

Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 6 January 2015 at 8.00 pm

Present: *Councillors W. Soane (Chairman); T. Barker; P. Challis; B. Franklin; K. Gilder; S. Outen; D. Stares*

Officers present: *D. Mander, Town Clerk; K. Murray, Service Support Manager; A. Bunn, Leisure Services Manager; L. Matthews, Committee Officer*

Also present: *Councillors M. Holmes and D. Mills
M. Rozzier and D. Pickup, One Woodley
R. Thompson, Alliance Leisure*

37. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Downes and S. Rahmouni.

38. **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note that at the meeting of the Council held on 9 December 2014 Councillor Chadwick was replaced on the Leisure Services Committee by Councillor Stares.

39. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Soane	Agenda item 11, Charges 2015/16, in relation to proposed charges for the Memorial Ground.	Personal – Councillor Soane is a member of the Carnival Committee, which hires the Memorial Ground.
------------------	---	---

40. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2014**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 4 November 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

41. **ONE WOODLEY**

The Chairman welcomed Mark Rozzier and Dave Pickup to the meeting to provide an update on the progress of the One Woodley project.

Mark Rozzier informed Members that a great deal of work had been carried out and discussions had been held between the football clubs in Woodley, including the managers, players and parents, and a manifesto had been produced detailing the benefits of working together and setting out how the amalgamated club would be run. It had been agreed that the amalgamated club would operate under the Woodley United name, and Woodley United had now adopted a new constitution. The Football Association had issued a press release, which described the plans as inspirational and stated how pleasing it was to see all the clubs in an area working together to improve the quality of football provision for the whole community.

Mark Rozzier reported that a Sunday soccer centre had been set up at Willowbank School and sessions would soon be starting at Goals Football Centre. Two under 9 girls' teams had been set up last term for the first time and under 11 girls' teams would be started this term. At the recent Wokingham Borough Council Sports Awards, the Woodley United Ladies team had been presented with an award for their work in the community towards increasing the provision and participation in girls' and women's football.

Dave Pickup explained that the aim of the One Woodley project was to increase the number of teams playing in Woodley and improve facilities; it was hoped that the number of people playing football could be doubled and the number of coaches would be increased accordingly. The increased participation would lead to an increased budget for the amalgamated club and it was estimated that this could be raised from £200,000 to £1,000,000. An increased annual budget would allow a business case to be made for improved facilities in Woodley and the eventual aim would be to provide a permanent football ground suitable for higher level league games. Dave Pickup thanked the Council for its support with the project and for undertaking to provide a 3G artificial grass pitch at Woodford Park. He also thanked Councillor Outen for his attendance at the One Woodley meetings.

In reply to a question Dave Pickup explained that the new amalgamated team would not result in fewer games being played; it was possible that there might be more than one Woodley United team in some of the leagues and that the teams may have to play against each other, but there were so many different leagues in existence that this probably would not happen often. The larger number of players at one club would make it easier to build teams and players would be able to move between teams.

When asked how many of the local teams had agreed to be part of the project Mark Rozzier explained that Woodley United, Town, Hammers and Zebras had agreed to unite in 2016 and it was hoped that other teams would join later.

In reply to a question Dave Pickup informed Members that Woodley United was now a partner club to Reading Town FC, which brought benefits such as free first-aid training, and although it was hoped that in time the new Woodley United might have a 1st team playing in the Conference or Division 2, they would not be playing at such a level that they would be in competition with Reading Town.

The Chairman thanked Mark Rozzier and Dave Pickup for their update and said that he was very pleased that Woodley was a forerunner in this type of initiative.

42. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to commercial matters, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press were temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw for the following item.

43. **WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT**

The Chairman welcomed Robin Thompson to the meeting to give a presentation on behalf of Alliance Leisure on the feasibility study being produced on the potential development of activities and sports at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

Mr Thompson reported on the analysis that had been carried out to determine the level of demand for various types of leisure and sporting facilities in and around Woodley and then outlined the options for refurbishment/remodelling of the existing facilities within the leisure centre and the possibility of building an extension.

