

SPORT AND PLAY COMMITTEE

Date: 11th January 2021

Title: West Witney and Leys Bowls Green Irrigation Systems

Contact Officer: Operations and Estates Officer – John Hickman

Background

Following recent issues regarding the Bowls Green Irrigation systems breaking down at each of these greens and the associated issues getting the bowls clubs to maintain and repair them. Continental landscapes have asked if the irrigation systems can be taken into Witney Town Council ownership. It has been suggested to the clubs that clubs hand the Irrigation systems to Witney Town Council. Council at the Sport and Play Committee meeting of the 2nd November 20 Item SP354 resolved that

SP354 2. that subject to a verbal update from the Operations and Estates Officer from a meeting with the bowls club, the bowls green irrigation systems be transferred into the control and responsibility of the Council.

Current Situation

This matter was raised with the clubs at the annual Bowls Green users meeting on the 29th October 20. It was explained to Clubs that the annual maintenance charges would be passed back to clubs through their annual hire charge maintenance per annul would cost £420 at each site approx... Clubs wished to consult with members before agreeing to this request and wanted to know the approx. associated cost to each club. Clubs have now responded Witney Town Bowls Club have agreed in principle, West Witney Bowls and Witney Mills Bowls have both agreed to hand Witney Town Council their irrigation system.

The Operations and Estates Officer will now get SJS back to site to give an exact figure on maintenance costs, to check the systems over for any work required to bring the systems up to a serviceable condition. Also, an associated cost to bring Witney Town Bowls irrigation control system out of the building to a position where the contractors can access the controls.

The Operations and Estates Officer can then calculate the associated cost for each club to be added to their annual hire charges.

The Operations and Estates Officer will update council again at the next Sport and Play Committee meeting on the 1st March 21 and is hopeful that the irrigation systems will be in Witney Town Councils ownership by the start of the Bowls Season in April.

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. With contractors having full control of the bowls green irrigation systems, it is hoped that water usage can be kept to a minimum of what is required to keep the bowls greens in a good condition without excessive over or under watering.

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

The associated costs for the maintenance and upkeep of the irrigation systems to be reclaimed through the bowls green hire charges.

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report.