

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre
on Tuesday 11 April 2017 at 8:00 pm**

Present: *Councillors W. Soane (Chairman); K. Gilder; S. Rahmouni; D. Stares*

Officers present: *K. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk; E. Whitesmith, Leisure Services Manager;
L. Matthews, Committee Officer*

Also present: *Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity
David Provins, Friends of Woodford Park*

61. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T. Barker.

62. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

63. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2017**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 17 January 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

64. **JUST AROUND THE CORNER (JAC)**

- a) Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity, was welcomed to the meeting and presented the JAC report. He reported that the antisocial behaviour, which had been a problem since the previous summer, was reducing and the atmosphere in the town was much better than it had been six months earlier. JAC had been working closely with the police and the PCSOs to engage with young people. Members were very pleased to hear that encouraging progress was being made.

Members were informed of the ongoing work to repair the youth shelter in Woodford Park, which was being undertaken with help from young people and the local PCSOs, and received an update on the progress of the Loddon Mead project, where half the funding for a container café had been secured.

Sam Milligan also informed Members that JAC were raising money to buy a house in Woodley, which had been offered to them by one of their donors at a price significantly below the market value. It was hoped that the house could be used to offer accommodation to vulnerable young people over the age of 18 who needed support in the transition to independent living.

The chairman thanked Sam Milligan for his report.

- b) Members noted that the three-year Service Level Agreement with JAC for the provision of outreach work in the town ended in March 2017 and the Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 8/17, which set out proposals for a new Service Level Agreement for a further three years. The new agreement included amendments to the service provision to recognise that the detached youth work sessions could include referrals of Woodley young people to JAC's Rehoboth Centre for more in depth

mentoring, and also that JAC would be working with young people on the proposed parkour project at the Loddon Mead site.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 8/17.
- ◆ To approve the proposed Service Level Agreement with JAC for the provision of outreach work in the town for a further three-year period ending in March 2020.

65. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 9/17 and noted that under the majority of cost headings expenditure was lower than the revised budget figure and income was as anticipated or higher. He reported that the problem with the electricity supplier had been resolved and bills had now been received, but those figures had not been available when the agenda had been prepared and were not reflected in the report.

In reply to a question about the necessary repairs to footpaths in Woodford Park, the Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that there were funds in the capital programme budget allocated for this.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 9/17.

66. **WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE, SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES**

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 10/17.

Members were pleased to note that the Gym on the Park and the associated fitness classes were proving to be very popular, with membership numbers reaching 310 at the date of the meeting. The Leisure Services Manager reported that the new PiYo class, a fusion of pilates and yoga, and the introduction of Toddler Dance, a session that allowed gym members to drop off their toddler and use the gym for the duration of the session, had both been well received. A new class for the over 50s, named "Silver Circuits", would be launched shortly. Members were also informed that a light-hearted newsletter for gym members had been circulated and would be produced regularly to keep the membership updated with gym related developments and interesting member stories. Regular updates on the social media channels were receiving a good amount of interaction from gym members and the public.

The Leisure Services Manager informed Members that gym members had requested that the issue of glare through the large window be addressed and that a solution to this was being sought.

Members were informed of the Easter holiday camps being offered at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the Leisure Services Manager reported that parents were tending to book their children onto camps for one or two days, rather than a whole week, so that they could experience a variety of activities.

The Leisure Services Manager also updated Members on arrangements for Woodley Schools Sports Week, commencing on 22 May 2017, and the Woodley 10km and Junior 2.5km races, being held on 7 May 2017.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 10/17

The Leisure Services Manager then drew Members' attention to an additional item that had been tabled at the meeting, with the agreement of the Chairman.

The Reading FC Former Players' Association had requested use of the 3G pitch on Saturday 10 June 2017 (Woodley Carnival Day) to run an adult five-a-side football tournament in partnership with Woodley Carnival. The Association was a charity organisation that raised funds for both former players in need of support and other local charities, raising approximately £10,000 for local causes each year. Both the Association and the Carnival Committee hoped that the hire cost of the 3G pitch would be absorbed by the Council and in return the Association would provide a team of former Reading players for an exhibition game on the carnival field against the winners of the five-a-side tournament. The Association had also indicated that they were prepared to advertise Council facilities/activities on their website, social media platforms and leaflets to be handed out in goody bags at the event. In addition, the Association had indicated that they would be willing to support the Mayor's charity in return for a reduction in the hire cost.

At this point the Chairman declared an interest in this item, as he was a member of the Carnival Committee, and took no part in the discussion or vote on this matter.

The Leisure Services Manager confirmed that there were currently no bookings for the 3G pitch for the day in question, 10 June. Members then considered the request and

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To allow Reading FC Former Players' Association to have free use of the 3G pitch on Carnival Day, 10 June 2017, in return for a donation to the Mayor's charity.

67. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 11/17.

