

**SPORTS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday 11 September 2017**

**At 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

**Present:**

Councillor: S E Bartington (Chairman)

Councillors: B J Churchill T J Morris  
H B Eaglestone L Price  
J S King D Temple  
C K Woodward

Officers: Town Clerk Operations and Estates Officer  
Democratic Services Officer Asst Ops and Estates Officer  
Responsible Financial Officer

Also present: 6 members of the public

R424 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies of absence.

R425 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Bartington declared an interest as Chairman of the Cogges Meadow Park Group.

R426 **MINUTES**

a) **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman;

b) **MATTERS ARISING:**

Minute no R332: Cllr Woodward was pleased to note that the Oxlease play area project was about to start. The Chairman thanked the Operations and Estates Officer for his work on this.

R427 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned in line with Standing Order 42 so that two members of the public could address the Committee

- Mr Jeff Hunter on behalf of Premier Tennis, and
- Mr Dave Woodward on behalf of Witney Swifts Cricket Club

The Committee reconvened following the address by the members of the public, and **RESOLVED** to move the agenda item regarding Witney Swifts Cricket Club in line with Standing Order 14(a)viii in order that the discussion could be heard.

R428 **WITNEY SWIFTS CRICKET CLUB**

It was positive to hear that the club did not have any issues with parking now.

A member commented that from what he had heard under public participation, both parties (The Coffee Shed and the Swifts) wanted to work together. He proposed that a joint press statement was issued stating that the Council, Coffee Shed and the Swifts were happy to work together. All members agreed with this.

A member proposed that the Council could offer informal support for grant applications to the club.

Another member asked if the Operations Team could investigate the feasibility and costs of a “spruce up” for the changing room and bring a report to the next meeting. This could be added to the project list.

The Operations and Estates Manager asked if he could have a meeting with the club to discuss what had been done already to improve things. All agreed this to be a good idea.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that a joint press release be issued stating that the Council, Coffee Shed and the Swifts were happy to work together;
2. that the Town Council Offers informal support for grant applications to the club;
3. that the Operations and Estates Officer investigates the feasibility and costs of a “spruce up” for the changing room and bring a report to the next meeting;
4. that the Operations and Estates Manager meets with the Club to discuss all issues.

R429 **OPERATIONAL REPORT – PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda.

He highlighted the installation of the footpath at The Leys, installation of recycling bins, a break in at the depot, rectification of a broken pipe at the Splash Park by the works team and the final clearing up of felled trees after Storm Doris.

It had been noted that someone had been bringing in large equipment into the Lake and Country Park and had been cutting off locks and chains to do so. It transpired that the Angling Society had thoughts on who it may be and they would speak to the individual concerned.

The football fields had been marked out and the ROSPA play area inspections had taken place.

The Oxlease play area regeneration was due to start the following day and had to be finished by 22 October due to funding constrictions. The Council needed to erect a new sign to

include funders and this would be at a cost of £535. This was a necessity and all members agreed the funding.

A letter had been received from the farmer who grazed sheep adjacent to the lake and country park, requesting more signage asking for dogs to be kept on lead, as when the gate was left open, there had been incidents with dogs attacking her flock.

A member felt that more signage was a waste of money, as there was no one to enforce it. Another member agreed and commented that the key thing was to stop the sheep and dogs coming into contact with each other. He suggested putting a spring on the gate so that it was self-closing and the sheep could not get out. A sign could be put on this gate. The Operations and Estates Officer thought that he would be able to adjust the gate so that it would self –close.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the funding of £535.49 for a sign at Oxlease park be agreed;
3. that the gate at the Lake and Country park be adjusted to make it self-closing and a sign reminding people to keep dogs under control is fixed to the gate.

**R430 BOWLS GREEN IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda. Members discussed the situation and felt that the idea of recharging the costs to the clubs was reasonable. The Operations and Estates Officer would discuss the issues with the club at their post season meeting.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Operations and Estates Officer negotiates with the bowls clubs the Town Council taking over the responsibility of the Bowls Green irrigation systems.

**R431 RALEGH CRESECENT AND MOORLAND ROAD PLAY AREAS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer and the Town Clerk as circulated prior to the meeting.

The Town Clerk was due to meet with WODC Officers concerning Raleigh Crescent, and would report back to the next meeting.

