

Parks & Recreation

Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council

Monday, 6th September, 2021 at 6.00 pm



To members of the Parks & Recreation Committee - V Gwatkin, D Butterfield, J Aitman, L Ashbourne, T Ashby, L Duncan, D Enright and A McMahon (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Democratic and Legal Services Officer (democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk) in advance to reserve a seat.

We will continue to observe social distancing and hand sanitiser will be available.

For further information or clarification regarding the meeting contact the Democratic and Legal Services Officer at democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk Tel: 01993 226071

Recording of Meetings

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Town Clerk or Democratic Services Officer know before the start of the meeting.

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee Members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Democratic Services & Legal Services Officer (democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

Standing Order 30(a)(v) permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer before the meeting that they are unable to attend.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)

a) To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 5 July 2021;

b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress on any item).

4. **Participation of the Public**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of five minutes each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 42. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **Request for a Lido** (Pages 9 - 10)

To consider a request for the provision of a lido facility in Witney.

6. **Football, Cricket, Bowls & Park Run Update** (Pages 11 - 50)

To consider the report of the Operations & Estates Officer.

7. **Committee Work Plan** (Pages 51 - 58)

To consider the report of the Town Clerk.

Town Clerk

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 5 July 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	D Butterfield L Ashbourne T Ashby	L Duncan D Enright O Collins
Officers:	Adam Clapton Simon Wright Sharon Groth	Deputy Town Clerk Democratic & Legal Services Officer Town Clerk
Others:	0 members of the public.	

With no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy will require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 2 August 2021.

PR343 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joy Aitman and Andy McMahon.

Councillor Owen Collins attended in place of Councillor Aitman.

PR344 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

PR345 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 May 2021. There were no matters arising.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 17 May 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PR346 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no requests to address the committee.

PR347 **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Town Clerk advised that following adoption of the Open Spaces Strategy at the Council meeting on 28 June 2021 work was ongoing to allocate priorities from the Action Plan to various committees who would take ongoing responsibility.

Members would receive a report at each meeting on the priorities for the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Resolved:

That, the update be noted.

PR348 **MADLEY PARK PLAYING FIELD**

The Town Clerk updated members on progress with discussions regarding Madley Park Playing Field. A meeting had been held with Wood Green School and it had been agreed that the agreements currently in place should be reviewed with all interested parties.

The Town Clerk advised that these discussions would be progressed and an update provided to members in due course.

Resolved:

That, the current position be noted.

PR349 **WITNEY TOWN BOWLS CLUB - REQUEST FOR NEW GATES**

The Committee received a request from Witney Bowls Club seeking replacement of the existing access gates to the facility at The Leys.

It was advised that officers had looked at the situation and it was not considered feasible to repair the existing gates. The cost of replacement would not exceed £2,000 and could be fitted by the grounds team. The Town Clerk advised this would need to be funded from the Rolling Capital Fund as the limited revenue budget would not cover this. Clarification was given that the works would not be subject to a full tender process.

It was proposed and seconded that the replacement of the gates be supported with the matter being delegated to officers to conclude. On being put to the vote the proposition was carried.

The Town Clerk clarified that discussion on other issues at The Leys would be subject to a review in the future.

Resolved:

That, the replacement of the gates at a cost not exceeding £2,000 be supported with the matter being delegated to officers to conclude.

PR350 **LEYS SKATE PARK**

Councillor Daniel Butterfield gave a verbal update and advised that 'Ramp up The Leys' had created a Facebook page, were in the process of setting up a bank account and had commenced a survey to establish the views of interested parties.

It was hoped to develop greater awareness of the proposal and it was indicated that the group may need support in developing documents for the tendering process. The Town Clerk indicated that Town Council officers could help where possible and provide assistance on fundraising and accessing grants.

Resolved:

That, the update be noted.

PR351 **WILDFLOWER PLANTING AT RECREATION GROUNDS**

The Chair suggested that extending the wildflower planting, as at King George's field, to other Council owned recreation grounds would be beneficial.

Members noted that this needed to be referred to the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee for consideration and this was agreed by the Committee.

Resolved:

That, the issue be referred to the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee for further discussion.

PR352 **WEST WITNEY DOG/LITTER BINS & SIGNAGE**

The Committee considered the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor regarding the provision of additional bins at West Witney Sports Ground and changes to associated signage.

Members supported the provision of two additional recycling litter bins that could take a range of waste including dog waste. It was further agreed that simplified signage would be beneficial.

Recommended:

That the following be approved:

1. The installation of 2 x recycling litter bins at West Witney and their location;
2. The removal of the existing Dog signage at the site; and
3. The installation and wording of new dog signage

PR353 **WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND - REQUEST TO OPERATE A FOOD VAN**

The Committee received a request for the siting of a food van at West Witney Sports Ground.

The proposed hours of operation, siting of the vehicle and charges to be implemented were discussed.

The Committee expressed their 'in principle' support for the proposal subject to clarification of the siting and the agreement being for an initial six months to enable officers to monitor the van.

Recommended:

That, agreement in principle be given for The Snack Shack to run a food van on the West Witney Sports Ground, subject to the following:

1. A fixed term period of six months for operating along with clear terms and conditions which will be reviewed and monitored by officers;
2. Delegation be given to the Officers to agree the location of the stall; and
3. Delegation to officers to handle all the legalities and charges associated.

PR354 PARK ROAD PLAY AREA - UPDATE

The Town Clerk reminded members that additional funding for the project had been agreed at the Council meeting on 28 June.

It was explained that quotes had been sought for the safety surfacing under the existing play equipment (slide and horse) in the site. An issue had arisen regarding the stability of the surface under the slide and options were being considered.

In response to a question it was clarified that the works could be undertaken in mid-August but a decision may be required at that point regarding whether to retain the slide.

After discussion the committee agreed that a contractor should be appointed with a mid-August deadline and delegation be given to remove the slide if applicable.

Recommended:

That, a contract for the works be approved for completion in August with a decision on the inclusion of the slide being delegated to officers depending on whether surfacing works are possible.

PR355 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

Resolved: That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

PR356 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on a number of issues at West Witney Sports Ground.

It was reported that the Clubhouse was now fully compliant. In addition the consultants appointed by the Town Council were progressing their work and were talking with various interested parties and site users. She hoped a report would be presented in September on proposals for the site.

It was noted that one current user was looking to change their governance and was interested in being involved in the discussions.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal update be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.40 pm

Chair

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Agenda Item 5

From: Olivia
Sent: 24 July 2021 12:04
To: Info <Info@witney-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: A change needed

To whom may concern,

I am writing as both a Wood Green Sixth Form student and as a young adult pleading for action to be taken in response to teenage fatalities caused by unsafe water related incidents. Our community suffers as a result of a limited safe outdoor facility. Raising awareness for water safety is a fundamental start, but the real progress will be the action taken. Being a part of a school community I have seen and felt the devastating impact this tragedy has caused in both the school atmosphere and the local one. There needs to be a response from the wider community ensuring that accidents like this one never happen again. Water fatalities **can** be prevented: this issue needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.

