

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre
on Tuesday 9 April 2019 at 8:00 pm**

Present: *Councillors B. Soane (Chairman); D. Bragg; 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 M. Forrer
2 members of the public*

51. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Barker and B. Franklin and from Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity.

52. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

53. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2019**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 15 January 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

Members noted the contents of the JAC report, which had been circulated after the agenda was issued. Councillor Gilder asked for the committee's thanks to be passed to Sam Milligan and his team for all the work they do for the benefit of Woodley residents, making Woodley a better place for everyone.

Under this item, the Town Clerk informed Members of the feedback she had received from a local resident regarding the art project at Loddon Mead. The resident thought the artwork was wonderful, but reported that a large amount of rubbish had been left behind. The Town Clerk had reported this to Wokingham Borough Council.

55. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 8/19 and reported that costs were mostly lower than anticipated for this point in the year. She informed Members that Woodford Park Leisure Centre had already achieved its target income for the year, with one month remaining and the income received from football, and from Coronation Hall and Chapel Hall, was greater than anticipated. Members congratulated officers on this achievement.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 8/19.

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

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 9/19 and informed Members of upcoming events. The Woodley 10km and 2.5km races, organised by Barnes Fitness,

would take place the following Sunday (14 April) and Woodley Schools' Sports Week would be held during the week commencing 20 May.

The Leisure Services Manager reported that the Gym on the Park had had a strong financial year, with net income of £115,621, an increase of £39,727 on the previous financial year. Ways of increasing the capacity of the gym, by adding additional small pieces of equipment, were being investigated although there was limited space available.

Members were pleased to hear of the success of children's birthday parties at the leisure centre, with 202 birthday parties being held during the 2018/19 financial year - an increase of 47 on the previous year. The purchase of new multi-coloured tables and chairs for the parties had helped to improve the feedback scores relating to the condition of the Function Room. The Leisure Services Manager informed Members that the Function Room would be redecorated the following week using a lighter, more modern colour scheme, which would be more suitable for the exercise classes, sports groups and children's parties that now formed the majority of the bookings.

Members noted that the 3G pitch was starting to show the first signs of wear and tear and had received some damage, in the form of a small tear to the carpet, in an area of the pitch where there was very heavy use. In reply to a question the Leisure Services Manager said that this damage would not be covered by the warranty as it was not caused by a defect, however the maintenance contractor had indicated that he might be able to carry out the repair free of charge. During the discussion of the 3G pitch, Members asked when the next meeting with the FA would take place, as annual meetings had been required as part of the funding arrangements for the pitch. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the Council had not been contacted by the FA for some time and agreed to follow this up.

The Leisure Services Manager informed Members that a provisional date of 27 May had been set for the opening of the padding pool, but that this would be dependent on ongoing maintenance work and the replacement of the pool liner, which would be carried out under warranty.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 9/19.

57. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 10/19. He reported that contracted works had been carried out to the heating system, plumbing and drainage at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, including pressurisation of the water system to greatly improve water pressure, and improvements to the foul drainage to avoid blockages. Members were pleased to note that the installation of the solar panels on the sports hall roof was complete and the panels were now operational. Members also noted that, following the discovery of problems with the paddling pool liner that had been replaced the previous year, the liner was to be replaced again under warranty.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that a new rose garden had been prepared in the Rotary garden as part of an initiative by the Rotary Club to provide members of the public with the opportunity to purchase and plant a rose in memory of a loved one.

Members received an update on the progress of the Woodford Park lake project and noted that the contracted work had been completed on schedule and within budget. The Grounds team had started the in-house work to replace areas of fencing around the eastern end of the lake. The re-laying of the pathways around the lake would be carried out later in the year when the bird-nesting season was over. Members noted that path repairs had been carried out in the Garden of Remembrance and hedging and planting installed to improve the entrance. This work had been undertaken by the Grounds team

and the Friends of Woodford Park. Members noted the minutes of the Friends of Woodford Park meeting held on 26 March 2019 and the Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that arrangements had been made to meet with some of the Friends in between the formal meetings.

The Chairman said that he had walked around Woodford Park before the meeting and it was looking very good. He congratulated the Grounds team on the work they had done in the park.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that a review of the electrical capacity of the existing Grounds depot had shown that it would not be possible to run a supply from this to the proposed new workshop building. Officers were therefore looking at alternatives and seeking costings.

Members noted the update given in the agenda on matters at the allotments site and were interested to hear of the Launchpad project, which provided plot space for the charity to use for educational purposes in support of the homeless and to grow food for local food banks. Another initiative was the introduction of managed bumblebee hives at the site, along with wildflower planting to encourage the bees to flourish.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members of work to be carried out at the community halls. The removal of asbestos from the roof space at Coronation Hall had been rescheduled for August due to an increase in the required work, and water storage tanks were to be removed from both Coronation Hall and Chapel Hall to eliminate the risk of potential contamination with legionella

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 10/19.

58. **CHARGES INFORMATION**

Following the comments that had been made by the Strategy and Resources Committee when they considered the charges recommendations of the Leisure Services Committee (Strategy and Resources Committee, 22 January 2019, minute number 73b), Members considered how the information regarding proposed charges could be presented in future, to clarify how the decisions had been made.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That in future officers would investigate competitors' prices as much as possible and would report their findings to the Committee.

59. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

The Town Clerk informed Members that a technician had fitted the disabled handrail and the electricity meter that day, but needed to finalise the electrical connection and test the equipment. Thames Water had given a date at the end of April to make the water connection. When this had been completed, Danfo would need to spend half a day commissioning the unit and a date for this work was awaited.

60. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Under this item, Members discussed the necessity of building the leisure centre as a business and agreed that options for regenerating the leisure centre should be considered. It was agreed that this topic should be discussed by the new Council after the elections in May.

61. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To publicise the following:
 - The opening of the new public toilet in the town centre – when the date is known.

Before the end of the meeting, the Chairman thanked all Members who had served on the Committee for their ideas and commitment over the past four years. He also thanked the officers for their hard work and said that a great deal had been achieved in four years.

The meeting closed at 8:55 pm
