

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 6 September 2021

Title: Committee Work Plan

Contact Officer: Town Clerk - Sharon Groth

Background

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on the Committee's work plan which includes projects identified as part of the Council's Draft Strategic Plan and Budget Setting agreed in February 2021, as well as the Open Spaces Strategy adopted in June 2021.

This is also an opportune time to consider any future/additional projects to be put forward for the budget setting cycle (November) to prepare a forward plan for 2022 and beyond, to give Officers time to carry out any required research.

Current Situation

Appendix 1 attached lists the current project list – some of which has been budgeted for and is underway – however it should be noted that some of these projects cross reference into the Open Spaces Strategy which should be seen as the overarching plan for the Council and should dictate priorities and timescales.

In the interim, the following updates have been provided by the Operations & Estates Advisor and the Project Officer on the status of current or emerging projects:

Park Road Play Area

The horse and slide have been restored and re-installed in the play area. The Works Team have also prepared the ground around the slide for the safety grass matting. There is some work on clearance still outstanding from the Works Team, which the Maintenance and Environment Officer will schedule in.

The new play equipment has been ordered and Officers are expecting an installation date this week from the contractor – the delay has been due to the fact that the factory in France closed down for the summer.

Skate Park

The Project Officer has had several meetings via Zoom with Cllr Butterfield and Ollie Pockett of Ramp Up the Leys. The Communications Officer has assisted the group with a Survey Monkey Survey to help ascertain what users would like to see in a revitalised park.

The Project Officer has also put Ollie Pockett in touch with the person who drove the campaign “Liven Up the Leys”, for some guidance and help as this was such a success.

At the last meeting, Ramp Up the Leys were planning an open day to raise some awareness and gather more responses. The Town Clerk met with them on 31 August as they are planning to have a stall at Witney Feast as this event may be a captive audience to raise awareness of the project. The Town Clerk has agreed that part of the budget established for this project can be used towards the marketing and awareness raising campaign - as well as support writing a project brief to go out to tender with.

The Project Officer has offered support with assisting in writing grant applications but a firm plan is needed from the group before this project can move forward. The total project cost is anticipated to be in the region of £150,000.

Tennis Courts and MUGAS

The tennis courts at West Witney Sports Ground are due for colour coating and re-lining next year. The Project Officer has obtained quotes for a guide on price for budgeting and has passed this to the RFO for budget setting. Whilst out on other project visits, it was noted that the MUGAs at Burwell and King George V Field were quite badly in need of re lining and therefore quotes were obtained for these to be done at the same time as the tennis courts. This has also been passed to the RFO. The optimum time for the colour coating is April/May and the Project Officer has been in touch with the tennis club to discuss when would be a suitable time. The quotes will need to be refreshed next year but should not increase hugely.

Open Spaces Strategy

During the next two months the Town Clerk, as Strategic Lead, will begin to drill down into the OSS Action Plan in order to establish some clear project plans for implementation by her Officers.

At this stage, as a reminder, attached at appendix 2 is the extract from the OSS - this Committee’s priorities.

In the meantime, the Chair has requested the Town Clerk to provide the following updates:

OSS Ref	Project	Update
SP6	West Witney Sports Ground – using KKP to draft a long term master plan	KKP has finished the consultation with the users and other stakeholders and have identifiable ‘issues’ to help them formulate a plan to address. On 25 August the Operations & Estates Advisor and the Town Clerk met with consultants on site at West Witney to show them around the various premises. They consider the site to be a complex one given its current configuration and will

		therefore be working on some options to present as an interim report in October.
SP2	Madley Park Playing Fields – seek out opportunities to provide additional pitches	WODC have advised that freehold isn't available due to a complex legal agreement in place between OCC/WGS and WODC. Both WTC and the School have asked WODC if the legal agreement could be brought to an end in order for a clearer agreement to be put in place that better serves the needs of the community. A response is waited from WODC.

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.

Each project plan will include an environmental impact assessment to ensure that the Council's declaration and environmental issues are taken into account and isn't to the detriment of the Council's ambitious target of carbon neutrality by 2028.

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.

A lot of the projects identified have significant costs attached to them and Officers and Councillors should be mindful of not wasting taxpayer's money – but also ensuring the projects have full cost benefit analysis.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and the status of the various projects agreed. Consideration could also be given to any priorities or forward plan the Committee may wish to put forward for the budget setting cycle for projects in 2022 and beyond.