As climate change is a significant issue within our global community our summers are only going to get hotter and longer, we need address the urgent demand locally for safe open water environments to prevent the inevitable if action is not taken. Oxfordshire geographically is land locked, therefore unlike many other coastal counties we are restricted to safe open water areas without lifeguards. Growing up in Witney myself I have noticed as I have got older swimming in rivers and lakes is the only outdoor alternative when the weather gets hotter. The Leys is targeted towards younger children and we have limited options. Therefore, I'm urging you to give children of all ages, backgrounds and generations to have a choice in the future summers to come. At this current moment in time young people in this area do not have the choice for a safe open water alternative and this needs to change! Chipping Norton have a lower population and yet still facilitate a lido this is something we need to seriously consider to keep your children safe. We cannot ignore Witney's growing population.

Therefore, I am proposing that we need to begin to consider an outdoor pool facility for our community. A good start would be clearer signage around Ducklington lake as many people are unaware of the serious dangers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated just how much community matters more than ever. Many young people have missed out on opportunities around wellbeing and enjoyment. As well as a global pandemic we are currently in the midst of a mental health crisis. Our community needs something to look forward to especially after such devastating local news. We need to come together for both funding and support to ensure all children can feel safe outdoors. I know that this will be a challenge, but when the lives of young children have been lost I'm sure you'll agree that a change is needed.

Yours faithfully,

Olivia

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PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 6 September 2021
Title: Football, Cricket, Bowls & Park Run Update
Contact Officer: Operations & Estates Advisor - John Hickman

Background

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current position of Sports Provision provided by Witney Town Council.

Current Situation

Football

Tower Hill FC

This season Tower Hill football have requested pitches for 20 teams 18 of which will play at West Witney and 2 will play at the Leys.

FC Mills Have 1 team that will play at West Witney

FC Royals have 2 teams that will play at Burwell QE2 Field

Spartan Rangers have 1 team that will play at King Georges Field

Vikings have 20 teams playing at Burwell QE2 Field, 7 teams playing at the Leys Recreation Ground and 4 teams playing at King Georges Field

This makes a combined total of 55 teams playing on the pitches this year.

In 2020

Tower hill had 16 teams

FC Mills 1 team

Royals 2 teams

Spartan Rangers 1 team

Vikings 22 teams

A total of 42 teams an increase of 9 teams in one year.

Youth team numbers have risen year on year in recent years, however the growth between 2020 and 2021 is larger than in previous years.

Pitch 2 at West Witney will not be marked for play this season. This pitch is invariably unusable after the end of November until late March due to waterlogging and the 2 teams that were to use this pitch have been moved to an available 9v9 pitch at the Leys.

Tower Hill have been given permission to use the pitch 2 area at West Witney for training during the football season on the lighter nights as this is not in use for play this season and Vikings have been given permission to use an area that is off the pitches as above.

Council Officers & Councillor, FA Meeting with Football Teams 12th August

This meeting was well attended by all clubs using Witney Town Council pitches, Andrew Earnshaw, Business & Facility Development Manager for the Oxfordshire Football Association, Councillor V Gwatkin & Officers of the Council.

Items discussed were future provision of pitches, making better use of existing pitches, future pitch provision training provision, storage, funding and grants, dog faeces, dog bins and signage at Burwell.

The OFA also presented some useful information regarding funding currently available from the FA.

It was suggested that this should be held as a regular meeting every quarter in future.

Cricket

Swifts West Witney

The Operations and Estates Advisor has been informed that Swifts are hoping to be promoted into a higher Cherwell league again at the end of this season, this will again mean they need to improve their facilities further for this league. The Operations and Estates Advisor has asked that if they are promoted, they provide a list of what additional items they may require and their approx. cost to see if Witney Town Council can assist in the purchase or provision of any items in time for this meeting. At the time of writing this report the list has not yet been provided.

The club are asking if it is possible for the existing artificial practice base to be reinstated, this would be beneficial to the Council as well as there would then be no requirement for council to provide a practice wicket on the Square removing the associated cost for that. The Operations and Estates Advisor is looking into the possibilities of reinstating the surface of the artificial practice wicket, the associated cost and if any ongoing maintenance cost at present.

Witney Swifts have reported that the square plays really well now and they are receiving lots of good comments from visiting clubs.

Leys Cricket square and outfield

Although the square has been maintained throughout the season and end of season renovation works are planned, the cricket square has not been used this season by the school or any teams. If not maintained, then this square would be lost and should a club wish to make use of it in the future then it would cost substantial sums and time to bring it back to a usable condition again.

To cost savings to the council, the Operations and Estates Advisor has requested that Continental provide details of the cost reduction in the grounds contract if the Council decided not to maintain this Cricket Square and outfield.

A third option might be to offer it at a reduced rate, if a club can be found that would at least make some use of the facility. The current charge is the same as West Witney for adults £69.50 and £35.50 Junior U-16s, however there is also an additional cost of £37.50 per changing room at the Leys whereas it is understood that West Witney were only charging £10.00 for changing rooms. The Leys is also smaller outfield with a shorter boundary on one side than the other and a smaller square as opposed to West Witney which has a full-size boundary that can if a boundary rope is used which can be adjusted to suit which wicket on the square is being played on. Witney Swifts had been speaking about running a thirds team at this location in previous years although it's not known if they are in the position at this moment to still do that. They had also spoken about setting up a junior's team but no further information has been received on this. The Operations and Estates Advisor was contacted prior to Covid by Newland cricket club about running a team from the Leys however they may not be wishing to do that now.

It should be noted that in order to maintain cricket squares in good condition they not only need to be maintained well they also do require to be played on.

Bowls

The bowls green end of season service users meeting is planned for the 7th October and Officers will update councillors following that meeting.

The final day of the bowls season 2021 is the 26th September. Renovations will hopefully commence before 1st October.

At this meeting Officers will again request that the irrigations systems are handed over to Witney Town Council by the bowls clubs, so that full control of the watering system, its maintenance and upkeep can be looked after by the council and the contractors. It should be noted that again this season the West Witney Bowls green irrigation system has not been covering an area at the centre of the green, however this has not become a large issue due to the wet summer we have had. There were also issues with the Leys Bowls green irrigation system at the start of the season the system was not usable for some time until the club

arranged for the system to be repaired. There also appears to be a leak on the Leys bowls green system currently by the old bowls pavilion that the club say will be looked at end of season. Charges previously agreed for this by council provided separately.

There will be an additional cost to council to move the Irrigation system controller from inside Witney Town Bowl club to the outside of the building in a cabinet to allow full control by grounds contractors as previously done with the West Witney Controller.

Park Run

Park run is now operating again every Saturday.

Annual STRI Inspection

This was carried out on Tuesday 17th August with the grounds contractors, Witney Town Council Officers, a Witney Swifts representative and an Agronomist from the STRI carrying out the inspection. Michael has attended Witney on at least the previous 5 inspections so knows the facilities well.

The representative from the Swifts was present so he could give the clubs impression of how the square at West Witney has played this year and understand the how the wicket is maintained in particular during the end of season renovations. He reported that the square had improved throughout the season and was playing very well.

The STRI inspector had also brought along the Clegg Hammer device to inspect the compaction of the ground on football pitches. Pitches at West Witney were within the acceptable range for football.

