

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre  
on Tuesday 5 November 2013 at 8.00 pm**

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**Present:** *Councillors B. Franklin (Chairman); T. Barker; A. Chadwick; P. Challis;  
N. Cox; S. Outen; S. Rahmouni*

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

21. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Downes and M. Willson.

22. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Rahmouni Agenda Item 6

Interest

Civic space/war memorial

Councillor Rahmouni is the Council's representative on the Woodley War Memorial Project Group

23. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 AUGUST 2013**

It was noted that Minute 14: Bookings System did not include the concern expressed about the uncertainty over the ending of the lease on Bulmershe Leisure Centre in 2015 and whether it was appropriate to include the Centre in the proposed arrangements.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 27 August 2013 be amended and brought back to the next Leisure Services Committee meeting for approval.

24. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 21/13 and responded to questions regarding the comparison of actual income and expenditure at 30 September against the budget estimates.

In reply to a question the Town Clerk reported that the water bills for several budget heads had been higher than anticipated. The Service Support Manager reported that once these costs had been established as being over budget an exercise was carried out to establish whether there were any leaks. A leak was found at Woodford Park and action had been taken to repair it. The next bill would show whether this had been successful.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 21/13.

25. **LEISURE CENTRES**

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 22/13.

**Healthy Habits Card**

Members considered the proposal that the Healthy Habits card, which provides discounts on sports activities and courses, be valid for one year, rather than two years, with effect from 6 November 2013. It was noted that the cost of £3 for adults and £1.50 for those under 18, over 60 or on benefits would still give good value for money. In response to a suggestion that the price of the cards be reviewed, the Chairman reported that this would

be included in the charges proposed for 2014/15. Members supported the proposal to make the Healthy Habits card valid for one year.

## **Sports Development**

### **Parkrun and Junior Parkrun**

It was reported that Parkrun had been in existence for one year and during this time a total of 7731 runners had taken part. In October 225 runners took part in the anniversary run. The event was growing much faster than anticipated and the Oakwood Café was benefiting from the extra trade. Junior Parkrun, a monthly run on Sundays, which topped 100 runners in October, started in February 2013.

### **Healthy Habits**

It was noted that the total number of members was 634, an increase of 130 members since the last meeting.

### **Physical Activity Work Group**

The Leisure Services Manager reported that he had been invited to be part of the Physical Activity Work Group, set up by Wokingham Borough Council's Sports Development Team to look at health and wellbeing in the borough.

### **Meeting with Wokingham Health Improvement Officer**

The Leisure Services Manager reported that he had recently met with Wokingham's Health Improvement Officer to discuss working together in partnership on projects targeting the elderly, young adults and young families. Three projects were discussed:

1. A Kick Boxing class for 18 – 21 year olds at either Woodford Park or Bulmershe, funded by Sportivate.
2. Healthy Habits classes for the elderly at Alexandra Place.
3. Swimming lessons for 14 – 21 year olds from hard to reach families, funded by Sportivate.

Members would be updated on progress at the next meeting.

## **Bulmershe Leisure Centre**

### **Free swimming for over 60s**

Members were pleased to note the launch of these sessions for Wokingham residents. The sessions were being supported by £5,000 of Public Health funding. In reply to a question from Members, the Leisure Services Manager confirmed that the overall participation for the swimming and aquafit sessions was approximately 40% male and 60% female.

### **Swim School**

The Leisure Services Manager reported that 489 people had booked with Swim School to receive swimming lessons at Bulmershe Leisure Centre between October and December. Swim School was running at 93% capacity and exceeding the anticipated income.

### **October half term holiday activities**

The Leisure Services Manager reported that the Football Camp planned for October half term had to be cancelled due to insufficient uptake. All other activities - Trampoline Camp, Racquet Attack, Pre-school Camp, one week intensive swimming lessons and Swim for £1 for 16s and under – had been fully booked.

He also reported that the Council had received a request from Wokingham Borough Council to run free swimming sessions for 16s and under at Bulmershe pool during the October half term holiday, as leisure centres were doing at Loddon Valley. With no grant funding

available for the additional costs of extra lifeguard provision, he had decided not to take part in this scheme. He believed that the Swim for £1 scheme was a good offer and would be used by local people who would not have the expense of travelling to Earley.

### **New Sports Officer**

Members noted that a new Sports Officer with significant experience of fitness and exercise training and coaching qualifications had been appointed.

### **Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

#### **Sid Hopkins primary schools football league tournament**

The Leisure Services Manager reported that, at the request of the schools, the format of the tournament had been changed this year from a single day tournament to a weekly league on Tuesday afternoons played in September and October. Six schools took part and the league winners were Highwood. A girls' football tournament would be run in February 2014.

#### **October half term**

The Leisure Services Manager informed members that the Cheerleading course planned for the half term holiday had been cancelled as there was insufficient uptake. All other courses – Badminton, Multi-skills and Racquet Attack – were well attended.

