</b>	£0*	£25,670
<b>Nominal Receipt</b>	£0	£3

\*No savings are anticipated from the current financial year as it is anticipated that timescales for transfer will likely be in place for the next financial year.

## **6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?**

### **6.1**

<b>Current Risk</b>	<b>Actions to reduce the risks</b>
Councils' liability for the sites	Transferring the asset to the Parish Council's will transfer the liability.
Risk that the Parish is unable to maintain the assets after transfer.	The Council will carry out due diligence to ensure the Parish Council's have the ability and funding to maintain the parks into the future.
Limited funding for improvements to the open spaces.	Transferring the asset will provide further funding avenues for future improvements to the sites.

## **7. Other options considered**

- 7.1 The option of continuing to maintain the site by the Council's in house team was considered and discounted based on the ongoing revenue costs of maintaining the site and lack of capital funding for any investment into the site. The option to undertake minimal maintenance on all sites was considered and discounted in favour of transferring to the parish council.
- 7.2 Opportunities to retain Jubilee Park sites for potential biodiversity net gain units have been explored and discounted as an early assessment has found that it would not yield a favourable investment in units. Southey Close Recreation Ground and the Holt Close Allotment site were not deemed appropriate sites for biodiversity net gain consideration.

## **8. Environmental impact**

- 8.1 No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated given there is to be no change to the current utilisation of the land.

## **9. Other significant issues**

- 9.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

## **10. Appendix**

10.1 Appendix A – Holt Crescent allotment, Thurlaston.

10.2 Appendix B – Southey Close recreation ground, Enderby.

10.3 Appendix C – Jubilee Park, Enderby.

## **11. Background paper(s)**

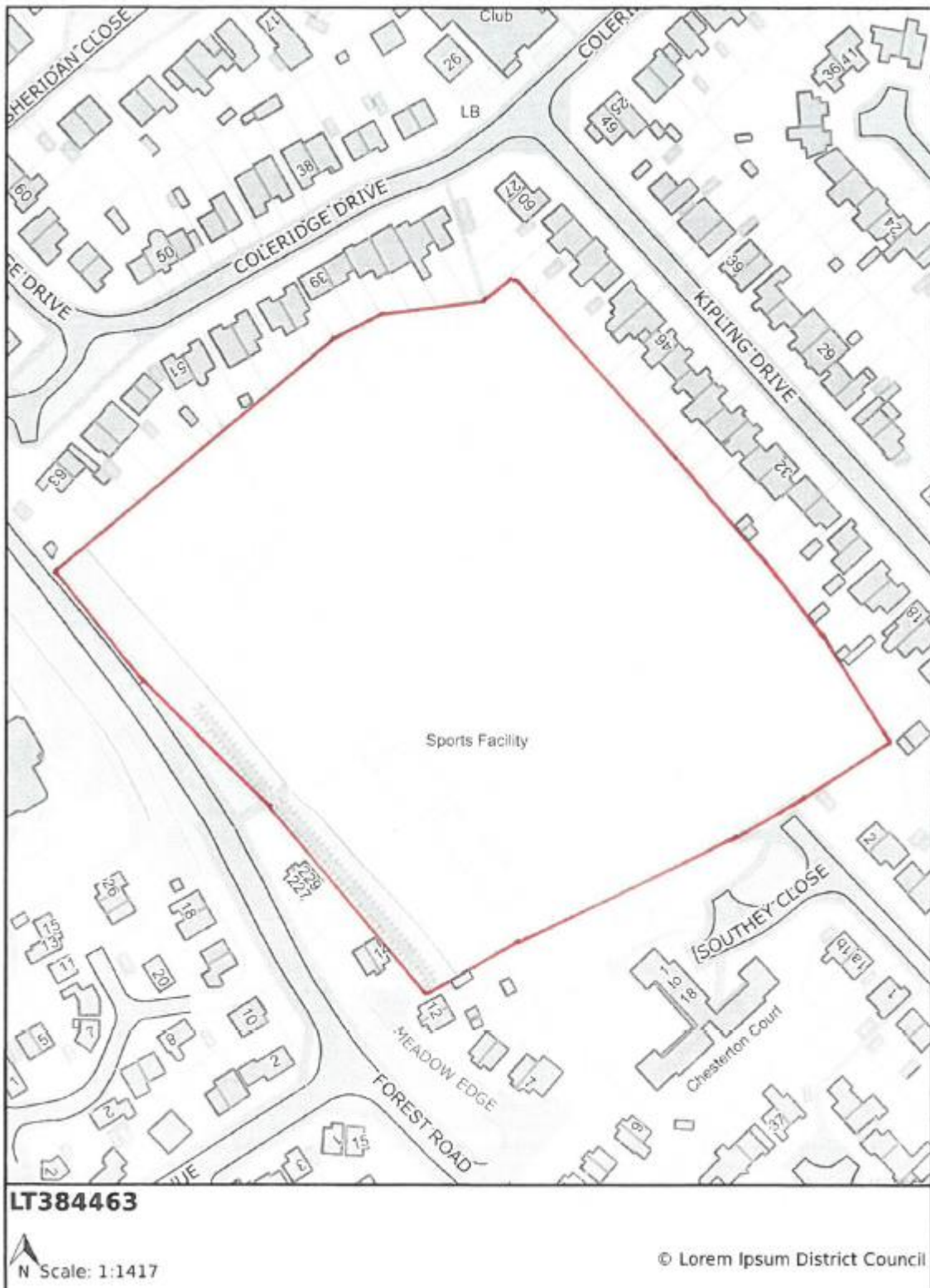
11.1 None.

## **12. Report author's contact details**

Paul Coates	Neighbourhood Services Group Manager
Paul.coates@blaby.gov.uk	0116 2727615



## Appendix B – Southey Close, Enderby



Appendix C – Jubilee Park, Enderby

