

Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 17 January 2017 at 8:00 pm

Present: *Councillors W. Soane (Chairman); T. Barker; S. Rahmouni; D. Stares*

Officers present: *D. Mander, Town Clerk; 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
Bob King, Friends of Woodford Park*

43. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Gilder, M. Green and R. Lay.

44. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Soane	Agenda item 9, Charges 2017/18, in relation to proposed charges for the Memorial Ground and hire of halls and meeting rooms.	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest: Councillor Soane is a member of the Carnival Committee, which hires the Memorial Ground and meeting rooms in several Council-run locations.
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Councillor Soane took no part in the discussion or voting on agenda item 9.

45. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2016**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 8 November 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

46. **JUST AROUND THE CORNER**

Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity (JAC), was welcomed to the meeting and presented the JAC report.

Sam Milligan informed Members that JAC had worked with a group of local young people and the PCSOs to replace the back of the youth shelter in Woodford Park the previous weekend and it was hoped that the front of the shelter would be replaced before the end of January. Working together in this way was encouraging the young people to engage with the PCSOs and Sam Milligan hoped that if the scope of the required work could be expanded, continuity of this engagement could be maintained. The atmosphere among young people in the town was improving after some difficulties in recent months and Sam Milligan hoped that the continuing engagement between young people and the PCSOs would enhance this.

Members were pleased to hear that the JAC bid to the Police Property Act Fund had been successful and they had been awarded £2,500 to put towards the parkour project at Loddon Mead. JAC was currently applying to the Co-op for funding for the project. It was noted that the Borough Council was in the process of providing a licence to allow JAC to

take their van to Loddon Mead one evening a week from March/April onwards to develop the project with local young people. Members noted that parkour had recently been recognised as a sport by Sport England and there was some discussion about the type of ground covering that could be used, with wood chippings, road planings and recycled block pavements being suggested.

The Chairman thanked Sam Milligan for coming to the meeting.

47. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 1/17 and explained that no electricity costs were included in the expenditure as a problem with the electricity supplier has resulted in no bills being received since April. It was hoped that this problem would be resolved shortly.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 1/17.

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

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 2/17.

Members were informed of the upcoming schools events in Woodford Park and the leisure centre, including the Badminton in Schools Initiative in February and the Orienteering event in March. Plans were underway for the Woodley Sports Week, scheduled for the week commencing Monday 22 May 2017, and agreement had been reached with Bulmershe Leisure Centre for the use of the swimming pool for this event.

The Leisure Services Manager updated Members on the arrangements for the Woodley 10km Road Race and reported that online enrolment would be available from the end of the week. In reply to a question the Leisure Services Manager confirmed that Barnes Fitness, who were running the event, would be making a donation to the Mayor's charity, as they had the previous year.

Members were pleased to receive a report on the completion of work to the new gym at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, known as the Gym on the Park, and an update on its use and performance to date. The Leisure Services Manager reported that the membership software was linking well with the newly installed access control system on the gym door and an additional member card reader installed at reception allowed gym members to swipe in to register for exercise classes included within their membership, thereby reducing queue times at reception.

Members also received an update on new exercise classes and courses running at the leisure centre, including a Walking Netball session running as part of Wokingham Borough Council's SHINE programme for over 60s, and an update on operational matters relating to the 3G pitch. In reply to a question about concerns regarding the use of rubber crumb on artificial grass pitches, the Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the Council had received reports from the Football Foundation to allay concerns.

The Leisure Services Manager reported that eleven staff members had completed a one-day emergency first aid course, including defibrillator training and anaphylaxis management.

Members were asked to approve the proposed Christmas 2017 opening times at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, as an early decision on the opening times would enable hirers, centre users and staff to plan accordingly.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 2/17.
- ◆ To approve the proposed opening hours at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, with the Leisure Services Manager having the flexibility to amend weekend opening, over the 2017 Christmas and New Year period, as follows:

Friday 22 December	- open normal hours
Saturday 23 December	- closed
Sunday 24 December	- closed
Monday 25 December	- closed
Tuesday 26 December	- closed
Wednesday 27 December	- open normal hours
Thursday 28 December	- open normal hours
Friday 29 December	- open normal hours
Saturday 30 December	- closed
Sunday 31 December	- closed
Monday 1 January	- closed
Tuesday 2 January	- open normal hours

49. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. 3/17.

Members were informed that Coronation Hall had been broken into over the Christmas period resulting in minor damage to the back door and the kitchen cupboard doors. Additional security measures had subsequently been implemented, including reinstatement of the internal shutter on the main door and reinforcement of the back door. The Deputy Town Clerk said that he would like to look at strengthening the security of the back door and the Chairman commented that it was very dark at the back of the building at night, which did not help security.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the building, flooring, air conditioning, electrical and decorating works for the Gym on the Park were completed on time and within the allocated budget. He informed Members that the water heating system at Woodford Park Leisure Centre had broken down over the New Year period and was expected to be repaired in the next few days. Members also received an update on the gas and electricity contracts for the Council's buildings.