The Operations and Estates Officer explained that he understood members had wanted to look at renewing Moorland Road play equipment but going back, King George V Field was due to have been done first as the play equipment was older and had much greater need. He proposed that additional equipment (from stock) could be put in and the swings could be upgraded. Moorland Road could be looked at the following year.

Members were interested to know what the footfall was in the various areas and asked for a Survey Monkey survey to be done.

A member asked if there was any progress with Park Road. The Town Clerk replied that this was still with the solicitors.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that a Survey Monkey Survey is carried out on the Council's play areas in order to ascertain the usage and footfall;
3. that the Operations and Estates Officer reviews what equipment could be installed into King George V Field.

R432 **MATRIX UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated with the agenda. She advised she would bring an updated and simplified plan to the next meeting.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

R433 **MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE LAKE AND COUNTRY PARK**

The Committee received an update from the Town Clerk further to a meeting with the Lower Windrush Valley Project. She advised that as a starting point the Council needed to have a vision and mission statement. Members felt that a delicate balance was needed in terms of a manicured park versus a wildlife haven. A member described it as "a slice of paradise on your doorstep."

A discussion followed which included the option presented previously by Adventure Plus.

It was agreed that in simple terms, the Council just wanted to see more people using the park. It was felt that the best way forward was to delegate further deliberation of the land management plan to a small working party.

The Town Clerk circulated information about the Yellow Fish Project from the Environment Agency, which was asking for Council support. Members agreed that the Council could raise awareness and promote the project but further information was required.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the update be noted;
2. that further deliberation of a vision and mission statement for the Lake & Country Park be delegated to a small working party to consist of Cllrs Woodward, Temple and Bartington, and that they meet with Mrs Kennery of the LWVP with a Council Officer.
3. that the Council supports the Yellow Fish project by raising awareness and promoting it.

R434 **BURWELL RECREATION GROUND FACILITIES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated prior to the meeting. Suggestions had been received by the public for better lighting around the hall and the installation of CCTV to the recreation ground/play area.

The Town Clerk explained that previously the Town Council had been unable to get CCTV on The Leys and the service was currently under review. She therefore questioned being able to get coverage at Burwell Hall, Recreation Ground and Play Area, but she would raise it at the next CCTV Management Group meeting.

One member asked for it to be recorded that he thanked the respective members of the public as they were active members of the community and he applauded their interest.

Cllr Price, who was also a County Councillor, asked that the street lighting issues be forwarded to her.

A discussion followed on the changing facilities at Burwell Recreation Ground and it was agreed that an earmarked reserve should be set up to provide more and enhance the changing facilities.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that thanks is given to the two members of the public who had been in touch;
3. that the street lighting issues be referred to Cllr Price as a County Councillor;
4. that an earmarked reserve of £25,000 be set up towards additional changing facilities at Burwell Recreation Ground.

R435 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates officer as circulated with the agenda. The report had already been seen by the Estates Management Committee.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and the amendment to the contract as detailed in the report be agreed.

R436 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer as circulated with the agenda.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

R437 **HEALTH AND SAFETY – CRICKET SQUARE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda. It was pointed out that although the wrong rope had been installed, there was a bye-law prohibiting cycling on The Leys. Members were asked if they wished additional signage to be installed.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that blue rope continues to be used to separate off the cricket square;
3. that additional signs are fixed to the blue rope to warn people of its presence;
4. that “No Cycling” signage be put up around The Leys.

R438 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

**RESOLVED:** that standing order 48 (a) be suspended to allow the meeting to continue past two hours.

R439 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

R440 **LEYS RECREATION GROUND – TENNIS, CRAZY GOLF AND PAVILION – MAINTENANCE AND AGREEMENTS**

The Committee discussed the presentation given by Mr Hunter earlier that evening.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the Council agrees to Premier Tennis replacing the current mini golf course with a new modern community version, funded by Premier Tennis and offering additional income to the Town Council on the condition that price increases to the public are kept in line with inflation;
2. that the Council agrees to the modernisation of tennis bookings/protection of courts with an electronic lock, funded by the leaseholder, on the condition that price increases to the public are kept in line with inflation;
3. that Premier Tennis be offered a full repairing lease for a further 5 year period.

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The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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Chairman