

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre  
on Tuesday 4 June 2019 at 8:00 pm**

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**Present:** *Councillors D. Stares (Chairman); D. Bragg; K. Gilder; A. Heap;  
S. Rahmouni; R. Skegg; A. Swaddle*

**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*

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Soane

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 APRIL 2019**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 9 April 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

Members noted the contents of the JAC report, and the Chairman commented that the atmosphere among the young people in Woodley seemed to be very good.

For the benefit of the new committee members, Councillor Gilder explained the proposals for the Loddon Mead project. She also said that JAC were doing fantastic work with young people and had been supported in this work by the Town Council for 21 years.

5. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor Gilder presented Report No. LS 11/19 of the Community Youth Partnership meeting held on 22 May 2019.

The latest proposals for the Loddon Mead area had been reported at the meeting and the use of timber logs for stepping stones and jumps was under consideration as a low cost start to the park, providing an area for younger people or a training area before moving on to more complex parkour equipment. Sam Milligan was hoping to visit local schools to engage staff and young people with the project.

Members noted the update on the parents self-help groups project. In reply to a question, Councillor Gilder explained that the project was developing slowly, not due to a lack of interest, but because there was a need to gain peoples' confidence in the project and this would take time. The Town Clerk informed Members that discussions had taken place on the ways in which families in need of this type of support could be targeted.

Members also noted that the difficulties encountered in running and managing youth clubs had been discussed and it had been reported that the Friday night youth club at Woodley Baptist Church was struggling to find volunteers to help at the sessions and may not be

able to continue operating after July. The Community Youth Partnership had agreed to look at the provision of youth clubs in Woodley.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 11/19

6. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 12/19.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 12/19.

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

The Leisure Services Manager presented Report No. LS 13/19 and informed Members of the success of the Woodley 10km and 2.5km races, which had taken place on 14 April. There had been 635 participants in the 10km race and 75 children had taken part in the 2.5km race. Barnes Fitness, who had organised the event, had donated £1,000 to the Mayor's charity, The Multiple Sclerosis Society, Reading, Wokingham and Districts branch, in recognition of the support given by the Town Council for the event.

The Leisure Services Manager also reported on Woodley Schools Sports Week, which had been another successful event with an estimated 3,000 children taking part. Particular highlights of the week had been the opening ceremony Dance Festival and the Paralympics celebration.

Members were pleased to note that, following on from the success of the Silver Circuit sessions, which provided exercise classes for older people or those recovering from a period of inactivity, the Leisure Services Manager had been invited to meet with a NHS linked Pulmonary Rehabilitation group and this had resulted in a number of the patients becoming regular attendees at the Silver Circuits classes.

Members were also informed that the redecoration of the function room at Woodford Park Leisure Centre was nearing completion, the colour-changing lights in the gym had been repaired, the two small tears in the 3G pitch carpet had been repaired at no cost to the Council and the paddling pool liner had been replaced by the supplier. The work to replace the liner had resulted in the paddling pool being opened to the public slightly later than usual, on 1 June.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 13/19.

8. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No. LS 14/19. He informed Members that the liner to the paddling pool at Woodford Park Leisure Centre had been replaced by the supplier under warranty, following problems with the new liner that was installed last year.

Members noted the work that had been undertaken in Woodford Park, including refurbishment of seats in the Rotary Garden, and in the park generally, installation of new memorial seats, preparation and seeding of wildflower beds, planting and path repairs in the Garden of Remembrance, and preparation of the Bowls Green for the new season. The Friends of Woodford Park continued to maintain the Rotary Garden and borders in the park.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that new signage would be installed around the lake in Woodford Park in the coming weeks and this would include advice on appropriate food for ducks. He informed Members that water and marginal plants had been ordered and would

be planted by the Grounds Team, with help from volunteers. The Grounds Team would also reinstate a low level fence around the eastern end of the lake and would lay a hogging path along the northern bank.

Members were informed that the Council had received a response to its request to Wokingham Borough Council to take ownership of Malone Park. The Borough Council wished to retain the freehold for the site and had offered the Town Council either a lease on the previous terms or a community asset transfer lease of up to 30 years. After lengthy discussion and taking into consideration the £50,000 spent on the park by the Town Council since the previous lease lapsed in 2008, Members agreed that the offer from Wokingham Borough Council was thoroughly unsatisfactory and they agreed to recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that the Borough Council should be robustly challenged to transfer the ownership of the land.

The Deputy Town Clerk then gave an update on matters relating to the allotments, as noted in the report. Members were very interested to hear about the Bee Roadzz project, which was supported by the Allotment Tenants Committee, and about which a presentation had been held in the Oakwood Centre the previous evening. The intention was to encourage bees and other pollinators through the planting of wildflowers and other appropriate plants at key locations and the allotment site had been identified as a good location for some of this planting. The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the Town Council and the Allotment Tenants Committee were also looking at the possibility of encouraging bee keeping at the allotments site.

Finally Members noted that the removal of asbestos from the roof space at Coronation Hall was scheduled to take place in August and would include replacement of the suspended ceiling and redecoration of the hall.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 14/19.
- ◆ To make the following recommendation to the Strategy and Resources Committee:  
That the offer from Wokingham Borough Council of a lease on the previous terms or a community asset transfer lease of up to 30 years for Malone Park is thoroughly unsatisfactory, and it is therefore recommended that Wokingham Borough Council be robustly challenged to transfer ownership of the land at Malone Park to Woodley Town Council.

9. **TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC TOILET UPDATE**

The Town Clerk informed Members that she was waiting for Danfo to agree a date to carry out training on the operation of the public toilet and when this had taken place the toilet could be opened to the public.

10. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

11. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

Under this item it was suggested that the Partnership page on the Council's website could be used to publicise volunteering opportunities in the town and the call for volunteers to help with the Friday night youth club at the Baptist Church could be advertised.

The meeting closed at 9:20 pm