

## **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE**

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**Date:** Monday, 4 September 2023

**Title:** Recreation Ground Signage

**Contact Officer:** Operations Manager

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### **Background**

Witney Town Council manages 5 recreation grounds, The Leys, Burwell, West Witney, King George's, and Oxlease. Out of those grounds, Burwell is the only site with a recreation ground information sign. The Leys has a ground name sign, but no other information is displayed and again Burwell has a separate ground name sign.

The council has a responsibility to inform recreation ground users of the site operator (Witney Town Council), contact information and any rules. Currently, Burwell is the only site with an acceptable sign but has limited prohibition signs on it, only displaying No Littering, No Fouling and No Alcohol.

### **Current Situation**

As detailed above the council has a responsibility to display certain information to ground users, so the main purpose of these signs is to get that information across.

The Ground name signs on Burwell and the Leys are road-facing and cannot be adapted to contain further information. Burwell recreation ground signs cannot be adapted to contain further probation signs.

New signs would be of a standard A1 or A2 design in the Witney Town Council colour scheme. The signs would be manufactured with standard post fixings to sit on two metal posts to best survive any vandalism.

### **Prohibition Signs**

Except for informing users of the site operator, the key pieces of information to display are the recreation ground rules and any by-laws, coming in the form of prohibition signs. Council staff wouldn't be in a position of authority to enforce the rules on the recreation grounds, but the signs would at least inform users. Listed below is a standard list of probation signs that would be recommended to be displayed at each site.

- No littering
- No Alcohol\*
- No Dog Fouling

- No Camping
- No Fires or BBQ's

More updated prohibition signs may include.

- No Drones
- No Golf
- No E-Scooters
- No unauthorised metal-detecting

*\*This would not apply to events operating under separate licences.*

It may also be appropriate to include No Smoking to extend out the smoke-free zones and No Cycling to make these areas safer. Instruction to contact 101 for ASB or non-urgent crimes will also be included.

### **Additional information**

Officers recommend that it would be good to include some basic information on each recreation ground sign along with rules such as the history of the ground and its use. At this point in the design process, any additional information can still be added but it would be recommended to keep the signs simple and timeless, to avoid them becoming outdated too early.

### **Environmental impact**

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

Once the correct information has been considered and the signs created, their durability should ensure they will not need replacing for many years.

### **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.

The coffee shed at the Leys serves alcohol so although it's restricted to their premises it could be seen as hypocritical to restrict its consumption over the recreation ground, especially when people picnic with alcoholic drinks.

Smoke-free play areas were introduced earlier this year but their expansion to the whole recreation ground may raise criticism.

### **Financial implications**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- Company 1: **Either A** design and production of 5 x A2 size signs & posts £2,625.00 ex VAT + Delivery £150.00 = £2775.00, therefore cost per site is £555.00

**Or B** design and production of A1 size signs & posts £3,250.00 ex VAT + Delivery £150.00 = £3400.00, therefore cost per site is £680.00

- Further quotes will be sought in line with the Council's financial regulations
- The property maintenance budget, 4036 for the Leys Recreation Ground, Burwell and King George's Recreation Ground would cover the cost of the signs.
- Oxlease and West Witney budgets are not sufficient to cover the costs. It is recommended that these signs could be funded through utilising the infrastructure earmarked reserve, the balance of which at 1 April 2023 was £59,944.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. Delegating to officers to draft a final sign design for approval at the next Parks & Recreation committee meeting.
2. The list of prohibition signs to display at each site and if it covers any reported incidents at the parks.
3. Allocation of funds as presented above up to a maximum for Option A or B from Company 1, delegating to Officers to choose the supplier offering the best value once all quotes have been received.