The Operations and Estates Advisor also requested if the STRI inspection could be carried out at Burwell recreation ground on the football pitches in that location. Burwell pitches require fertilising - they currently have limited root zone this will be carried out soon after the start of the season as programmed in the specification. The Clegg Hammer reading was close to the top of the range for football at this site despite the fact it was recently vertidraind. It was decided that the verti-draining that would normally be carried out to all pitches in October would be changed to verti-quake for this year which breaks up compaction much more than verti-draining. The cost being offset by carrying out verti-draining in next Mays's pitch renovations instead of the verti-quake that was planned then.

The current pitch maintenance specification states verti-draining to all pitches will be carried out once per year in October and verti-draining and verti-quake and verti-draining carried out alternate years during pitch renovations.

Going forward it would be beneficial in the new grounds contract specification to be drawn up to use verti-quaking annually at pitch renovations in May every year and verti-draining in late October every year.

The STRI report will hopefully be available by the time of this meeting for councillors.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates. The increased numbers of teams using the councils football pitches could lead to an increased usage of chemical fertilisers and mechanical maintenance to maintain pitches in a good condition.

Improved control of irrigation water usage on bowls greens with direct control of the greens irrigation systems reducing water usage.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Financial implications

Possible additional costs at end of football season for increased football pitch renovations.

Additional costs to Council regarding the Bowls Greens irrigation systems to be recoup from clubs via additional sums agreed by council added to the clubs annual rent.

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Increasing verti-draining vert quake alternate years to verti-quake annually at football pitch renovations within the new grounds contract specification currently being drawn up.
2. Moving Witney Town Bowls irrigation controller from inside club house to external wall inside a secure cabinet on wall as at West Witney.

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Football Pitches 2021/22

Burwell QE2 Field			
Pitch Number	Type	Approx. Length	Approx. Width
1	11 v 11	91.5 m	55m
2	11 v 11	91.5m	55m
3	9 v 9	60.4m	36.5m
4	9 v 9	73.1m	45.7
5	7 v 7	55m	36.5m
6	7 v 7	55m	36.5
7	5 v 5	40m	30m
8	5 v 5	40m	30m
9	Not Marked In		

West Witney			
Pitch Number	Type	Approx. Length	Approx. Width
1	11 v 11	98.8m	58.6m
2	11 v 11	98.8m	58.6m
3	Not Marked In		
4	9 v 9	70m	42m
5	5 v 5	40m	30m
6	7 v 7	47.8m	32m
7	7 v 7	50m	32m
8	5v5	32m	23m

Leys Recreation Ground			
Pitch Number	Type	Approx. Length	Approx. Width
No Longer Exists			
2	9 v 9	73m	45m
3	7 v 7	55m	37m
4	9 v 9	73m	45m
5	5 v 5	36m	27m

King George 5 th Field			
Pitch	Type	Approx. Length	Approx. Width
1	11 v 11	98m	58m

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Football Pitches meeting held at Corn Exchange

12 August 2021 17:00 to 19:00

Present: Cllr Vicky Gwatkin WTC

John Hickman WTC

Tracy Minns WTC

Angus Whitburn WTC

Lorraine Harwood WTC (notes)

Andy Earnshaw - FA

John Philips – Tower Hill

Claire Anton – Tower Hill

Colin Morris – Witney Royals

Steve Wright - Spartan

Alfie Saunders - Spartan

Steve Bott – Witney Vikings

Mike

Apologies: Paul Wilson – FC Mills

Intro from Cllr Gwatkin which gave an overview of the current situation regarding the football pitches in Witney.

More pitches will become available. Tower Hill full to capacity. King George's, not ideal without facilities. One Four Leys pitches available for play, but other had to be shut for health and safety reasons. One on Eton close is not a proper pitch just for kick about recreation– but parking an issue.

Lots of planning in place to get more pitches – Madley Park pitches, 2 adult and 2 juniors. WODC own them and as a result not managed. Ground is rough, they have changing rooms and astro turf. Issues are booking with Wood Green school and not open on Sundays. WTC have met with school who are receptive to us taking on pitches and management. WODC own under agreement with OCC and Wood Green School. WODC prepared to lease to us until 2029. Requirement to get legal together for WTC to take ownership.

KKP consultants due to release WODC Playing Pitch Strategy in October 2021.

New Curbridge development – two pitches already built and laid to turf. Will be 24 months before available. Room for extra secondary school – but if not proceeded with, WTC will hopefully have football pitches, pavilion, and parking for 60 cars. Currently ascertaining if WTC can have use of pitches before decision on school.

Suggesting that money £800K ATP might be used there if school not built. Would like the ATP to be at West Witney. KKP are consultants for playing pitch strategy for WODC as well as WTC.

Potentially 5 pitches. Need to determine where pitches are to be located. FA say need a solution of 3g pitches. Stage C supply and demand current feeling 4.5 games pitches adults.

Discussion around issues teams have

Teams were given an opportunity to raise questions before the meeting and the responses are attached:



Football
Questions.docx

Teams have wait lists and cannot satisfy current demand. Problem is now or was before and not in 2 years' time. Lack of places to train is an issue for teams. Demand has doubled and standard of pitch quality required has increased.

Henry Box pitches – can't look at them just yet. Suggested the teams talk to Henry Box to see if they can take them on. They are enclosed – no dogs.

Wood Green School to access their pitches too. They have opened to rugby league in the summer and are more open minded than Henry Box School

The ATP is now WGS responsibility. Not in their interest to have the liability of people on their site.

Will there be investment in quality at West Witney? – Andy Earnshaw confirmed not suitable for drainage.

Individuals need to hear the teams' voices. All teams have managers who would be happy to come in and speak to whoever they need to.

Suggested contacting Councillor Jane Doughty WODC Cabinet portfolio holder for Sport & Leisure jane.doughty@westoxon.gov.uk

Discussion around FA Foundation funding and process for applying

FA – have new funding called Pitch Power. Ducklington and Carterton have already been given grants. Pitches assessed by app get a report, apply for 6 years of funding and 10 years of agreement. Categorized a good grass pitch. FA trying to get all from basic to good. If already good – funding; If poor or basic, more funding. Key thing is needs to have lease or licence. In terms of options 1. New pitch 2. improvement of existing

Could FA look at clubs, service level agreement for improvement of stock. FA will take through Council. They will obtain the funding and organise contractors to complete work agreed. In terms of WW do 3g pitch and do a substantial improvement grant.

Looking at pavilion investment as well. Funding also available for maintenance equipment. Real opportunity to make quick decisions

[Application Support Documents | Football Foundation](#)

SLA 4 pages – straightforward application, insert name and sign and recommendations to be inserted. FA - Andy E can give an independent report. Know what we need to do and what funding needed. Grass pitch investment programme.

The Leys: Not possible to carry out sustainable ground de-compaction due to compaction from continuing events throughout the summer and early Autumn.

Hard pitch can be played on, but it has become dangerous and can't now be played on safely for matches or training.

3g technology is closest we can get to play on grass and can take punishment, unlimited. More and more of them now. They have to demonstrate there is money for maintenance.

FA are investing in 3g as more usage; however, nothing can beat grass as playing experience.

