

SPORT & PLAY COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 7 September 2020

Title: Facilities at Windrush Place Development, West Witney

Contact Officer: Sharon Groth – Town Clerk

Background

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the facilities at Windrush Place, West Witney, which are likely to be transferred to Witney Town Council at some point, and which consequently will fall under the responsibility of this Committee.

Wheeled Sports & Destination Play Area

The current situation is that WODC need to commission a site survey in order to plot the underground services – this will then give a clear picture where the play area can be located. The funding also includes the burying of the overhead cables.

The Town Council and District council has already resolved to use the services of Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association to project manage this project, based on similar projects at Madley Park and Ralegh Crescent. These fees will be covered by the S106 funding – however there will still be the requirement for Town Council Officer(s) to be involved with the need for regular meetings with the Project Officer as well as input once the project starts.

Until the site survey has been undertaken this project cannot proceed any further at this current time. Furthermore, nor does the Town Council Officers have the capacity.

Sports Pitches/Pavilion

Members may be aware that there was a planning application for football pitches and a pavilion, including parking, towards the end of last year for Windrush Place.

The update from WODC is that the planning application is still going through the process because the applicant didn't submit required documents and plans until more recently – and now it is sat with OCC for comment.

Therefore, there are no timescales as yet for laying out of these pitches – however once they have been laid out it will likely be a full 12 months before they can be used.

3g Pitch

Whilst this isn't directly linked with Windrush Place development and nor is it funded via the S106 from this development (it comes from Downs Road developer funding on the old Witney United FC site), it does have some bearing on the possible facilities there.

Under the previous Council Administration, the Town Clerk wrote expressing the Council's interest in having the 3g pitch located at West Witney Sports Ground.

According to WODC Officers no decision has been made for the location as yet, as it is waiting on the production of the playing pitch strategy which was delayed due to COVID. Consultants are due to start that piece of work in the Autumn and will take about 9 to 12 months to complete.

However earlier indications were that the other possible site for the 3g pitch to be located was at the secondary school site (whether it goes ahead or not – because of the other facilities being provided there as mentioned above).

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.

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.

Members should be mindful of the impact on Officer time taking on anymore projects at the present time as there are significant capacity issues that need to be addressed – particularly given the additional work COVID-19 has generated.

Financial implications

The capital cost of these facilities will be covered by the Section 106 Developer Funding, which is currently held by West Oxfordshire District Council.

Recommendations

The Town Clerk has outlined the required works above and the fact that WODC are very much in control of the funds, timescales and ancillary works required before the projects can begin.

Members are therefore invited to note this report.