#### **Redevelopment - Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

It was reported that since the last Leisure Services Committee meeting the Leisure Services Manager, Councillors Franklin and Outen and Paul Backman, Football Development Officer at Berks & Bucks Football Association, had met with members of the football forum to identify areas within the football development plan that needed to be changed or required further information. Action points from the meeting had been circulated to members of the football forum, however delays in responses meant the plan had not yet been signed off. Potential demand for the proposed 3G pitch was promising. It was anticipated that the plan would be provided at the next meeting of the committee.

### **General**

#### **GP Referral**

In response to a question about the GP referral programme the Leisure Services Manager confirmed that the organisers were still keen to include the Woodley leisure centres despite there being no gym facility at either centre and that discussions were ongoing.

#### **Apprenticeship opportunities**

The Leisure Services Manager reported that he had been contacted by the Institute of Swimming about the possibility of continuing to offer a placement at Bulmershe Leisure Centre from April 2014 along with an additional placement at Woodford Park Leisure Centre. Members asked for a report to be prepared for the next meeting of the Leisure Services Committee to review the success of the current year's placement and provide evidence for continuing with the scheme.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 22/13.
- ◆ To approve the Woodley Healthy Habits card providing a one year membership with effect from 6 November 2013.

## 26. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. LS 23/13.

## **Vandalism**

In reply to a question, the Service Support Manager clarified that the cost of removing the graffiti from a wall at Woodford Park Leisure Centre would be £550. It may be necessary to paint the wall if the graffiti could not be completely removed, although it would be preferable to avoid this, if possible. Members asked if this work could be undertaken under the community payback scheme and the Service Support Manager reported that he had investigated this but it had not been possible.

## **Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

It was reported that two fir trees in the play area had been removed – this was an item on the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Entrance Improvements Working Party project list. Two items of outdoor gym equipment had been out of action due to damage; one had now been fully repaired, but the other may be beyond repair and options were being sought and costed.

## **Woodford Park**

Members noted the damage to several trees caused by high winds overnight on 27 October and the work undertaken to clear the debris from the broken branches and the uprooted poplar.

## **Malone Park**

Members noted the plans for consultation on the new play equipment for Malone Park, to be purchased with £14,000 Section 106 funds. It was anticipated that the new equipment would be installed by Spring 2014.

## **Memorial Ground**

The Service Support Manager reported that initial estimates received from the landscape architect for providing a civic space/war memorial close to Headley Road had been high. The Woodley War Memorial Project Group would consider alternative locations and revised estimates and this would be reported to the Strategy and Resources Committee for consideration at its meeting on 26 November.

## **Community Halls**

Members noted that a review of caretaking duties at both halls was underway, and that new gas contracts had been agreed for both halls after seeking competitive prices via an energy broker.

## **Community Orchard**

It was noted that the location of the community orchard had not yet been decided. The Service Support Manager reported that exploratory digging had taken place at several sites and Transition Reading would be carrying out further site visits in November.

## **Energy Metering**

Smart meters for electricity supplies were currently being installed at all sites. In reply to a question the Service Support Manager confirmed that the installation was free and the tariff would remain the same with all electricity billing based on actual consumption.

## **Capital Programme**

It was reported that the following issues were being investigated and considered for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme, which would be an agenda item at the Council meeting on 10 December 2013.

### Woodford Park

- Replacement of old pitch fibre sewer pipes with plastic pipe
- Improvements to surface water drainage – car park/driveway/footpath near lake/adjacent to hard surface sports area
- Repair of pathways near the lake/near the north entrance gate/adjacent to hard surface sports area

### Woodford Park Leisure Centre

- Repair/replacement of sections of guttering and roof panels on Sports Hall
- Replacement of function room windows
- Replacement of old asbestos roofing – Function Room/Committee Rooms/Pub

Following discussion, Members suggested that repainting of the white lines in the leisure centre car park should also be considered as this might encourage people to park in the marked bays.

### **Maintenance Officer**

Interviews for the vacant post of Maintenance Officer had taken place over the previous two days and the position had been offered to one of the preferred candidates who had verbally accepted.

### **Woodford Park Leisure Centre Entrance Improvements**

Members noted that the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Entrance Improvements Working Party had not met for some time or seen the plans for the proposed improvements. The Service Support Manager reported that the quotations for new doors to the centre were still being assembled. A meeting of the working party would be arranged soon, the minutes of which would be reported to the committee.

### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 23/13.

### 27. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chairman invited the committee to suggest future items for consideration by the committee.

### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To include the following future items for consideration by the committee:
  - Update on the Sports Awards Ceremony of the Year 2013. (Previous suggestion)
  - Update on the entrance into Woodford Park from Western Avenue. (Previous suggestion)
  - Update on progress regarding the 3G pitch.
  - Update on proposals for the Woodford Park Leisure Centre entrance improvements.

### 28. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

It was suggested that the apprenticeship scheme at the leisure centres could be publicised in the future, following presentation of the report on the success of the scheme.

The meeting closed at 8:53 pm

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