Discussion over pitch allocations

JH – can't teams spread days of playing – Sat and Sun? Covid made us stagger kick off times and required being more flexible.

League representatives are volunteers, and it was felt changing fixtures would be a nightmare.

Witney has increased this year to 56 teams from 40 plus last year. Have had to ask teams to play on different days.

Teams feel it is almost impossible to manage the staggered kick off times. Teams are at the sharp end. Leagues state that all games have to be played by certain times.

JH - Leagues, players and parents need to be flexible to fit in around the facilities and when they are available. Teams need to talk, and stagger kick off times. Clubs should be asking leagues – they are affiliated with a number of leagues. AGMs need to be attended to ask the leagues to address and listen. Lots of governing bodies telling the clubs what to do so that we can fulfil fixtures

Tower Hill happy with allocations. Were given permission to use pitch 3. Teams are understanding that they will be playing on different pitches.

Discussion over improvement of stock and facilities available

WTC are using funds to improve current stock and also trying to take on more and have been actively doing this for 2 years. Pitches are there but not provided in a state that can be used and probably won't be able to take some on.

We have no say on pitches in other parish councils. Steve Bott has been trying to contact all parish councils for pitches.

Requirement of changing facilities and toilets. Safeguarding issue. Leagues have created rules knowing that pitches don't have facilities to provide.

FA asked if we could look at min specification so would be difficult for teams that don't have that provision.

Constant battle with lack of funding to provide the facilities. With exception of King George. All other three sites have toilets. Girls especially need access to toilets.

Ratio of pitches to changing rooms is low. There are additional funds for extra changing rooms at Burwell and WW.

Community changing rooms were put within Wood Green school. Standalone facilities might need to be provided e.g., standalone portable toilets at King George.

Funding opportunities for improvements

FA have started looking at storage units to turn into changing rooms and toilets. Identifying key sites that could be provided with storage units.

WTC can come to FA and ask for funding - Football foundation.org.uk

List of items available for funding inc 3g pitches, pavilions work, existing grass pitch improvement, fencing, storage all under £25k

Playing pitches strategy is important – only looked at Chipping Norton, Witney and Carterton and only has a shelf life of 3 years. This is first time Andy of FA has completed a playing pitches strategy.

Includes a pitch assessment of each grass pitch. FA has challenged this. Mitigation against pitches not having been played during Covid. Final draft will be available in Sept.

Discussion around booking system

FA raised question regarding current booking system. WTC has gone back to individual booking forms per pitch. Very time consuming for teams.

ACTION: Looking to review the booking system. VAT discussed HMRC don't want to charge.

ACTION: Speak to Adam/Tina/Hollie regarding the booking system and VAT issue

Additional questions raised

Colin Morris raised some additional questions just prior to the meeting:

- Dog excrement - Not a new issue but continues to be an issue on council football pitches. More notices and additional bins.
- General bins - Lack of bins in accessible places for people to dispose of rubbish (not just football clubs but for those making use of the public space)
- Costs -

Requests / Facilities

- Storage - Witney Vikings have the large storage unit at Burwell, we have asked to have some storage space within the changing rooms (Referees room) - we were happy to fit and pay for ourselves so that, but that was refused.

- Floodlights - Not necessarily at Burwell (Unlikely) but there is no place to play Veterans in Witney (ATP isn't an option due to existing bookings) - Nearest local are Clanfield (Occupied), Carterton (not available) and North Leigh (not available).

Responses:

Dog poo – Burwell additional dog bins and additional bins. All entrances and exits. Burwell broken glass and no benches near bins. Will re-position bins to be by benches

Signage for WW and bins. Will be reviewed.

Suggestion to contact dog warden at WODC regarding poo on pitches

Storage – Burwell small storage requested for nets flags first aid kits. Happy to build a cupboard – JH to review the request

Looking at a second changing room there and will look at storage. Comes down to planning and there is a certain amount of funding.

WW not a field in trust at the moment as there are limitations on use

Flood lights – new lights they have been replaced with LED

Any funding for flood lights? FA can agree funding – portable an option flood lights – not subject to planning

Burwell – allowed for training near hedge.

Poss. West Witney or Leys – WTC are not against flood lights. WTC need Ideas on where teams would like flood lights.

Other items discussed:

Discussed future meetings and frequency and attendance – there is a need for regular future meetings and all teams being represented.

Ages 16,17,18, difficult to keep the youngsters due to training times. Cross over between children and adults' teams and need better integration.

Need to go forward as a town and have communication between teams.

Changing facilities, lights, will be future developments. Teams suggested forward thinking 5/10 years ahead, so town is not shafted.

Shores Green – ask for funding for the town – District Council negotiate with developers

Opportunities with schools. Great land which they are not using and needs to be opened up to the community

Open spaces strategy – toilets, storage, pitch maintenance.

WW has been priority – hence consultancy in place.

Teams enquired if any allocated land for pitches? Some pitches are sitting idle. E.g., Madley needs a collective to love it and invest in it.

Discussed the need to make the most of existing stock and as developers come forward, they will be asked to provide football pitches and changing – not necessarily on the same site.

Pitch strategies have to be renewed every three years.

Legacy of Covid – Burwell – goal mouth renovations have taken place. Pitches available for play from 4th September.

From Steve Bott – Witney Vikings:

how can we make more pitches available?

We are on the limit of what we can currently provide on the grounds that we have available, We could add possibly 2 x 7v7 or 1 x 9v9 over marked on King Georges pitch however junior teams are reluctant to go here due to the issues with facilities only being available at Woodgreen school and the distance from the field.

The only other way we can increase pitches is with further suitable land.

From Claire Auton – Tower Hill:

The new Windrush Place / curbridge road pitches - timelines of when will these be available?

Currently in control of developer/WODC – Town Clerk is seeking clarification from WODC to see if they have timescales when these pitches will be available for community use

Response received today:

➔ *the pitches have been laid and I believe there is a 24 month maintenance period on them. It was my understanding from Martin the pitches would go to the secondary school if OCC decide to go ahead and we would ensure a community use agreement was in place. If the school doesn't come they would transfer across to the Town Council.*

They are finding out if they can be used any sooner than 24 months...

Additional ATP which was identified as a need for Witney but is now part of a third secondary school conversation as I understand it.

WTC has written to WODC on several occasions and requested that consideration be given for the 3G pitch to be at West Witney Sports Ground.

Decision is in the hands of WODC – who indicated that it should be part of the secondary school site if it goes ahead.

The Town Clerk checked with WODC Officers in July – no decision has been communicated regarding a secondary school (OCC decision) as yet so cannot confirm the location based on the school situation. However KKP are in the process of completing WODC's Playing Pitch Strategy – one of the things that they want scenario tested in the PPS is where best to locate the 3G in Witney – something that Oxfordshire FA are also keen to see tested.

In lieu of a new artificial pitch - what are the alternative training locations? Given all flood lit local locations are over subscribed.

The only floodlight location Witney Town Council can currently provide is Burwell hard court should any clubs wish to train there. We have two locations that can be used for training during day light hours for this the duration of this season only 1 is the training area clearly shown on the mapping of Burwell pitches and the other is the location of pitch 3 at West Witney, other than the other locations previously suggested by WTC .