Members questioned Mr Thompson about the demand for additional facilities and methods of funding. Concern was expressed that the presentation had not specifically included reference to Bulmershe Gym Club and Badminton England, which had been the initial prompt for the feasibility study. Mr Thompson confirmed that he had spoken to Bulmershe Gym Club and intended to contact Badminton England before completing the feasibility report and would include this information in his report.

The Chairman thanked Robin Thompson for his presentation.

At this point in the meeting the Chairman moved that the agenda items 11, 12 and 13 be considered next to allow Councillor Franklin to participate in the discussion and voting before leaving the meeting early as he was unwell.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To consider the remaining agenda items in the order 11, 12, 13, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15.

44. **CHARGES 2015/16**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 4/15 and explained that the proposed charges for 2015/16 had been drawn up taking into account the increase in the Retail Price Index and comparative charges by other local providers.

The Town Clerk explained that at Woodford Park Leisure Centre the room hire charges were generally low when compared with other nearby providers and this was reflected in the proposed above inflation increases to the charges. Members were asked to consider withdrawing the concessionary rates for the Games Room and Tea Room/Function Room as these rates had not been used in the past year; however, it was proposed that the concessionary rates for the hire of the Committee Rooms be retained, at an increased level, as these rooms were regularly booked at the concessionary rate.

Members were informed that the proposed charges for indoor and outdoor sports at Woodford Park had taken into account the rates charged by other local sports providers, and resulted in some sports having no increase in charge. The Leisure Services Manager explained that the cost of the work required to improve the standard of the outer cricket field had resulted in higher charges for cricket matches, but that the cricket club had accepted that this was a necessary cost.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 4/15.
- ◆ To recommend that the proposed charges for 2015/16, as presented, be approved.
Voting: For: 4 Against: 3

45. **REVISED ESTIMATES 2014/15**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 5/15 and explained that both the income and the expenditure figures had been affected by the early surrender of the Bulmershe Leisure Centre lease and the transfer of the centre to 1Life. In reply to a question she confirmed that the report on the leisure centre transfer would include information on any additional costs borne by Woodford Park Leisure Centre and confirmed that there had been no redundancy costs associated with the handover.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 5/15.
- ◆ To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that the Revised Budget Estimates for 2014/15, as presented, be approved.
Voting: For: 4 Abstentions: 3

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk and her team for the work taken to produce the budget reports.

46. **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2015/16**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 6/15.

In reply to a question the Town Clerk explained that the 10% increase in waste disposal costs was due to an increase in the tariff, and believed that rising landfill costs accounted for this.

RESOLVED:

◆ To note Report No. LS 6/16.

◆ To recommend that the Budget Estimates for 2015/16, as presented, be approved

Voting: For: 4 Abstentions: 3

At this point Councillors Franklin and Mills left the meeting.

47. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 1/15 and informed Members that there was a misprint in the figure for Net Actual Income in the previous year's figures and that the correct figure was £117,727.

RESOLVED:

◆ To note report No. LS 1/15.

48. **LEISURE CENTRES**

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 2/15.

Defibrillator

It was noted that the defibrillator had been ordered and the cost included training for up to twelve people.

Sports Development

Satellite Clubs

The Leisure Services Manager reported that he was hoping to develop links with sports clubs in the local community as part of a programme of outreach work. Funding was available from Get Berkshire Active to enable clubs to hire space for their activities and it was hoped that this would generate new interest in hiring space at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

Rounders England

Members noted that a grant of £2,500 was available to continue the partnership with Rounders England with the aim of further increasing participation in Woodley and in the borough.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

3G Football Pitch Project – Update

The Leisure Services Manager informed Members that since the last meeting the Council's consultants had submitted amendments to the planning application to Wokingham Borough Council as a result of the consultation meeting with residents in October. The amendments included the installation of an acoustic board along one side of the pitch, changes to the lighting and the pitch opening times, the creation of 55 new parking spaces and the

refurbishment of one tennis court. The consultation period had been extended to allow the Environmental Health and Highways departments to consider the implications of the application.

