

**SPORTS & RECREATION  
GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

Met on Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at 7.30 pm via Video Conferencing

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Jenny Roberts, Graham Leonard (Chair), Geoff Churchard, John Newton Davies  
Public Members Lauren Lewis, Chris Gallagher, Abigail Rutland Turner, Philippa Mulberry

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillors Janet Churchard, John Foster,  
Public Member Tom Clegg

**OFFICERS:**

Simon Thwaites, Clerk, Rebecca Pannese, Project and Amenities Officer

**426 Declarations of Interest**

There was none.

**427 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Sports and Recreation Ground Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020, having been previously circulated, were reviewed and it was:

**Resolved**

That the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record.

**428 Covid Update**

Committee members were informed that courts and gym equipment taken out of service during 'lockdown' are once again open.

**429 Verbal update by the Project and Amenities Officer on Ongoing Projects in the Parish**

The Project and Amenities Officer update Members on the following;

- Skate Ramp at Jersey Farm Open Space. Additional soundproofing, funded by savings elsewhere in the Sports and Recreation budget, has been fitted. This has been successful in reducing the noise impact on neighbouring properties and no further complaints have been received since installation. The ramp continues to be very popular.
- Basketball at William Bell Open Space. This facility is being well used and with no reported incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- Trampoline and Wet Pour Surfacing at Sherwood Park. The replacement trampoline is proving as popular as it was before being taken out of service for safety reasons.
- Outdoor Gym at Spencer Meadow. Outside of lockdown, this facility is being regularly used, complimenting the use of the location by sports clubs and boot camps.

**430 Astro Turf at Spencer Meadow Courts**

Members continued to discuss the potential conversion of one of the Spencer Meadow multi use game areas to an astro-turf court for football. Issues discussed included the current level of court hire for tennis use, the potential use of a new 5-aside pitch by the football clubs and the frustration experienced by hirers having to dismantle goals/nets and

set up for their own sport before being able to play. It was agreed that the Chair, Councillor Leonard, and the Project and Amenities Officer would seek to clarify some of the above issues and report back to the committee in due course.

#### **431 Fire Pits in Open Spaces in the Parish**

Committee members discussed issues around residents lighting barbeques and small fires on some open spaces during the Summer months. It was;

##### **Resolved**

To pursue this initiative in principle, the Chair and Project and Amenities Officer to further investigate.

#### **432 Bike Track on the Jersey farm Open Space**

The committee considered at length a report commissioned by the Parish Council proposing a process to be followed for the creation of a mountain bike trail within the fenced adventure playground. Several issues were discussed including access to the trail, emergency access and whether the trail limited the potential for future installations on the site. It was unanimously;

##### **Resolved**

To proceed with the project in accordance with the report as circulated. The Project and Amenities Officer to obtain quotes in accordance with Standing Orders and to liaise with committee members as appropriate.

#### **433 Better Use of the Jersey Farm Open Space (South end)**

This agenda item was requested at a previous meeting, at which time consideration was still be given to the Parish Council taking transfer of the open space. The matter was discussed in this context and committee members were asked to bring ideas to the next meeting.

#### **434 Facilities for Children with Special Educational Needs**

Committee members discussed the facilities available to young people with disabilities of all types. The question of there being wheelchair access to our playgrounds arose and the Clerk undertook to make enquiries regarding the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act on this matter and in the general provision of play apparatus for those with special needs.

#### **435 Access to William Bell Open Space**

The Clerk raised a request recently made by a member of public that access to the William Bell Open Space from one of the three entry points from The Ridgeway and Furse Avenue be made easier for anyone pushing a double buggy. After discussion, the Clerk undertook to make enquiries.

#### **436 Matters of Note**

- A new animal-proof bin has been installed at Sherwood Park in a bid to avoid waste (in particular food waste) being pulled out and distributed around the park causing health risks to dogs.
- The Clerk has still not heard from the District Council with final estimated costs relating to maintenance of the playground and open space adjacent to Wheat Close. A further reminder has been sent.
- The Council has resolved not to pursue a transfer of the Jersey Farm Open Space because of concerns over maintenance of the lagoon.

- A new £250,000 playground has been built at Verulamium Park. Committee members may want to visit the site to generate ideas for parish play areas in the future.
- A bin has been ordered for installation next to the skate ramp at Jersey Farm Open Space.
- A small piece of apparatus at Sherwood Park has broken and been removed (steel dish). It is recommended that committee members consider a replacement during the next committee walkabout.

**437 Items for Future Meetings**

There were none.

**438 Matters Arising Since the Circulation of the Agenda**

The Clerk informed committee members that new equipment has been ordered by the District Council to replace broken items within the playground adjacent to Wheat Close.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.44pm.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – to be confirmed**

Chair .....

Date.....