Update on WTC obtaining the Woodgreen pitches and changing rooms from WODC.

WODC have advised that freehold isn't available due to a complex legal agreement in place between OCC/WGS and WODC. Both WTC and the School have asked WODC if the legal agreement could be brought to an end in order for a clearer agreement to be put in place that better serves the needs of the community. A response is waited from WODC.

When the £840,000 off site contribution from the Downs road development will be used for development of grass roots football as prescribed in the planning application response from 2016? (Linked to the ATP question).

When WODC have decided where the 3G pitch will go as per above.

And lastly to understand the timelines and ongoing communication channels for the recently released Open spaces strategy more specifically items SP1-SP9.

Rough timescales have been set in the OSS action plan – it will be driven by WTC's Committee process with regular progress reports on each item. Stakeholders, users and potential users will be consulted where possible.

From Vicky Gwatkin (similar questions to Tower Hill)

- Madley Park playing fields (wodc/WGS) – covered above

- Curbridge new pitches (occ/wodc - when the 5 years is up for the new school, if wodc still willing to hand over to us if not a school) – covered above as far as possible

- new atp pitch (whether we can get at WW with FA support and not at curbridge - or wherever is best to put it so long as it isn't tied into the school). Just in this regard, the chap who petitioned to have the ATP pitch (apparently with seating etc) when they shut down witney town football club has contacted us periodically asking where it is! Good question. At last contact I redirected him to Martin at Wodc. Covered above

- KKP report - I know teams have been contacted - anything they have re initial thoughts/plans would be great. Whether they are putting the ATP at WW in their plans/pitch quality improvements etc. Asked for an update from KKP. They have spoken to WODC about the 3G pitch location – but outcome is above.

In the way of an update received today– all community consultation is now complete and KKP currently writing a short key issue/consultation feedback paper. They aim to get this across to Town clerk shortly.

The next steps are to do a site visit.

Hi John,

Roughly the cricket outfield maintenance is £2144 for both sites so the leys is about 40% of West Witney = £857 a year, cricket square maintenance is roughly £12608 for both squares with West Witney being 1498m² and the Leys being 1075 m², this = £4.90 per m² for the maintenance on the squares with 50% of this now allocated to West Witney due to the Leys not being played on, so the real saving would be £2.45 * 1075m² = £2633.75

Total Saving =

£2633.75 Cricket Square

£857.00 Outfield

= £3490.75

Less cutting of cricket square as prestige area = £734.32

Total Saving = £2756.43

Dave Gilson

Contract Manager

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Amounts for Bowls Green Irrigation charges previously agreed by council.

The Operations and Estates Officer wrote to all three clubs stating that I was looking at charging an additional sum of £550 on the current bowls greens annual hire fees payable to Witney Town Council the two clubs at West Witney cost would be split £225 for each club and the Leys Club the full £550, this would cover the annual maintenance charges for each green of £420 as quoted by SJS contractors with an additional sum of £130 for additional works required to bring the system up to its full working potential and maintain it there. This money would be held by Witney Town Council if not used towards any works required to bring the system up to working at its full potential and maintaining it there on going. Should works required cost more than the available sum council will fund the works and reclaim the sums from this charge over time. If at any point, there are remaining sums these will be held to be used when required for future repairs/improvements or replacement of the system or part thereof.

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Making great sport happen



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Advisory Report on the Leys and West Witney Sports Pitches

Report Date: 26th August 2021
Consultant: Michael Boyes



Date of Visit: Tuesday 17th August 2021

Visit Objective: Review of agronomic conditions and performance of the sports pitches at The Leys and West Witney.

Present: John Hickman – Witney Town Council
Angus Whitburn & Tracey Minns – Witney Town Council
Luke Gladdy, Duncan Corby & Terry Turner - Continental Landscapes
Philip Blakeman – Swifts CC
Michael Boyes – Turfgrass Agronomist, STRI Ltd

Weather: Cool with extensive cloud cover (16°C).

Headlines

- Challenging weather patterns have caused a slow start to growth this year but more favourable conditions of late have facilitated increased maintenance operations leading to improved general presentation and performance of the vast majority of playing surfaces under the remit of Continental Landscapes.
- Bowling greens at West Witney and Leys are in reasonable condition, performing well and under increased use which results in the evitable wear and tear. Aside from routine end of season renovations, focus is required on the more heavily impacted areas of both bowling greens to alleviate compaction, improve development of the rooting systems and grass health at the surface. Irrigation systems continue to present a considerable challenge at both bowling venues and greater control by the Council is key to deliver an improvement in the playing surfaces.
- The cricket pitch at the Leys is being routinely maintained with basic cutting operations but has experienced a complete lack of play this season. The cricket pitch at West Witney is subject to a more intense maintenance programme, due to its reported use for some 34 fixtures so far this season and is presented very well and performing excellently according to the representative in attendance from Swifts Cricket Club.
- The football pitch area at West Witney has not received the level of cutting maintenance required to prepare for recommencement of play on 3rd September and significant urgent operations are necessary to reduce the height of cut in graduation ready for play.
- Repairs to goalmouths at West Witney are intact but are poorly established due to a lack of routine irrigation delivery which will be key to ensure that the turf “knits in” sufficiently in these traditionally heavily impacted areas, ahead of play in September.

Key Actions

- Apply a curative wetting agent (i.e., Aqueduct, or similar) to the hydrophobic area identified in the central section of the bowling green at West Witney with an appropriate applicator gun and hand hose. Investigate the delivery of the automated irrigation system to identify shortfalls in the irrigation arc and make the necessary recommendations to the Council and the Clubs for appropriate upgrades and repairs.
- Contact the home Clubs that use West Witney Bowls to re-established autonomous control of irrigation system operation by the appointment contractor Continental Landscapes.
- Make provision as part of the end of season renovations on both bowling greens to undertake additional aeration operations on the heavily compacted perimeter areas adjacent to the pavilions to alleviate soil compaction and develop a more friable soil structure which is conducive to root mass extension and improvement of turf health at the surface.
- Cut football pitch area at West Witney with the Amazone Flail Mower for a cut and collect operation to reduce the height of grass and collect the debris in one single process. Mark out pitches for commencement of play on 3rd September.
- Deliver adequate irrigation to goalmouth repairs on the football pitches at West Witney to ensure the turf “knits in” correctly and provides the necessary levels, stability and traction for these heavily impacted areas.
- Maintain routine maintenance on the cricket square at The Leys to facilitate the preparation of a wicket should the venue be required for a fixture at short notice. Aim to promote increased use of the cricket pitch at the Leys by contacting junior cricket clubs and local schools.
- Ensure the rinks are turned on a regular basis at Leys Bowls Club to alleviate the damage at the rink ends due to the current orientation causing significant wear and tear.
- Continue to promote plans to strip, supplement the loam and restore the levels at the wicket ends of the cricket square at West Witney to deliver a uniform level and eradicate the drop off beyond stumps.

Photo Observations and Comments – Bowls West Witney



Figure 1: General condition of the bowling green at West Witney is acceptable for the time of year.



Figure 2: Closer inspection of the grass sward reveals reasonable grass cover with the typical impact of moss.



