

## **SPORT AND PLAY COMMITTEE**

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**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021  
**Title:** Operational Report  
**Contact Officer:** Operations and Estates Officer – John Hickman

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### **Background**

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of improvements and repairs since the last meeting.

### **Current Situation**

#### **Play Areas**

Play areas are still open and disinfection routine is continuing to be followed. It should be noted that the Play areas have been very well used during the recent lock down and with the extremely wet conditions have become very muddy and the grass has been worn away in particular in the Leys Play area. During the first lockdown many of the badly worn areas of the Leys play area were turfed and seeded whilst the play area was closed, however conditions are now back to where they were if not worse.

It may be necessary at the end of the summer holidays but before the late autumn to have to shut the Leys Play area for remedial works to the ground in order to bring the ground conditions back to a good condition.

The Leys Play area has always been extremely heavily used all year round especially even more so when the weather is good, and the splash park is open that the grass within the play area and splash park are not able to within stand the level of footfall particularly in wet weather. Consideration should be given as to how this can be addressed/remedied in future.

#### **Splash Park**

The annual contract for the maintenance of the splash park which is normally agreed so the Splash Park can open for the Easter Holidays has not at present been agreed, the Operations and Estates Officer will commission these works as soon as Government Guidance confirms these type of facilities will be allowed to open this year.

#### **Football**

Football is currently prevented by Covid restrictions however goal mouths in particular those at West Witney are still being badly worn by children using them during the lock down whilst the schools are closed. Teams are becoming upset and are requesting that they be fenced off

at West Witney however it is part of a public open space and the children do require some where to exercise. The Operations and Estates Officer has asked the grounds contractors to ensure the goal mouth are kept fit for play for when sport returns and if damage begins to get excessive advise the Operations and Estates Officer and the worst goal mouths will be fenced off at that point to recover.

### **West Witney Toilet provision for Sports.**

The Operations and Estates Officer has ordered 1 x accessible toilet and 1 x standard single toilet to cover requirements at the site in the longer term if required. Lead times are approx. 7 days for the single toilet and approx. 5 weeks for the accessible toilet from payment of invoice. Witney tennis association is planning on running Witney Open Grade 4 Junior Tournament and Mens and Ladies Tournament running from 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> April. I am also sure that Tower Football club will be wanting to start play as soon as they possibly can within the Covid restrictions.

### **Preparations for Summer Sports**

All materials have been purchased to carry out the required maintenance, the works team will be carrying this work out over the coming weeks whenever the weather is suitable.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Party Events**

A request has been received regarding the May Fair from Mr Perry Hatwell for a provisional booking on the Leys for 17<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May.

The Witney Carnival have requested to meet with Officers and Councillors to discuss this years Carnival on 10<sup>th</sup> July.

### **West Witney Sports Ground – Pedestrian Access Wet & Boggy**

Park Run have not run for many months now however the new entrance from the woodland has become extremely wet and boggy ground this is due solely to pedestrian access with people using this entrance rather than the entrance at the South East corner to avoid the conditions there. If Park Run were running Saturday runs the situation would be much worse and the area would become impassable.

Council gave Park Run Permission to look into and construct a hogging path however they were unable to raise the required funding required £20,000 plus, and therefore this has not progressed to resolve these issues.

The purpose of this report is to make Members aware of the situation and Officers will look into alternative solutions in time for the next budget cycle – as no funding has been set aside for these works.

**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.

**Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report.