Members were pleased to note that the application for Green Flag Award status for Woodford Park had been submitted and the Deputy Town Clerk agreed to circulate the application document to the Committee. Nationwide judging would take place between March and June and the results would be announced in July.

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on the initial proposals for the improvement of the Woodford Park lake. These would form the basis of the project plan and the public consultation, which he hoped would be carried out shortly.

The Deputy Town Clerk also informed Members of tree works that would be carried out in Woodford Park and Malone Park and reported the work that had been carried out by the Friends of Woodford Park.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 3/17.

At this point in the meeting the Chairman asked the representatives of the Friends of Woodford Park whether they wished to raise any points. David Provins reported that there were concerns about the flooding on the paths in Woodford Park, particularly near the Garden of Remembrance. The Deputy Town Clerk informed the meeting that he had arranged for a contractor to look at the possibility of draining or raising the path in this area and that there were funds available in the Capital Programme to cover this work. He noted that there were also flooding problems near Coronation Hall and in the area adjacent to St Dominic's School.

David Provins thanked the Council for the Community Grant that had been awarded to the Friends of Woodford Park and noted that they had also received a grant from the Rotary Club. The Friends hoped to use the money to buy a tool shed and were considering where this should be located.

Following a question from the Chairman regarding the problem of dog fouling in the park, David Provins reported that there seemed to have been some improvement following the recent poster campaign.

50. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 4/17.

51. **CHARGES 2017/18**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 5/17 and explained that the proposed charges for 2017/18 had been drawn up taking into account the increase in the Retail Price Index, comparative charges by other local providers and any other relevant factors.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 5/17.
- ◆ To recommend that the proposed charges for 2017/18, as set out in the Budget Appendix, be approved.

52. **REVISED ESTIMATES 2016/17**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 6/17 and explained that the Committee's original budget expenditure was estimated to decrease overall.

Members were informed that the running costs of the 3G pitch and the grass football pitches had been lower than anticipated and a vacancy in the Maintenance Team from April to November had resulted in lower staff costs than budgeted. The expected expenditure on the new public toilet in the town centre had not occurred in this financial year. There had been additional costs due to the fitting out of the new gym at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and associated coaching costs and additional rates has been payable at the leisure centre due to the opening of the 3G pitch.

Members were pleased to note that there was estimated be a significant increase to the Committee's income over the original budget due to additional income at Woodford Park Leisure Centre from courses, vending and 3 months' operation of the gym, and higher than anticipated income at Coronation and Chapel Halls.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 6/17.
- ◆ To recommend that the Revised Budget Estimates for 2016/17, as set out in the Budget Appendix, be approved.

53. **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017/18**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 7/17.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 7/17.
- ◆ To recommend that the Budget Estimates for 2017/18, as set out in the Budget Appendix, be approved.

54. **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

Members noted the update on matters relating to the allotments that had been provided in the agenda. The Town Clerk informed Members that the availability of plots would be publicised in the March newsletter and Councillor Stares said that banners advertising the availability would be put up at the allotment site.

55. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

Members noted that a planning application for the public toilet was being prepared by Danfo, the Council's contractor, and was expected to be submitted shortly.

56. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL CONSULTATION: 21ST CENTURY LEISURE STRATEGY**

At the last meeting it had been agreed that Members would review the consultation document for Wokingham Borough Council's 21st Century Leisure Strategy and send their comments to the Committee Officer to enable a response to be made before the deadline of 23 December 2016 (Leisure Services Committee, 8 November 2016, minute number 40).

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note that a response had been sent asking for the strategy document to state that the Borough Council would work in partnership with community organisations and town and parish councils, where appropriate, to achieve their aims.

57. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

58. **PUBLICITY & WEBSITE**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To publicise the following:
 - The official opening of the gym at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.
 - The public consultation on the lake project.
 - The work undertaken by the Friends of Woodford Park.
 - The availability of allotment plots.

Under this item Councillor Barker noted on behalf of the Committee how good the last edition of the Woodley Herald had been and he thanked all those involved with the production.

59. **EXCLUSION OF 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 agenda item.

60. **THE GYM ON THE PARK**

Members were pleased to note the projected annual performance figures for the Gym on the Park.

There was some discussion about the provision of refreshments at the leisure centre. These were currently sold from the reception desk and the Leisure Services Manager reported that he had investigated increasing the provision of refreshments, but that this would require more space to be available.

The meeting closed at 9:20 pm