Figure 3: Historic disease scarring can be seen in localised, more sheltered sections adjacent to the pavilions.



Figure 4: Inefficiencies in the irrigation coverage is highlighted by hydrophobic soils in a central section of the green.



Figure 5: Compaction is evident on the perimeter edge immediately outside the pavilion due to extensive footfall from the bowlers using the same area to access the green.



Figure 6: Sporadic weed ingress should be removed regularly with hand weeding.

Photo Observations and Comments - Cricket West Witney



Figure 7: Presentation of the cricket square and wickets was very good on the day at West Witney.



Figure 8: The wickets are being well maintained largely by Continental Landscapes with assistance from Swifts CC with additional rolling operations as required.



Figure 9: The historically reported “fall-off” beyond the stumps at the end of the wicket still requires addressing but is reported by Swifts CC, not to influence play.



Figure 10: The outfield is currently maintained with a single weekly cut and additional mowing operations were advised to optimise presentation, performance and definition.



Figure 11: A highly visible plastic chain system has been installed to protect the cricket square but has unfortunately fallen foul to vandalism.



Figure 12: Dedicated covers have undoubtedly proven beneficial in protecting the wicket and feedback on performance of the cricket pitch this season is very positive.

Photo Observations and Comments - Football West Witney



Figure 13: The grass sward is extremely long on the football pitch area at West Witney and will require considerable attention ahead of commencement of play on 3rd September.



Figure 14: Goalmouth repair is encouraging but it is essential that significant and ongoing irrigation is required to help the turf to knit in ahead of use.

Photo Observations and Comments – Bowls Leys



Figure 15: The bowling green at Leys was under heavy use on the day so the inspection was largely limited to the out of play rinks.



Figure 16: In the areas of strongest grass cover the composition, density and healthy of the sward was very good.



Figure 17: Inspection of the soil profile on the green at Leys shows some accumulation of organic matter near the surface.



Figure 18: The rink ends are extremely worn due to localised and heavy footfall from the bowlers under their current orientation.



Figure 19: Localised weed ingress should be removed by hand as part of the routine maintenance, prior to regular cutting operations.



Figure 20: Regular cutting maintenance on the perimeter hedge is key to optimising light penetration and air circulation to improve the growing environment on the green at Leys.

Photo Observations and Comments – Cricket Leys



Figure 21: The cricket square at Leys is quite rightly still being routinely maintained despite a complete absence of fixtures this season.



Figure 22: Soil water management remains key to correct dry patch and fairy ring symptoms seen on the square on the day.



Figure 23: The protective plastic chain has also been installed at the Leys in an attempt to protect the cricket square. Unfortunately, the intervention has suffered the same vandalism.



Figure 24: The cricket outfield is being used for mini-football pitches and a number of community events so is currently being maintained with basic cutting operations.

Recommendations

Bowling Green Maintenance

- End of season renovations centred around well recognised practices, and in conjunction with the STRI Sports Pitch Maintenance Specification agreed with Witney Town Council 2019 have been carried out at both bowling green venues and the playing surface condition and performance was acceptable for the time of year.
- Less oppressive hot and dry conditions have prevailed this summer due to the unseasonal weather patterns and so the substantial drought impact viewed in 2020 is not as prevalent this year. However, the weaknesses and frailties of the irrigation system at both venues remains a concern. It is important that the necessary action is taken to ensure that the most efficient delivery of irrigation is provided by the current systems or urgent steps are taken to identify the shortfall and make the necessary funds available for compartmental upgrade and repair.
- An imbalance in soil moisture management is best highlighted by the hydrophobic soil condition viewed in the central section of the West Witney Bowling Green on the day. An inspection of the soil profile in the central section of the green where the irrigation delivery falls short, and the soil particles are water repellent now and the use of a curative wetting agent tablet via applicator gun and hand hose will be essential to effectively rewet the soils.
- Beyond this immediate action, it is essential that the irrigation system as a whole is audited to identify ongoing problems and make plans for corrective action. Also, the control of the automated irrigation system should rest entirely under the direction of the appointed contractor, Continental Landscapes, as they are the experts in the field with regards to turf care and we should not rely on the Club officials to turn on and off the irrigation system when they deem it necessary. Undoubtedly, representatives of Witney Town Council will need to co-ordinate with the Clubs which use West Witney Bowls to smooth the transition of irrigation control.
- A more balanced picture with regards to soil moisture levels was apparent at The Leys, which as reported had been significantly impacted by the frailties of the irrigation system with prevailing drought conditions last year. Vigilance is advised to ensure that irrigation delivery is co-ordinated with Continental Landscapes in accordance with changing weather patterns.
- The routine cutting maintenance of three times per week (i.e., Monday, Wednesday and Friday) is nicely balanced to service both bowling greens but the necessity to remove dew on a daily basis on the “non-cutting” days still holds true.
- The promotion of vertical cutting operations is still recommended to target the mild moss ingress on the bowls at West Witney, but it is essential at both facilities to target some of the coarser, less desirable grasses and encourage the finer turf grass species we wish to promote.
- The sporadic ingress of opportunistic weeds on both bowling greens is not a major issue but will present a considerable problem with time if the offending plants are not physically removed with a pen knife during routine cutting maintenance. As previously advised, where removal of weeds results in a void in the playing surface ensure sufficient top dressing and seed is available to affect immediate repair.
- As part of the routine end of season renovations, it is suggested that additional solid tine aeration is undertaken on the perimeters of both bowling greens, particularly in areas immediately adjacent to the exit and entry points to the greens from the pavilion, where soil profiles were noted to be extremely compacted and grass cover particularly weak. Attempts should be made to direct players and maintenance crew and equipment to enter and exit the playing surfaces at alternate positions to avoid future damage of this nature.
- Further reduction of the perimeter hedge at the Leys Bowling Green is required at the earliest opportunity to facilitate greater light penetration and air circulation particularly as we enter the latter part of the year, and the sun sits lower in the sky.

End of Season Bowling Green Renovations

- A structured and timely programme of end of season renovations are key to the ongoing health of both bowling greens and should be carried out in line with the well-recognised practices previously adopted and detailed in the STRI Sports Pitch Maintenance Specification 2019.
- It is essential that scarification operations are carried out in multiple directions to remove thatch and surface debris, complemented appropriately as required with hollow core aeration, top dressing and overseeding to restore a healthy, strong surface over free draining soils in preparation for the recommencement of play with the 2022 season.
- The expertise of Continental Landscapes is key in identifying how much material removal is required with regards to each respective surface and thereby how many scarification operations will be necessary to achieve the intended aim.

