

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre
on Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 8:00 pm**

Present: *Councillors B. Soane (Chairman); T. Barker; D. Bragg; B. Franklin;
K. Gilder*

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

Also present: *Councillor M. Willson
Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity
1 member of the public*

Before the start of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Colin Holland, who had recently taken up the position of Maintenance Manager and Councillors present introduced themselves to Mr Holland.

26. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.J. Ellis, M. Green, S. Rahmouni and D. Stares.

27. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

28. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2018**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 4 September 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity (JAC), was welcomed to the meeting and presented the JAC report. He reported that there was still generally a good atmosphere in Woodley, with an increased number of young people gathering in the Southlake area. Members were pleased to hear of the positive developments in the relationship between JAC and some of the young people in the 15 – 18 age range.

In reply to a question about the problem of young people riding their bikes dangerously around the Southlake area Sam Milligan said that it was hoped that this was just a phase and that the JAC teams would have conversations with the young people about this. It was noted that cycling in the Town Centre was still a problem, but that this was not just due to young people as older people also cycled in the Town Centre. The Chairman asked whether the Town Council could do anything to help the situation, such as providing warning signs, but Sam Milligan reported that the general feeling of the JAC teams was that the most important course of action was to build relationships with the young people and talk about the problem.

30. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**

Sam Milligan presented Report No. LS 21/18 of the Community Youth Partnership meeting held on 14 November 2018.

Members were pleased to hear that very positive feedback had been received following the workshops for parents on awareness of anxiety in children and young people. The next step for the parents' self-help project would be to organise training for those who had volunteered to be facilitators for a self-help group. Sam Milligan commented that it was good to see the Town Council funding such things as anxiety workshops, which would hopefully lead to a reduction in the costs associated with antisocial behaviour and security measures.

Members noted the update on proposals for the Loddon Mead area, where artists were hoping to start an art project to paint murals on the concrete pillars and create interest in the site. It was hoped that students from the local secondary schools could also be involved in this and that the art project would run concurrently with the development of a parcourse at the site. Members considered a recommendation from the Community Youth Partnership that a sum of £300 be allocated from the Youth Projects Budget to start work on the art/parcourse project.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 21/18.
- ◆ To allocate £300 from the Youth Projects Budget to allow work to start on the art/parcourse project at Loddon Mead.

The Chairman thanked Sam Milligan for coming to the meeting.

31. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. 22/18.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 22/18.

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

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 23/18 and informed Members that a quote had recently been obtained for a winter pool cover that would allow the paddling pool to remain clean and running all year round. This would eliminate the need to deep clean the pool each year, would prevent the pool becoming unsightly over the winter months and would eliminate the need for a two-week preparation period prior to opening, allowing the opportunity for the pool to be quickly opened earlier in the year than planned should the weather suddenly improve. The Leisure Services Manager explained that turning the pump off at the end of each summer allowed algae to grow within the system and often meant that various pool plant components needed to be replaced when the pump was turned on the following year. It was likely that a new pump and multiport valve would be needed in 2019 and a winter cover should help to save money on replacement parts in the future. Members were informed that the cost of the cover would be included in the Capital Programme for consideration by Members in 2019 and the additional running costs would be included in the leisure centre budget for 2019/20.

The Leisure Services Manager reported that a new membership type, the Sunshine Membership, had recently been introduced at the Gym on the Park, allowing access to the gym and classes between 8:00am and 3:00pm and costing slightly less than the standard membership. This had been well received so far. Members were also informed that a scheme to allow local community groups to use the gym for a minimal charge of £2 per person on Fridays had been in operation since October.

Members noted that the redecoration of the Gym on the Park was currently in progress and two new classes, Zumba and Tai Chi, had recently been added to the gym exercise timetable, taking the number of weekly classes on offer to thirty.

The Leisure Services Manager informed Members of the planned Christmas and New Year opening and closure dates for Woodford Park Leisure Centre, as follows:

- Closed Sunday 23 December – Wednesday 26 December (4 days)
- Open Thursday 27 December – Saturday 29 December (3 days)
- Closed Sunday 30 December – Tuesday 1 January (3 days)
- Open Wednesday 2 January

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 23/18.

33. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 24/18. He informed Members that the work to install new ladies toilets at Woodford Park Leisure Centre had been delayed due to some redesign work, but was now nearing completion. Plans for the redesign of the office and reception area at the leisure centre were being developed, along with plans for an improved IT installation.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that defects in the flat roofing to the leisure centre, which had been replaced earlier in the year, had been identified and would be replaced under warranty. He also informed Members that the heating in the sports hall was undergoing repair, along with the identification and rectification of a gas leak in the system and remedial works to enable the water systems to comply with current regulations were almost complete. Members were pleased to hear that a backlog of maintenance issues were being addressed by the new Maintenance Manager and all of the lamps in the sports hall had been replaced by the Maintenance Team. In reply to a question, the Maintenance Manager informed Members that it would not be cost effective to replace the lights with LED lights until the possible future refurbishment of the sports hall.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the two broken street lights on the driveway to the leisure centre had been repaired.

Members noted that the Rotary Club proposed to create a 'Rotary Foundation Rose Garden' within the Rotary Garden in Woodford Park and had also sponsored the purchase of a new seat in the garden. Volunteers from the Rotary Club and the Friends of Woodford Park had planted 5,000 crocus bulbs between the Oakwood Centre and the war memorial and in the Rotary Garden.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the installation of a timber retaining wall and new drainage at the eastern end of the lake had been carried out by the Grounds Team and tenders for the silt redistribution and boardwalk work were due to be returned shortly.

Members were pleased to note that the memorial gates in Woodford Park had been refurbished before the Remembrance event on 11 November and that the 'Woodley in WW1' panels installed close to the war memorial had been very well received. The Remembrance event and commemoration of the centenary of the end of World War 1 had been very well attended and Members thanked all the Council officers who had worked hard to produce a very successful event.

Members also noted that the plans for the new maintenance workshop had been submitted for planning permission and noted the update provided on matters relating to the allotments.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 24/18.

34. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

The Town Clerk informed Members that following issues relating to land ownership the contractor was now waiting for Wokingham Borough Council to notify them of the dates when the installation could take place. The crane and traffic management information required for the road closure permission to be granted had been submitted to the Highways Department by the contractor and because of the delay the applications for permission to connect to the utilities had been resubmitted. Following the installation of the toilet unit it would take three weeks for the utilities to be connected.

35. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The following item was requested for inclusion in a future agenda:

- An update on the Town Centre public toilet.
- The ownership of Malone Park.

36. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To provide the following information on the website:
 - Publicity for the Christmas Extravaganza in the Town Centre.
 - A social media campaign to explain and apologise for the poor delivery of the most recent edition of the Herald and to note that the Council is looking at alternative delivery options.

The meeting closed at 9:05 pm