Members were informed of an episode of vandalism when a substance believed to be acetic acid was poured on parts of the cricket green over the weekend of 25/26 March, damaging the grass in some areas. The Deputy Town Clerk reported that fly tipping had become a common problem in parts of Woodford Park and the possibility of improved cctv coverage and additional warning notices was being investigated.

Members were pleased to note that the consultation days regarding the proposals for the lake in Woodford Park, held in the park on 6 and 8 April, had been very useful and had resulted in a large number of comments and suggestions. The Deputy Town Clerk would combine these with the results of the questionnaire that had been on the Council website and the information would be reported to the Committee at the next meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that Woodley Pre-School were considering whether to proceed with their building proposal using grant funding awarded by the Department of Education and distributed by Wokingham Borough Council, as the funding criteria required projects to be completed by the end of August 2017, although the terms and conditions had only been received by the pre-school at the end of March. The timescale for completion of the project was considered to be unrealistic and the pre-school would not be able to embark on a substantial project if there was a risk that the funding may be withdrawn if the project was not completed in time. They were therefore requesting a time extension.

In addition Members were informed of remedial works that were required to the roof at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, tree work and repairs carried out in Malone Park and the resolution of the problems with the electricity contracts for the Council's buildings. Members also noted the minutes of the Friends of Woodford Park meeting held on 7 March 2017.

Following the presentation of the report the Chairman asked David Provins, who was present at the meeting, if he would like to address Members on behalf of the Friends of Woodford Park. Mr Provins distributed plans showing the positions of proposed new flower beds that the Friends wished to dig next to the Oakwood Centre. It was agreed that the Chairman would show the plans to the chairman of the Carnival Committee so that he was aware of the location of the new beds. Mr Provins informed Members that the Woodland Trust had donated 16 rowan trees to the Friends and they were proposing that these be positioned behind the war memorial and thinned out as they grew. The Chairman reminded Members that the war memorial had been positioned so that it could be seen from the road and Mr Provins said that if the trees became too large they could be transplanted elsewhere. Mr Provins also mentioned that there was a lot of debris left over from memorial displays in the Remembrance Garden and suggested that the rules governing how long displays could be left in the Garden should be attached to the fence.

The Chairman thanked David Provins for coming to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 11/17.

68. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor Stares presented Report No. LS 12/17 of the Community Youth Partnership meeting held on 22 March 2017. As requested in the report, Members considered funding the cost of the licence agreement between Wokingham Borough Council and JAC, required to permit JAC to use the Loddon Mead area under the A3290 to meet up weekly with young people to start work on the potential projects there.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To agree that the Town Council fund the cost of the licence agreement between Wokingham Borough Council and JAC to allow JAC to use the Loddon Mead area under the A3290, subject to these costs not exceeding £275.

69. **LAND ADJACENT TO BULMERSHE PARK**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 13/17, which asked Members to consider an invitation from Wokingham Borough Council for the transfer of land between Bulmershe Park and Bulmershe Gymnastics Club to the Town Council under a community asset transfer lease.

Members noted that the land would require significant work to bring it back into public use and would present ongoing costs for maintenance and rubbish clearance. In reply to a question from the Chairman the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that there would be no financial incentive from Wokingham Borough Council for the Town Council to take on responsibility for this land.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

- ◆ That the offer of the transfer of land adjacent to Bulmershe Park from Wokingham Borough Council to the Town Council under a community asset transfer lease be declined.

70. **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

Members noted the update on matters relating to the allotments that had been provided in the agenda. Councillor Stares reported that 20 plots had been reallocated in March and there were currently only 2 unworked vacant plots. This was the first time in several years that there had been almost 100% occupancy at the allotments site.

71. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

Members noted that planning permission for the public toilet had been granted and issues regarding connection to services and sewers had been resolved. The Council was awaiting details of a community asset transfer lease for the land from Wokingham Borough Council. Once this was agreed an order would be placed.

72. **BUS SHELTERS**

Members noted that a replacement bus shelter in Beechwood Avenue was installed on 29 March 2017.

In reply to a question the Deputy Town Clerk agreed to contact Wokingham Borough Council to ask when the replacement of the bus shelter in Headley Road would take place.

73. **2018 COMMEMORATION OF THE END OF WORLD WAR 1**

Members noted that correspondence had been received from Colin Lott, a former member of the Woodley War Memorial Committee, suggesting that an event be held in 2018 to commemorate the end of World War 1. Following discussion of possible ways to commemorate this event it was agreed that more time was needed to gather ideas before a decision could be made. Members agreed that any such commemoration should be Council led, in conjunction with residents and local organisations.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To consider this item again at the next meeting of the Committee.

74. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

A possible event to commemorate of the end of World War 1 would be discussed at the next meeting.

75. **PUBLICITY & WEBSITE**

There were no suggestions for items to be publicised.

The meeting closed at 9:25 pm