Cricket - Maintenance

- The maintenance of the cricket square at West Witney is very good under the recognised programme of a weekly cut with the final preparation of the wicket typically carried out on the Saturday or Sunday of the fixture. A reported 34 games have been played this season so far and it was good to have a representative from Swifts Cricket Club on the day of the visit to receive their members feedback directly. The wickets were reported to have performed very well this season, with a nice even bounce, and the Club officials were more than happy with the services provided.
- The main challenge at West Witney Cricket remains the provision of irrigation but the surfaces are being managed within the confines of the current water provision.
- The cricket square at the Leys is being maintained on a routine basis although it was reported that the pitch has received no play this year. The square is being regularly maintained to remain in position to be ready for match play if there is an urgent requirement to cut out a wicket at short notice. It is suggested that the facility should be promoted for junior cricket as a proactive measure to try and engage with the local communities and schools and raise interest in the game.
- Cricket outfielders are being maintained with routine cutting operations, but two different circumstances persist. The outfield at West Witney would benefit from some additional mowing to optimise presentation and definition of the playing area but also enhance performance. At The Leys the cricket outfield is primarily being used for junior football and other community exercise events and is therefore most appropriately maintained under its current mowing regime.
- Some discussions took place regarding water provision at the Leys as it is understood that testing has been carried which confirmed that water pressure is adequate, and it was suggested that at next year's visit a demonstration of the irrigation provision should be undertaken to ascertain the actual delivery of water and whether any further corrective action is required.

Cricket - Renovations

- Despite a complete lack of play at the Leys this season, it is suggested that a full programme of end of season renovations still be carried out by Continental Landscapes at both venues to ensure that the excellent provision at West Witney continues and that the situation at the Leys is ready for immediate use should it be required. It is suggested although the programme is clearly identified with regards the need for hollow coring, multiple scarifications and the introduction of loam top dressing and overseeding, that a more conservative programme could be adopted at Leys due to the lack of play. Undoubtedly some form of renovations will be required as generation of thatch is continual, and the area will have been impacted by general public use throughout the year. As previously identified, the expertise of the contractor will be key on ascertaining the actual level of organic matter accumulation which has developed throughout the Leys cricket square to tailor the suggested operations.
- Deep solid tine aeration (i.e., Verti-Drain) is key to maintaining the outer areas and optimising drainage potential but it was noted that operations of this nature are restricted at The Leys due to the shallow nature of the sewer installation in the area. Ultimate care is advised to avoid these areas in conjunction with direction by Witney Town Council.
- The ongoing issue with the drop off in surface levels beyond stumps on the cricket square at West Witney remains outstanding and at the earliest opportunity as part of end of season renovations works should commence to aim to address this outstanding problem. It was encouraging however to hear from the Swifts Cricket Club official that this issue is having little impact on play at the moment and there has been no complaints with regards to ball/surface interaction. It is suggested that these works cannot be carried out in one end of season renovations and therefore levels should be gradually corrected over a number of seasons to achieve the desired results.

Football - Maintenance

- The football area at West Witney displays extremely long grass growth and immediate action is required to reduce the height of cut in graduation to the desired playing height in preparation for the commencement of play on 3rd September.
- At this late stage the grass is so long that significant debris will arise from any cutting operations so the employment of an Amazone Flail Mower “cut and collect” operation is suggested to reduce the grass height significantly and collect debris in one single operation. It is suggested that in the forthcoming seasons, routine cutting maintenance is absolutely essential throughout the close season to prevent a reoccurrence of this problem.
- Goalmouth repairs have been undertaken at West Witney, but the turf is poorly established at present and significant irrigation delivery is required to ensure stability and traction is achieved with the turf rooting successfully prior to recommencement of play.
- The marking out of the football pitches and installation of the goalposts will also be required in the coming weeks.

Football - Renovations

- End of season renovations at West Witney will follow the programme laid out in the STRI Sports Pitch Maintenance Specification in 2019. A typical programme centres around extensive deep solid tine aeration (i.e., Verti-Drain), delivery of ample top dressing (approximately 160 tonnes) and an overseeding operation. However, discussions took place regarding the adoption of the Earthquake Aerator as this has proven particularly beneficial in previous seasons to optimise drainage potential in these difficult soils.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Boyes', written in a cursive style.

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PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 6 September 2021

Title: Committee Work Plan

Contact Officer: Town Clerk - Sharon Groth

Background

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on the Committee's work plan which includes projects identified as part of the Council's Draft Strategic Plan and Budget Setting agreed in February 2021, as well as the Open Spaces Strategy adopted in June 2021.

This is also an opportune time to consider any future/additional projects to be put forward for the budget setting cycle (November) to prepare a forward plan for 2022 and beyond, to give Officers time to carry out any required research.

Current Situation

Appendix 1 attached lists the current project list – some of which has been budgeted for and is underway – however it should be noted that some of these projects cross reference into the Open Spaces Strategy which should be seen as the overarching plan for the Council and should dictate priorities and timescales.

In the interim, the following updates have been provided by the Operations & Estates Advisor and the Project Officer on the status of current or emerging projects:

Park Road Play Area

The horse and slide have been restored and re-installed in the play area. The Works Team have also prepared the ground around the slide for the safety grass matting. There is some work on clearance still outstanding from the Works Team, which the Maintenance and Environment Officer will schedule in.

The new play equipment has been ordered and Officers are expecting an installation date this week from the contractor – the delay has been due to the fact that the factory in France closed down for the summer.

Skate Park

The Project Officer has had several meetings via Zoom with Cllr Butterfield and Ollie Pockett of Ramp Up the Leys. The Communications Officer has assisted the group with a Survey Monkey Survey to help ascertain what users would like to see in a revitalised park.

The Project Officer has also put Ollie Pockett in touch with the person who drove the campaign “Liven Up the Leys”, for some guidance and help as this was such a success.

At the last meeting, Ramp Up the Leys were planning an open day to raise some awareness and gather more responses. The Town Clerk met with them on 31 August as they are planning to have a stall at Witney Feast as this event may be a captive audience to raise awareness of the project. The Town Clerk has agreed that part of the budget established for this project can be used towards the marketing and awareness raising campaign - as well as support writing a project brief to go out to tender with.

The Project Officer has offered support with assisting in writing grant applications but a firm plan is needed from the group before this project can move forward. The total project cost is anticipated to be in the region of £150,000.

Tennis Courts and MUGAS

The tennis courts at West Witney Sports Ground are due for colour coating and re-lining next year. The Project Officer has obtained quotes for a guide on price for budgeting and has passed this to the RFO for budget setting. Whilst out on other project visits, it was noted that the MUGAs at Burwell and King George V Field were quite badly in need of re lining and therefore quotes were obtained for these to be done at the same time as the tennis courts. This has also been passed to the RFO. The optimum time for the colour coating is April/May and the Project Officer has been in touch with the tennis club to discuss when would be a suitable time. The quotes will need to be refreshed next year but should not increase hugely.

Open Spaces Strategy

During the next two months the Town Clerk, as Strategic Lead, will begin to drill down into the OSS Action Plan in order to establish some clear project plans for implementation by her Officers.

At this stage, as a reminder, attached at appendix 2 is the extract from the OSS - this Committee’s priorities.

