

Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 21 November 2017 at 8:00 pm

- Present:** *Councillors T. Barker (Chairman); B. Franklin; K. Gilder; R. Lay; S. Rahmouni; D. Stares*
- Officers present:** *K. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk; E. Whitesmith, Leisure Services Manager; L. Matthews, Committee Officer*
- Also present:** *Councillor K. Baker
Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity
David Provins, Friends of Woodford Park
1 member of the public*

27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Green and W. Soane.

28. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

29. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2017**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 5 September 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

30. **JUST AROUND THE CORNER (JAC)**
The Chairman welcomed Sam Milligan to the meeting. The JAC report had been tabled at the start of the meeting and Sam Milligan explained that the report had not been available for inclusion in the agenda papers.

Members were pleased to hear that JAC had taken possession of the house they were purchasing in Woodley to provide a home for young people in need of support. It was hoped that the house would be ready for occupation in December.

Sam Milligan reported on the ways in which JAC was engaging with young people in the town and helping to prevent antisocial behaviour by building relationships with the young people.

The Chairman thanked Sam Milligan for his report.

31. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**
The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 23/17. He explained that the phone costs for Woodford Park Leisure Centre were higher than expected at this point in the year as the Council had paid termination costs to end the phone contract in order to move to a cheaper contract.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the water charges were higher than expected due to billing errors by Castle Water. He reported that the direct debits to Castle Water had been cancelled and no more payments would be made until the billing errors were resolved.

In reply to a question about the reduced usage of the cricket pitches, the Leisure Services Manager explained that one of the organisations that had hired the cricket pitches in previous years no longer existed and this had resulted in the lower use.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 23/17

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

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 24/17 and reported on the progress of plans for the Woodley 10km road race, which would take place on Sunday 15 April 2018.

Members were pleased to note that the Gym on the Park remained popular with attendance levels at over 60% for each month since it had opened. The gym currently had 392 members and there had been very few cancelled memberships through the year. There were plans to open the gym earlier than the current 8:30am start on two days a week from January 2018. In reply to a question, the Leisure Services Manager reported that the bookings software used for the gym was working well and could possibly be expanded to cover other parts of the leisure centre.

The Leisure Services Manager informed Members that, following the success of two summer camps where an external company had been hired to host Nerf Camps at the leisure centre, £500 had been spent on purchasing Nerf equipment to allow the leisure centre to run its own weekly sessions, children's parties and holiday camps. It was anticipated that the cost of the equipment would be covered by the income from the Nerf sessions before the end of the financial year.

The Leisure Services Manager also reported on the success of the Silver Circuits class and The Racket Pack, a new initiative by Badminton England, targeted at primary school children, with the aim of increasing the number of young people playing badminton from an early age.

Following the presentation of his report, the Leisure Services Manager informed Members that he had been contacted by Woodley United Football Club to ask whether the Committee would like to receive an update on the progress of the club at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 24/17.
- ◆ To invite a representative from Woodley United Football Club to give an update on the progress of the club at the next meeting.

33. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 25/17.

Members were informed that the liner of the paddling pool at Woodford Park Leisure Centre had become damaged over the summer and was coming away from the joins at the edges of the pool. The liner had been inspected by a contractor and was not considered to be repairable. Quotes for a replacement had been received and were in the region of £10,000. Members considered whether to make a recommendation to the Strategy and Resources Committee to allocate £10,000 from the Buildings and facilities fund to pay for a replacement liner.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that repairs to the leisure centre roof had commenced and that improvements to the exterior of the building would be considered by the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Regeneration Task & Finish Group. He also reported that a planning application had been submitted by Woodley Pre-school for the proposed modular

building to be located in Woodford Park and a decision was expected in December. Members were also informed that proposals for the new maintenance workshop and office were being developed to establish costs.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that The pergola in the Garden of Remembrance had been vandalised in October and had subsequently been removed to make the area safe. The Chairman thanked The Friends of Woodford Park for the work they had done to clear much of the overgrown planting, which had made the Garden of Remembrance less secluded and less attractive as a location for anti-social behaviour.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the Friends of Woodford Park continued to be a great success, with their meetings and activities being well attended and many new people joining in. The group had achieved a "Thriving" award in the Thames and Chiltern In Bloom awards for 2017.

Members were pleased to hear of the Remembrance events that had taken place at the war memorial and the planned tree planting in Woodford Park, which would be carried out in partnership with the local CommuniTrees project, with some of the trees being planted by pupils from St Dominic Savio Primary School.

Members were informed that an application for funding for the Lake Project in Woodford Park was to be submitted to the Landfill Community Fund, with a view to carrying out the silt distribution and boardwalk works in September 2018. Members considered a proposal to request that the Strategy and Resources Committee allocate £10,000 from the general reserve to the Lake Project earmarked reserve to fund the tree works and the hire of equipment for the in-house elements of the work that could be carried out from December 2017 to March 2018.

Members noted the updates given in the report with regard to the Reading Road allotments and the new play equipment to be installed in the town centre, replacing the old equipment under the sail.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that, as resolved at the last meeting (Leisure Services Committee, 5 September 2017, minute number 22) the Council had declined an offer from Wokingham Borough Council to take on Colemans Moor open space under a community asset transfer and had enquired whether the Borough Council had any intention of offering a larger scale transfer of open spaces, along with funding for maintenance, which might make it worthwhile investing in the required equipment and staffing. The Borough Council had responded that it would be happy to transfer play areas and funds for maintenance to the town Council, but not larger areas of land. As the maintenance of play areas was labour intensive and the cost of play equipment was expensive Members agreed that this was not an attractive offer.

Under this item, the subject of fly tipping was raised, as this was becoming an increasing problem around Woodley and in Woodford Park, and it was suggested that Peter Baveystock, Waste and Recycling Manager, Wokingham Borough Council, be invited to talk to the Town Council about the problem of fly tipping and the impact of the introduction of charges at local household waste sites. Members also asked that fly tipping be an agenda item at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 25/17.
- ◆ To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that £10,000 be allocated from the general reserve to the Lake Project earmarked reserve, to fund the tree works and in-house ground works associated with the lake restoration project.

- ◆ To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that £10,000 be allocated from the Buildings and Facilities fund to pay for the replacement of the paddling pool liner.

34. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor Gilder presented Report No. LS 26/17 of the Community Youth Partnership meeting held on 18 October 2017.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 26/17.

35. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

Members noted that the Town Council was still awaiting a draft licence from Wokingham Borough Council for the toilet site in Woodley Town Centre. The unit would be ordered once the licence was signed.

36. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The following items were requested for inclusion in a future agenda:

- An update from Woodley United Football Club on their progress.
- Fly tipping
- A review of the viability of providing cricket pitches when demand is falling.

37. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

There were no suggestions for items to be publicised.

38. **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.

39. **THE GYM ON THE PARK**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To approve the Gym on the Park membership offer put forward by the Leisure Services Manager.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman informed Members that, due to increased work commitments, this would be the last meeting of the Leisure Services Committee attended by Councillor Lay. The Chairman thanked Councillor Lay for his work on the Committee and on the 3G Pitch Steering Group.

The meeting closed at 9:30 pm
