

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre
on Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 8:00 pm**

Present: *Councillors W. Soane (Chairman); T. Barker; K. Gilder; 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: *Councillor K. Baker
Mark Rozzier and Steve Outen, Woodley United F. C.
Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity
1 member of the public*

40. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B. Franklin, M. Green and M. Walker.

41. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

42. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2017**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 21 November 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

43. **WOODLEY UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB**

The Chairman welcomed Mark Rozzier and Steve Outen, the General Manager and Vice Chairman of Woodley United Football Club, to the meeting to give an update on the progress of the club.

Mark Rozzier explained that Woodley United was now in its third season since it was formed by the merger of several Woodley football clubs. It was an FA Charter Standard Community Club and had 34 teams for all ages, from under 7s to adults, including ladies' teams and veterans' teams. The club also ran twice-weekly pre-school mini-kickers sessions. In April 2017 the Men's 1st team won the County Cup, which was a fantastic achievement.

Mark Rozzier and Steve Outen spoke about the successes of the club. The club had raised the profile of football in Woodley and had also raised the profile of Woodley by the work that they were doing in the community. They worked with the Me2 Club and Sport in Mind to bring the benefits of participating in sport, and football in particular, to those who might otherwise find it difficult to take part. The club also undertook football coaching for boys and girls in many Woodley schools, ran a Junior Referee development programme and encouraged the Youth players to coach the younger age groups.

Mark Rozzier and Steve Outen informed Members of the club's plans for the future, which included running an FA Wildcats Centre in Woodford Park, an initiative designed to inspire girls between the ages of 5 and 11 to be involved in the sport. The club also planned to offer walking football, increase the recruitment of volunteers working within the club and increase the number of spectators at 1st team games and ladies' games. The club also hoped eventually to be able to play their 1st team matches more locally to Woodley.

In reply to a question about where the club's funding came from, Mark Rozzier explained that in addition to the community grants awarded by the Town Council, the funding came from members' subscriptions, sponsorship from local companies and fundraising within the community. The club did not receive funding from the FA.

The Chairman said it was very encouraging to see how the club was developing and he thanked Mark Rozzier and Steve Outen for their presentation.

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

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

Sam Milligan informed Members that the recent problems with antisocial behaviour seemed to have abated and Woodley was now much quieter. JAC was trying to build positive relationships with some of the groups that were out in the evenings as these groups could then influence others. The local PCSOs were also building good relationships with the young people.

Members were pleased to hear that the new JAC House in Woodley was now operational and the first young person was in residence. It was hoped that a second young person would be moved in within a few months.

Sam Milligan gave an update on the plans to site a container café at the Loddon Mead site and said that planning permission would be required, but before that could be applied for a lease with Wokingham Borough Council would have to be drawn up for the use of the land.

Sam Milligan informed Members that JAC had now been working in Woodley for 20 years and the Town Council had helped to start the work that JAC was doing. He said that the atmosphere in Woodley was now very different from how it had been 15 years previously and he was very grateful for all the support that JAC had received from the Town Council.

The Chairman asked about the work being done at Rehoboth, JAC's equestrian centre, and Sam Milligan reported that the centre was working well, with Woodley schools sending young people there, many young people volunteering and some young people undertaking apprenticeships in horse care.

The Chairman thanked Sam Milligan for his report.

45. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 1/18 and reported that the income received was well above the level that would be expected at this point in the year. In particular, the income from Woodford Park Leisure Centre was much higher than had been estimated. It was noted that the only disappointing income stream was from the use of the cricket pitches and the Town Clerk informed Members that this would be the subject of a future agenda item.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 1/18.

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

Before giving his report, The Leisure Services Manager referred to the FA Wildcats Centre, which Woodley United were planning to run at Woodford Park, and said he believed it was very important that the Council supported and encouraged schemes such as this as Woodley United were very active in the community and would bring more users to the Council's facilities. The Town Clerk said that the Wildcats Centre could be mentioned in the Council's newsletter and on the website and social media.

The Leisure Services Manager then presented Report No. LS 2/18 and informed Members that Barnes Fitness had asked for the Council's help and support on a number of matters relating to the Woodley 10km race, such as the displaying of publicity banners, the publicising of information on the necessary road closures and by providing volunteers on the day. Barnes Fitness had also asked the Council's view on the provision of music around the course, but Members felt they needed more information about what was proposed before giving an opinion on this. It was agreed that all Town Councillors would be informed of the need for volunteers on the day of the race.

Members considered a request from Reading FC Former Players' Association for free use of the 3G pitch on the morning of the Carnival to host an annual tournament, the winners of which would play an exhibition match against former Reading FC players in the main Carnival arena. This had been a very popular event at the previous year's Carnival and in return for the free use of the pitch the Former Players' Association had helped to promote the 3G pitch and the gym.

Members were pleased to hear of the success of the NERF holiday camps and children's parties, which had already recouped the cost of purchasing the equipment. The ongoing cost of replacing broken equipment and staffing costs would be monitored, but it was expected that the NERF activities would yield a profit at the end of the financial year.