In the meantime, the Chair has requested the Town Clerk to provide the following updates:

OSS Ref	Project	Update
SP6	West Witney Sports Ground – using KKP to draft a long term master plan	KKP has finished the consultation with the users and other stakeholders and have identifiable ‘issues’ to help them formulate a plan to address. On 25 August the Operations & Estates Advisor and the Town Clerk met with consultants on site at West Witney to show them around the various premises. They consider the site to be a complex one given its current configuration and will

		therefore be working on some options to present as an interim report in October.
SP2	Madley Park Playing Fields – seek out opportunities to provide additional pitches	WODC have advised that freehold isn't available due to a complex legal agreement in place between OCC/WGS and WODC. Both WTC and the School have asked WODC if the legal agreement could be brought to an end in order for a clearer agreement to be put in place that better serves the needs of the community. A response is waited from WODC.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Each project plan will include an environmental impact assessment to ensure that the Council's declaration and environmental issues are taken into account and isn't to the detriment of the Council's ambitious target of carbon neutrality by 2028.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

A lot of the projects identified have significant costs attached to them and Officers and Councillors should be mindful of not wasting taxpayer's money – but also ensuring the projects have full cost benefit analysis.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and the status of the various projects agreed. Consideration could also be given to any priorities or forward plan the Committee may wish to put forward for the budget setting cycle for projects in 2022 and beyond.

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PARKS AND RECREATION: COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

PROJECT	OSS ref	Year	Estimated timescale	N/L CODE	Original Budget	Comment/Update
					£	
Skate Park Refurb	IS2	20/21	2022	4924/800	40000	£40k budget + £12k S106 Funding TOTAL AVAILABLE £52K - SEE REPORT FOR UPDATE
Park Rd Play Area - Play Equipment	IS1/PO6	20/21	summer 2021	4929/800	30000	£5k budget EMR £12500/Grant THC £2500, Supp Est agreed June for £10k - SEE REPORT FOR UPDATE
Leys Recreation Ground - Splashpark groundworks materials turf/bark	IS1/PO6	20/21	ongoing	361	9000	Transferred into EMR contingency to make areas good when needed
Splash Park Replacement Fund - Due to be replaced 2025	IS1/PO6	20/21	2025	4491/201	25000	EMR £130k setting aside £25k per annum
Leys Recreation Ground - Grounds maintenance on Events Field	PO1/LP3	20/21	ongoing	4037/202	4000	Revenue Growth Item - pitch maintenance/Events field annual maint
Leys Recreation Ground - Speedhumps - match funding OCC		20/21		4923/800	5000	Officers speaking to OCC on status of project - in preparation pool
Burwell Recreation Ground Changing Rooms	PO6/SP1/SP3/IS6	20/21	Prep Pool	4943/800	25000	£25k budget EMR £25k + £25k S106 TOTAL AVAILABLE £75K - In preparation pool
West Witney Sports Ground - Changing Rooms/ Clubhouse/Pitch Improvements	SP5/SP6/PO6	20/21	2022-24	4991/800	463415	OSS Action Plan - KKP currently carrying out feasibility study to come up with plan
Woodgreen Pitches - taking over from WODC bring-up to spec and maintain inc goal posts	SP1/SP2/SP3	21/22	OSS		2500	Part of OSS Action plan - Officers working with WODC/OCC & WGS on trying to amend legal agreement
Leys Recreation Ground - sewerage/redevelopment of Pavilion/Changing Rooms	SP7/SP8/IS6	20/21	OSS			Part of OSS Action plan - Master Plan for the Leys Recreation Ground
Grey Water System Leys Cricket Square/Drains/Bowls/Pavilion	SP7/SP8/	21/22	OSS			Part of OSS Action plan - Master Plan for the Leys Recreation Ground
Take over Bowls Irrigation System	PO1	21/22	2021			Set up replacement fund/maintenance
Quarry Road Play Area = install a piece of play equipment	IS1/PO6	21/22	OSS	4938/800	5000	Part of OSS Action plan to review the play areas and come up with management plan
King Georges Field - path behind MUGA	LP2	21/22	2022			OCC/Active Travel?

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PARKS & OPEN SPACES STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN

Key Themes:

PO	Modernising and upgrading our parks and open spaces
SP	Improving and investing in our sporting provision
LP	Improving and investing in our leisure provision
IS	Improving and investing in our infrastructure provision
EE	Working in the most effective and efficient manner

Committees:

CBP	Climate, Biodiversity & Planning
HC&A	Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments
P&R	Parks & Recreation
PGF/PSC	Policy, Governance & Finance
SC	Stronger Communities

Reference	Action	Responsible Committee	Who Involved?	Commencement?	Completion?
<u>PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE</u>					
PO 6	Draw up long term management plans for each of the main Parks and Open Spaces (to be undertaken post other actions taking place at individual sites)	P&R	WTC Staff / Cllrs / Clubs	Dependent upon individual site decisions taken	On-going
SP 2	Enquire of landowners to try to seek out opportunities to provide additional pitches where required, including making enquiries to access existing third party owned facilities	P&R	WTC Staff / WODC / OCC / Clubs / Associations	On-going	On-going
SP 1	Undertake an audit and needs assessment of sports provision across the Town and then feed this into WODC's planning needs assessment	P&R	WTC Staff / Clubs/ Associations	Jun-21	Oct-21
SP 5	Undertake a comprehensive condition survey of the WWSSC, then prepare and adopt a maintenance and management plan accordingly to secure the short-term useability of the facility	P&R	Appointed Consultants	Jul-21	Oct-21
SP 7	Undertake a comprehensive condition survey of the The Leys pavilion, then prepare and adopt a maintenance and management plan accordingly to secure the short-term useability of the facility	P&R	Appointed Consultants	Jul-21	Oct-21
IS 6	Undertake a condition survey of existing pavilions and toilet facilities and draw up an improvement and upgrade plan accordingly	P&R	Appointed Consultants	Sep-21	Jan-22 (survey stage)
IS 1	Undertake a condition survey of children's play areas, then prepare and adopt a planned improvement and upgrade plan	P&R	WTC Staff	Oct-21	Nov-25
IS 2	Undertake a condition survey of skateparks, MUGA's and other youth provision, then prepare and adopt a planned improvement and upgrade plan	P&R	WTC Staff	Oct-21	Mar-24
LP 2	Identify possible opportunities to provide more, and better fitness trails, cycle routes, park run routes etc, some in conjunction with WODC and OCC	P&R	WTC Staff / Cllrs / WODC/OCC	Nov-21	Mar-22
IS 7	Undertake a needs assessment and, where required, invest in pavilion and toilet provision where none are provided currently	P&R	Appointed Consultants	Nov-21	May-2022 (Plan Stage)
SP 6	Using KKP as project managers, undertake a long-term master plan exercise at the West Witney sports ground in conjunction with stakeholders	P&R	WTC Staff / Cllrs / Club	Dec-21	Oct-22 (Plan Stage)
SP 8	Undertake a long-term master plan exercise at the The Leys recreation ground in conjunction with stakeholders	P&R	WTC Staff / Cllrs / Club	Dec-21	Oct-22 (Plan Stage)
SP 3	Assess shortcomings in pitch maintenance and identify solutions	P&R	WTC Staff / Clubs	Jan-22	Aug-22
PO 2	Consider seeking to attain Green Flag status for relevant Parks and Open Space locations	P&R	WTC Staff / Cllrs	Sep-22	Mar-23
SP 9	Undertake a feasibility and cost analysis study into the provision of a further 3G pitch in the Town, subject to discussions with both WODC and OCC	P&R	TC Staff / Cllrs / OFA / WODC / OCC	Apr-23	Jul-23

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