



## **MEMBERS OF THE SPORTS & RECREATION GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

Met on Wednesday 20<sup>st</sup> September 2023 at 7.30 pm at Marshalswick Community Centre

**PRESENT:** Councillors Graham Leonard (Chair), Jenny Roberts, Rehana Ahmed, James Lambert and Public Member Jez Cox.  
One member of the public.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Twidell, White

**OFFICERS:** Simon Thwaites, Clerk, Rebecca Pannese, Project, Amenities & Community Engagement Officer

**ABSENT:** -

### **550 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations**

There was none.

### **551 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Sports and Recreation Ground Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023, having been previously circulated, were reviewed before it was:

#### **Resolved**

That the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record.

### **552 To welcome new public members to the committee.**

Mr Chris Cooke, a resident, attended the meeting and was welcomed by the committee as a public member. An acceptance of office form was duly signed.

*Councillor Ahmed joined the meeting at this point having had no declarations of interest to declare.*

### **553 Bike track update**

Members discussed at length the ongoing issues around securing planning permission for this project, including the likelihood of refusal if the Herts Highways requirements in respect of site access are not met.

It was clear that the committee wants to push ahead with this facility and the following action points were unanimously agreed;

- Councillor Leonard and Rebecca Pannese to re-draft the site plan to include a revised

- boundary (red line) within which the proposed works will take place if approved.
- Rebecca Pannese to draft a letter (including the above revised site map) to the Planning Officer stating that the Parish Council will comply with the requirements of Herts Highways in respect of safe access/egress to and from the site and requesting conditional planning consent be given on that undertaking.
  - To engage a traffic consultant to advise on what measures should be taken to comply with the Highways requirements and to inform the Planning Officer of this appointment. Fees agreed of approximately £1,500. The current position was noted as follows;
  - The District Council has confirmed they're unable to accelerate constructing the new access point to the open space included in the planned SANG rewilding development. This is because the works will be financed through developer contributions, not yet received.
  - The District Council has confirmed that to cut foliage back further in either direction around the entrance is beyond its contracted obligation and would not therefore be funded through HCC.
  - The Planning Authority has confirmed that a new planning application will need to be made soon if the current application doesn't progress. The department is trying to avoid large backlogs of applications.
  - Funding – see agenda item 558.

It was unanimously;

### **Resolved**

To continue with this project in the context of item 558.

## **554 2023/2024 Capital Works**

The following works from the 2023/24 programme have been completed;

- Jersey Farm Adventure Playground: Removal of old slide platform and installation of step poles and stepping pods.
- Damson Way Open Space: Installation of bonded rubber mulch under the see-saw and between the existing areas of wet pour to link all the individual apparatus.
- Maintenance work at Damson Way to include washing off algae, sanding down and repainting equipment and replacing worn timbers where required.
- William Bell Open Space: Installation of an outdoor table tennis table.
- Replacement of the timber steps at Damson Way.

### **Still Outstanding**

- Installation of a basketball hoop and dribble area at Sherwood Park Open Space

## **555 CCTV at Jersey Farm Open Space**

The Clerk informed the Committee that enquiries have concluded that the Parish Council would have difficulty in establishing a 'pressing need' for CCTV at this location, particularly after what has been a relatively quiet summer. After discussion it was unanimously;

### **Resolved**

1. That the sum in the draft 2024/25 budget for CCTV at this location is removed for now.
2. That the committee continues to research park 'ambassadors', particularly in the context of Sandringham students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

**556 Skate Ramp Art Project**

The Project Officer informed the committee that the initial artwork completed on 8<sup>th</sup> September has been very positively received. Unfortunately it was also noted that the artist will be unable to return before November.

**557 LED Floodlights at Spencer Meadow**

It was noted and accepted that the quoted cost of converting the floodlights at Spencer Meadow to LED was unaffordable currently (£24,000). It may however be feasible to apply for funding through the Veolia Community Grant process. The Clerk will investigate further and report back to the committee in due course.

**558 2024/25 Sports and Recreation Committee Budget**

Committee Members discussed issues regarding completion of the Jersey Farm Open Space bike track. It was noted that if the project is to continue it's probable that additional funding will be needed in respect of traffic management as well as an inevitable increase in build costs. Councillor Ahmed suggested looking into crowdfunding and Jez Cox undertook to make enquiries and then report back to the committee. Additionally, The Project Officer undertook to look into the LLA Community Fund and the Clerk to look at the Parish Council's eligibility to borrow funds. It was unanimously;

**Resolved**

1. To request in the 2024/25 budget the sum of £30,000 with the proviso that the funds may be used in part towards completion of the bike track with the remainder being used elsewhere on apparatus to be agreed and first presented to a Full Council meeting.
2. That if the committee reaches a point where the bike track is no longer viable, the entire £30,000 budget may be used to fund enhancements elsewhere, again, following presentation to Full Council.

**559 Review of Hire Charges at Spencer Meadow**

Use	Current	Proposed	Increase
	£	£	£
Football Pitch	903 annually	993	90
Cricket Pitch	2,075 annually	2,283	208
Tennis/Netball Court	6/10 per hour	6/10	0
Astro Court	15 per hour	15	0

It was noted that the contract increase in grounds maintenance to the Parish Council this year is 12.9%. The Clerk recommended an increase to the sports clubs of slightly less (10%) to reduce the impact on the club's finances. It was also recommended for the Tennis/netball and Astro court hire fees not to increase in the current economic environment.

Members considered making the courts available free of charge to some organised groups. After discussion it was unanimously;

**Resolved**

1. For the Clerk to contact 'Play in the Park' and the HCC play scheme 'HAPpy' offering free use of the courts during holidays.

2. To approve a 10% increase in 2023/24 in the football and cricket pitch fees at Spencer Meadow with no increase in the tennis/netball/Astroturf hire fees.

**560 Walkabout date**

The Committee arranged a second walkabout date of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 at 3pm (starting location tba).

**561 Matters of Note**

- A new football net has been installed at Harness Way Open Space and a new tennis net at Sherwood Park.
- Reports of anti-social behaviour and vandalism have been significantly lower over the summer than in previous years.
- Minor repairs have been carried out to the skate ramp by the installer. The manufacturer has been approached regarding some wear to the timber, however it's likely this will be as a result of small fires having been started and so not covered by the guarantee. If necessary, the cost of repair will not be significant.

**562 Matters Arising Since the Circulation of the Agenda**

1. The Clerk informed the committee that the District Council will make a decision this week in respect of re-opening the Sandridge Village Hall car park toilets.
2. The Project Officer advised the meeting that repairs not covered by the guarantee are due to be carried out on the skate ramp at a cost between £900 and £1,000. A claim will be made to the Council's insurer.
3. The Clerk to look into obtaining stickers directing residents to a phone number when bins are unemptied.

**563 Suggestions for Future Meetings**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.51pm.

**Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Chair .....

Date.....