The Leisure Services Manager also updated Members on operational matters relating to the extended opening hours at the Gym on the Park, the popularity of which would be reviewed towards the end of January, and the increased maintenance requirements of the 3G pitch, as a result of the high usage.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 2/18.
- ◆ To publicise information on the road closures for the Woodley 10km race and to allow the display of publicity banners for the event.
- ◆ To approve the request from the Reading FC Former Players' Association for free use of the 3G pitch for a tournament on the morning of Woodley Carnival 2018, and that this approval should be requested each year, if required.

47. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 3/18 and informed Members that the Woodley Pre-School had received planning permission for the new modular building in Woodford Park and hoped that this would be installed by the end of March. As the pre-school would be moving out of Woodford Park Leisure Centre, and with the recently announced closure of Bulmershe Leisure Centre for redevelopment, Members noted the importance of the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Regeneration Task and Finish Group to consider new ideas for the development of the leisure centre. The work at the leisure centre to replace the flat roofing and install a new steel joist were on-going, but had been delayed due to inclement weather and contractor issues.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on the continuing clearance work around the Woodford Park lake, being undertaken by the Grounds Team, and Members were pleased to hear that the stage one funding application to the Suez Landfill Community Fund had been successful and that the more detailed stage two application for £50,000 for the lake project would be submitted in February. Members were also informed that 8 cherry trees had been planted in Woodford Park by children from St Dominic Savio Primary School as part of the CommuniTrees scheme and 6 other trees purchased by donations to the scheme had been planted by the Grounds Team.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the final design details for the town centre play area had been approved and an order placed by Wokingham Borough Council for the equipment, which was expected to be installed before April 2018.

Councillor Stares informed the Committee that 600 people had taken part in Parkrun in Woodford Park on one occasion recently. The Town Clerk said that the Parkrun organiser had informed her that parts of the park were now quite boggy and had suggested that bark chippings be spread in some areas and that Parkrun were prepared to help with the work and funding for this. They had also suggested that it would be a good idea to provide footscrapers and had offered to help towards the cost of these. Members were pleased that Parkrun and the Town Council were working so co-operatively together and that the event was bringing people into the centre of Woodley.

In reply to a question about a track that was forming where people walked diagonally across the Memorial Ground, the Deputy Town Clerk said that he was investigating the use of a reinforced mesh to protect the ground and would inform the Committee when he had an estimate of the cost.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 3/18.

48. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 4/18 of the Community Youth Partnership meeting held on 10 January 2018.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 4/18.

49. **CHARGES 2018/19**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 5/18 and explained that the proposed charges for 2018/19 had been increased by around 2%, taking into account comparative charges by other local providers and any other relevant factors.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 5/18.
- ◆ To recommend that the proposed charges for 2018/19, as set out in the Budget Appendix, be approved.

50. **REVISED ESTIMATES 2017/18**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 6/18 and explained that the Committee's original budget expenditure was expected to decrease overall.

Members were informed that staff costs to the Football, Cricket, Bowling Green, Woodford Park, Memorial Ground and Garden of Remembrance budgets had been lower than anticipated due to the post of Grounds Maintenance Manager being vacant for some weeks. The expected expenditure on the new public toilet in the town centre had not occurred in this financial year and the spending on youth services had been lower than budgeted for as the youth club was no longer in existence. There had been increased staff costs at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, as additional classes had been provided for gym members, and unanticipated consultant costs relating to the end of the defects period for the 3G pitch had been incurred.

Members were pleased to note that there was estimated to be a significant increase to the Committee's income over the original budget due to additional income from Woodford Park Leisure Centre from 12 months' operation of the gym and higher than anticipated income from Chapel Hall and fair and circus visits. Income from cricket and Coronation Hall were

likely to be lower than the original estimates and there would be no income from the public toilet.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 6/18.
- ◆ To recommend that the Revised Budget Estimates for 2017/18, as set out in the Budget Appendix, be approved.

51. **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2018/19**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 7/18.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 7/18.
- ◆ To recommend that the Budget Estimates for 2018/19, as set out in the Budget Appendix, be approved.

52. **3G PITCH STEERING GROUP**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Rahmouni to the vacant position on the 3G Pitch Steering Group.

53. **WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE REGENERATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that the Terms of Reference of the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Regeneration Task and Finish Group be amended to reduce the number of appointees from each of the Leisure Services and Strategy and Resources Committees to three.

54. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

Members noted that the licence with Wokingham Borough Council to site the toilet in the town centre had been agreed and signed. The Town Council was awaiting a quote for the unit before placing an order.

55. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

It was suggested that opportunities for Woodford Park Leisure Centre to support leisure activities in Woodley, with the forthcoming closure of Bulmershe Leisure Centre, should be considered in a future agenda item.

56. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To publicise the following:
 - The Woodley 10km race.
 - The Wildcats Centre at Woodford Park.
 - The March edition of the Herald should publicise the gym and possibly include an insert, or brochure, about the facilities at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

The meeting closed at 10:00 pm
