

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 1 July 2024

Title: Major Projects

Contact Officer: Project Officer

Background

As you are aware, Witney Town Council's Open Spaces Strategy cited five themes to deliver improvements for our community: Parks, Sport, Leisure, Infrastructure & Effectiveness.

This report aims to provide you with an update on the major projects linked to Parks and Recreation, which are: 'Wheeled Sports Park', 'West Witney Sports & Social Club', 'Courtside Master Plan', 'Raleigh Crescent Sports & Social Area', 'Splashpad' and 'Parking Restrictions on the Leys'.

The Leys - Wheeled Sports Park



The park was opened at the end of March 2024 and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The project is almost complete, except for the following tasks, which are included in the report for update purposes:

- **Litter:** Due to increased footfall, litter at the park has significantly increased. WTC operational teams continue to clean daily, but to help reduce litter officers have sourced a new, large high-durability bin from Bendcrete, instead of coaching sessions as they were too complicated to set up (please see event enquiries below). It is the same style of bin used around Witney and will be installed week commencing 24/6/2024.
- **Anti-Social behaviour:** Officers are pleased to report no incidents of Anti-Social behaviour have been reported to the police since May 2024.
- **Event enquiries:** The popularity of the skatepark has prompted organisations to contact WTC asking for permission to exclusively use the skatepark. After reviewing

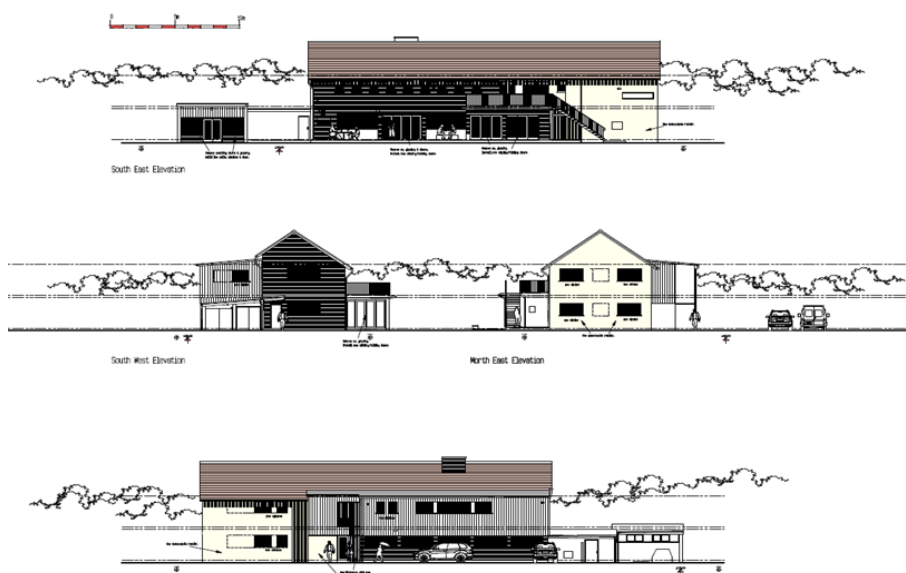
requirements, there are several liability/insurance/complaint risks, which prevent WTC giving formal permission. However, if a group/organisation wanted to use the park there was nothing stopping them, provided they obeyed the rules displayed on the signage and did not stop other people using the park.

- **Graffiti:** Officers are currently assessing the feasibility of running a competition to invite local graffiti artists to design and create some artwork in accordance with our brief which will focus on “youth”, “colour”, “inclusivity” & “Witney”. Officers hope this artwork will make the park more vibrant, welcoming and deter further vandalism. (This is also covered in “Stronger Communities” committee meetings).

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

West Witney Sports & Social Club (WWSSC)



Current Situation

- Planning Permission was approved in December 2023 with a requirement to demonstrate adequate drainage provision.
- WTC are currently exploring funding options and applying for grants to support this project. Please note the “Community Ownership Fund” closed due to Pre-Election rules, therefore “Sports England” and “National Lottery” are our main targeted funders.
- At the design and specification stage to prepare to procure and tender.
- Anticipated construction start date is late 2024, subject to the co-ordination with the new depot build project and requirements from any successful funding applications.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

The Leys - Courtside Hub



Current Situation

- Due to building footprint being moved to safeguard a drainage chamber – the District Council need to reassess the planning submission. WTC have been given reassurance from Courtside that this poses zero risk to their project, but it has impacted construction timescales. As a result, the opening date has been pushed back to late 2024.
- Courtside have issued community comms through their channels and WTC have supported with messages through social media/online to mitigate risks of complaints and reputational damage (through association, as not WTC Project).
- Work is due to recommence shortly.
- A planning application is being produced for a new WTC depot to be built at the West Witney recreation ground

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

Raleigh Crescent – New Sports and Social Area



Current Situation

- WTC and WODC have reached an agreement on the field, which enables WTC to lead with construction of Sports and Social Area, utilising S106 monies.
- Due to playpark at the other end of field, the concept is to build a Multi-Use-Game-Area (MUGA) and a Multi-Use-Social-Area (MUSA). The MUGA is an enclosed area for football/basketball/netball etc. The MUSA is an inclusive outdoors exercise area, normally with calisthenics equipment, such as pull up bars and aerobic areas combined with seating areas.
- Consultation has already started with four contractors expressing interest and submitting ideas.
- Officers are collating ideas and concepts from contractors to present to community at a couple of consultation events (Witney Carnival and local community centre). From these officers will be able to collect community opinions and requirements to create councillor recommendations and procurement tender.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

The Leys Splashpad – reactivation and refurbishment



Current Situation

- The Splashpad has been reactivated for the summer period. Work has been carried out to repair several components, such as pumps, electronics and drainage

pipework, which means the community can now enjoy this popular park during Summer.

- Started work on exploring refurbishment of Splashpad for 2025 to improve appearance, reliability, energy efficiency and water usage.
- Community consultation planned over summer period starting at the Witney Carnival.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

The Leys Parking Restrictions



Current Situation

- Officers have researched and clarified the intricate process to implement a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).
- Courtside have offered to assist with any associated costs.
- Officers are currently assessing the appropriate level of parking restrictions to impose on the parking bays.
- Disabled bays are 'out of scope' for the TRO
- Planning to make councillor recommendations and apply for the TRO in July – the process will take approx. 4 months but need to allow extra time for election period because the TRO requires approval from Secretary of State.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.