

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre
on Tuesday 4 November 2014 at 8.00 pm**

Present: *Councillors W. Soane (Chairman); T. Barker; A. Chadwick; P. Challis;
K. Gilder; S. Outen; S. Rahmouni*

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

Also present: *1 member of public*

27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Downes and B. Franklin.

28. **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note that at the meeting of the Council held on 30 September 2014 Councillor Cox was removed from the Leisure Services Committee and Councillor Rahmouni was appointed to the Committee, following the change in Council membership.

29. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

30. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2014**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 2 September 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

31. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 18/14 and explained that expenditure at Bulmershe Leisure Centre and Chapel Hall was above the estimate, partly due to the costs of providing long-term sickness payments and sickness cover at both locations.

Members noted that the figures for Bulmershe Leisure Centre were subject to change as some income had been collected in advance and would be paid over to 1Life when the transfer of the lease took place and a proportion of the expenditure already incurred would be reimbursed by 1Life.

Members congratulated the Leisure Services Manager and his staff for their good work in achieving increased income at the leisure centres.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 18/14.

32. **LEISURE CENTRES**

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 19/14.

Healthy Habits

It was noted that the total number of members was 843, but that this was expected to decrease when 1Life took over the management of Bulmershe Leisure Centre as they had their own loyalty card.

Defibrillator for Woodford Park Leisure Centre

The Leisure Services Manager reported that the cost of buying a defibrillator would be £1,200 - £1,500 depending on the model chosen. The cost of training for up to 12 staff members would be £400 and this, together with on-going refresher sessions, could be met from the staff training budget. Members considered increasing the equipment budget for Woodford Park Leisure Centre by £1,500 to enable a defibrillator to be purchased.

In reply to a question the Leisure Services Manager confirmed that the defibrillator would be kept inside the leisure centre.

Sports Development

Sid Hopkins Football Tournament

Members noted that the boys' tournament took place on 7 October and was won by South Lake School. Unfortunately the girls' tournament on the following day could not be completed because of heavy rain and a new date was being sought. The Leisure Services Manager reported that pupils from Bulmershe School had refereed the tournament and had been a great credit to the school.

Wokingham Level 2 Football Tournament for Years 3 and 4

Members were informed that Woodford Park had recently hosted this tournament for the first time. Ten schools from around the borough had taken part and the winner was Oaklands, who would go on to represent Wokingham in the county finals.

Bulmershe Leisure Centre

Swim School

The Leisure Services Manager reported that 520 people had enrolled with Swim School for term 3 and the income target for this activity was being exceeded; however it was noted that this income would require apportionment at the date of the early surrender of the lease.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

October half term

Members were informed that all the half term sports camps, which included football, trampolining and badminton, had been very popular, with all the trampolining sessions being fully booked. The Leisure Centre had received very good feedback about the instructors.

Healthy Habits children's activities

Members were pleased to note that the numbers attending the Healthy Habits children's activities and courses continued to increase. New activities had been added and more were planned for the New Year.

3G artificial grass pitch project

The Leisure Services Manager updated Members on the progress of the project. He reported that following concerns raised by residents, amendments to the proposals were being made with regard to the lighting, parking and opening times. The Council had also agreed to carry out an acoustic survey when the pitch was in use. Due to the amendments to the planning application, Wokingham Borough Council had extended the consultation period. Members were informed that the delay in the granting of planning consent meant that the application for funding from the Football Foundation could not be considered until the next round of funding, in February 2015, and this delay would result in a very tight

construction schedule in order for the pitch to be open in time for the start of the football season in September 2015.

Members considered making a recommendation to the Strategy and Resources Committee that a further £2,550 be allocated from the special projects earmarked reserve to cover the acoustic survey and other costs associated with this stage of the project.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre development

The Leisure Services Manager reported that a meeting had taken place with Alliance Leisure at which four members of the Leisure Services Committee were present to put forward their visions for the centre, which included enhancement of the current facilities, coffee shop/cafe bar, 50+ wellbeing suite, fitness gym and children's soft play area. Alliance Leisure had been asked to carry out a feasibility study to look into these ideas and this would be provided to the Committee at the January 2015 meeting.

Woodley Cricket Club

The Leisure Services Manager informed Members that the Berkshire Cricket League had recently inspected all Premier League cricket grounds and Woodford Park was found to require improvement in order for Woodley Cricket Club to continue playing league cricket there. Members were informed of the necessary improvements, which had been agreed by league and club representatives, the Leisure Services Manager, the Head Groundsman and the Leader of the Council, and were asked to consider approval of the works.

The Leisure Services Manager also reported that he would be attending a meeting with the Chairman of the Berkshire Cricket League and representatives from Performance Cricket and Woodley Cricket Club to discuss re-starting the Woodley Cricket Academy for youngsters, which had closed down two years earlier due to lack of volunteers.

In reply to a question about the possibility of installing an artificial cricket wicket, the Leisure Services Manager replied that there may be grants available for this. During discussion it was suggested that an artificial wicket might lead to more use and increased income.

In response to concerns about the possible loss of one of the tournament pitches as a result of the 3G pitch being constructed the Leisure Services Manager agreed to discuss this matter with the Development League to explore how to meet their requirements should this be the case. It was possible that extending the booking times could help.