The Town Clerk reported that borrowing approval for £255,000 had been received from the Government and this meant that when planning permission was granted an application would be submitted to the Football Association and the Football Foundation for the remaining 50% of the costs. It was hoped that this submission could be made in February. Members noted that the timing was going to be very tight for the 3G pitch to be installed and operational for the start of the new football season in September.

Woodley Cricket Academy

Members were pleased to note that the new Woodley Cricket Academy, which aimed to develop youth cricket within the town would start on 17 January, initially with indoor sessions, but moving to outdoor training in April. This would be a partnership between Woodley Cricket Club, The Berkshire Cricket League, Performance Cricket and the Town Council.

New artificial wicket

The Leisure Services Manager reported that he had investigated potential grants that could help fund a new artificial cricket wicket and had identified two sources of funding:

1. Section 106 development contributions.
2. Funding from the English Cricket Board through a potential partnership with the Last Man Stands cricket franchise

The preferred option would be confirmed following further investigation.

Bulmershe Leisure Centre

Members were informed by the Leisure Services Manager that, following the early surrender of the lease to Wokingham Borough Council on 1 December 2014 and the agreed transfer of staff to 1Life, a report on these matters would be provided to the Strategy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2015, as requested by Members at the Council meeting on 9 December 2014.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 2/15.

The Chairman thanked everyone who had been involved in the transfer of Bulmershe Leisure Centre for all the work they had carried out.

49. PARKS AND BUILDINGS

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. LS 3/15.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

It was reported that the surface of the old play area adjacent to the Leisure Centre had been made safe by replacing the areas of damaged tarmac. Refurbishment of the ladies and gents changing rooms would be carried out by the Maintenance Team from 13 January and disruption would be minimised by making use of the football wing changing facilities while work was in progress. Replacement of the windows in the Function Room and Tea Room would also be carried out in January, by a local contractor at a cost of £5,850.

Bulmershe Leisure Centre

Members were pleased to note that all the agreed pre-transfer maintenance works were completed and a smooth handover of maintenance issues achieved by the required date.

Mollison Close Play Area

Members were reminded that in 2009 the Town Council had agreed to take over the ownership of this play area from Wokingham Borough Council but that it had subsequently been discovered that the Borough Council did not own the land.

The Service Support Manager informed Members that the latest update from the Borough Council's Strategic Assets Department stated that the original developer could not produce an unencumbered title to the land as there was a charge against the property which remained in place and there was no apparent way of removing it, and while the charge was in place Wokingham Borough Council could not acquire the land. It was therefore not expected that the play area would be transferred to the Town Council in the near future. Members would be informed if the circumstances regarding this land changed.

Woodford Park

Following a request at the last meeting that the provision of a flagpole be investigated, the Service Support Manager suggested that this be submitted as a project for Section 106 funding and this was agreed. Options and costs would be investigated and reported to the Committee.

In reply to a question about the poor state of the ground surface at the entrance to Woodford Park from Western Avenue the Service Support Manager reported that he was still trying to acquire suitable material to fill the potholes and improve access for vehicles.

Community Halls

The Service Support Manager reported that over the Christmas period new flooring had been installed at Chapel hall at a cost of £7,000 and the Maintenance Team had redecorated the Committee Room at the back of Coronation Hall.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 3/15.

50. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chairman invited the Committee to suggest items to be included on a future agenda.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That joint working on sport and leisure activities with Wokingham Borough Council and 1Life form part of the Leisure Service Manager's regular report to the Committee.

51. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To publicise the support given to the One Woodley project by the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 9:53 pm