The Chairman thanked the Leisure Services Manager for all his hard work.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 19/14.
- ◆ To approve the purchase of a defibrillator for Woodford Park Leisure Centre at an estimated cost of £1,500 and that the centre's equipment budget for 2014/15 be revised during the forthcoming budget process to cover this cost.
- ◆ To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that a further £2,550 be allocated from the special projects earmarked reserve to cover the anticipated survey and other costs associated with this stage of the 3G artificial grass pitch project.
- ◆ To approve the works to the cricket square and boundary and the budget implications, as set out in **Appendix A**.

33. **BULMERSHE LEISURE CENTRE – EARLY SURRENDER OF LEASE**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 20/14.

Members were informed that the draft agreements for the early surrender of the leases on the leisure centre and the bungalow had been prepared by the Town Council's solicitor and had been forwarded to Shared Legal Solutions, acting for Wokingham Borough Council. The final agreements would be presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee for approval at its meeting on 25 November 2014.

The Town Clerk reported that the arrangements were in place for the transfer of staff to 1Life and the Town Council's responsibilities under the TUPE regulations to consult and meet with staff had been carried out.

Members noted that agreement had been reached on the repairs to be carried out by the Town Council before the handover and this work had been completed. Arrangements had also been made for the transfer or termination of service contracts, as appropriate. Permission had been given for 1Life to start refurbishment works in November. Both the Town Council and 1Life agreed that a smooth transition period was important for centre customers and the handover arrangements had been made with this in mind.

In reply to a question the Town Clerk agreed to identify how in practice liaison with the Borough Council and its leisure contractor over the future provision of sport and leisure facilities within Woodley could be established.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the Mayor would be hosting a reception for all Bulmershe Leisure Centre staff on the evening of Friday 21 November at the Oakwood Centre, to mark the end of their service with the Council. Members were asked to consider closing Bulmershe Leisure Centre from 6:30pm on that evening to enable all staff to attend.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 20/14.
- ◆ To cancel the public swim session at Bulmershe Leisure Centre from 6:30pm on Friday 21 November 2014 to enable all staff to attend the Mayor's reception to mark the end of their service with the Council.

34. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. LS 21/14.

Vandalism

Members were informed that the roof to the youth shelter had been damaged, and had not yet been repaired, and there had been an incidence of graffiti in the Garden of Remembrance, which had been removed by the Grounds Maintenance Team.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

The Service Support Manager reported that Optalis were currently moving furniture and equipment into the refurbished office space and were expected to commence operating from the centre on 17 November.

Members noted that insurers had advised that the former play area next to the centre be re-tarmacked and this work would be carried out in the near future.

Woodford Park

The Service Support Manager informed Members that the roots of the conifer trees around the perimeter of the bowling green were beginning to cause damage to the playing surface

of the green, to the underground irrigation system and to the path around the green. To prevent further damage, the trees would be removed and the existing railings beneath the trees would be reinstated. The cost of the tree removal would be met from the 2014/15 tree works budget.

Members were informed that dog fouling continued to be a problem in the park and that new "anti-fouling" signs were to be placed at the park entrances. Fly-tipping was also a problem in some areas of the park and some bins that were regularly being used for household waste had been removed.

Civic Space

Members were pleased to note that the shrub beds had been planted and the new gates were scheduled for installation before 11 November. The Civic Space would then be complete. The planting of a tree to replace the felled sycamore on the Memorial Ground was scheduled for 7 November.

The Service Support Manager reported that an informal gathering of remembrance would take place at the new war memorial on Tuesday 11 November. The Royal British Legion would be involved and representatives from some of the local schools would take part. The event had been advertised in the press and in the town centre and it was hoped that members of the public would also attend. The traditional Remembrance Service would take place at St. John's Church on Sunday 9 November.

Malone Park

Members were informed that the necessary permission had been received and tree work would be carried out in the coming weeks.

Community Halls

Members noted that 80 replacement chairs had been purchased for Chapel Hall.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 21/14.

35. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

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

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That an item be included to allow consideration to be given to the provision of a flag pole at the Oakwood Centre or on the Memorial Ground.

36. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To publicise the necessary adjustments to the budget due to the handover of Bulmershe Leisure Centre.

The meeting closed at 9:15 pm

Timeline of Works for Cricket in Woodford Park

Area of Concern	Action required for 2015 season	2016 season	2017 season	2018 season
Remove saddles from the square	Hire a verti drain hollow coring machine at a cost £425, can also be used in the football goal mouths	Same again depending on reports from the league	Same again depending on reports from the league	Same again depending on reports from the league
Artificial wicket	Artificial wicket either needs to be removed or replaced. LSM has a quote to replace the artificial wicket at a cost of 5k, possible 106 monies to cover the cost.	NA	NA	NA
Weeds in the outfield	Selective weed killing on the outfield of the cricket square, which would require the closure of the park area behind Woodford Park Leisure Centre for the morning whilst area was sprayed. Needs to be done during May half term at a cost of £924. Again costs could be split between cricket and football as area of ground covers both sets of pitches.	NA	NA	Weed killing needs to be done every 3 years
5 th football development pitch in front of pavilion	5 th football development pitch currently been placed on proposed area for the 3G 9 V 9 for this season	Loss of football development pitch 5	Loss of football development pitch 5	Loss of football development pitch 5
Moss detectable on some parts of the square, outfield uneven, pitch needs to be flat and rolled	Annual maintenance	Annual maintenance	Annual maintenance	Annual maintenance