



## **RECREATION AND PROPERTIES** **COMMITTEE**

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Recreation & Properties Committee at the following, place and date.

**Date: 23 June 2009**

Time: Immediately following the Special Community & Civic Resources Committee Meeting

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Devizes

Enquiries: 01380 722160

Chairman      Councillor Mrs Evans  
                    The Town Mayor (Councillor Leighton)

Councillors: Mrs Burton    Callow      Gudgeon  
                    Hopkins    Parsons    Smith  
                    A R Taylor   Mrs Winchcombe

## **AGENDA**

### **1. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 26 May 2009, which have been circulated with the agenda.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

To receive any disclosure(s) of interest by a Councillor or an officer in matters to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

### **4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to the Council.

A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business

**5. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES INCOME FIGURES**

Income figures for the Council's venues for the period April 2009 to May 2009 are attached (doc 5/1-5/3). These figures indicate the monthly income and cumulative income against budget

**6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FEEDBACK**

Attached to this agenda (doc 6/1) is the Venues Customer Feedback information received up to the end of May 2009.

**7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES ROOM USAGE REPORT**

As requested by this committee, officers have prepared monthly occupancy figures for all hireable areas. In addition there is a summary of last years performance.

The report summaries are as follows

Room Usage Summary 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009  
Room Usage Summary April 2008  
Room Usage Summary April 2009  
Room Usage Summary May 2008  
Room Usage Summary May 2009

Reports show usage of rooms over a 24 Hour period by name, number of bookings, total hours booked and income as hire charge.

Hire charge income for 2008-9 (12 months) was £137,894.27 (average £11,491.19 per month).

Income from 1 April 2009 to 31 May 2009 (2 months) was £24,610.15 (average £12,305.07 per month).

It should be noted that these reports currently include figures for usage of the Large and Small Greens, Football Pitches and Changing Rooms, which cannot at present be separated. This has the effect of lowering the "average covers" totals.

We are currently investigating creating new reports, which will remove any non-venues information.

## **8. REPORT FOR DECISION – HILLWORTH PARK FOOTBALL PITCH**

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee makes a decision regarding what action, if any, is to be taken regarding the future use of the football pitch and the maintenance and storage of equipment.

### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the present condition of the pitch and equipment so that they can come to a decision.

### **Background**

The goalposts at Hillworth Park have been removed due to constant vandalism. The goalposts are being stored in the yard but have been taken out once already by youngsters who knew where they were kept. We now only have one usable goal net, which is the one previously donated by a member of the public. The other net is in a very bad state, but could be repaired again. The public perception is that the area is being kept clear pending the redevelopment of the park.

As this is not the football season, the area is being used for cricket and informal play, and the grass is being cut regularly.

### **Options Considered**

The goalposts have been repaired, but it is likely they will be damaged again. One net could be repaired, but another one is required.

When the work in the Park is completed, a Park Warden will be on duty as additional security, but at the moment this facility is not available.

Councillors may decide to continue with the present arrangement for now.

### **Implications & Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There is a financial implication in that costs will be incurred, eg new goals cost £100 – 155 each and nets £30 each. It will be necessary for parks staff to remove and store nets when not in use and repair them when required

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

Officers are not aware of any legal implications.

Under the Local Government Act 1976 s19, the Council has a power to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications.

**Risk Assessment**

Use of the area for informal play without any equipment poses little or no risk.

**Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

**9. REPORT FOR DECISION – COMMUNITY BUILDING**

**Recommendation**

That the committee notes the programme for the completion of a community building at Windsor Drive and agreed to support the Allotment Association with an opening event.

**Purpose of the Report**

To note the programme of work for the new Community Building on the Windsor Drive allotment site.

To decide the future cleaning arrangements for the service facilities.

To decide if they would support an Allotment Association event to open the building.

**Background**

Following the successful application by Robert Hitchins Ltd to develop the former Spitalcroft allotment site a section 106 agreement was drawn up requiring a new allotment site to be developed on Windsor Drive.

Various conditions was placed on the company which were to be included in the Windsor Drive allotment site, one of which was the inclusion of a community building. After negotiations were completed it was agreed that the funds for this work would be committed to the Town Council in order that it could control the final design and specification.

Following a tender process, Gaiger Brothers Ltd were awarded the contract and work commenced on week commencing the 4 May. The work is due to be completed week commencing 13 July.

The building contains a large open space with a separated kitchenette and toilets for use of the allotment holders.

It is anticipated that the allotment holders will take responsibility for the toilets and kitchen and in return they will keep them clean.

The allotment association would like to organise an open event which it hopes the Town Council will financially support this event.

**Options Considered**

1. The Committee needs to decide if it agrees that the Allotment Holders take on the responsibility for the cleaning of the facilities in the new community building.
2. If the Committee will support the Allotment Association for the opening of this new community facility.

### **Implications & Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

The council are being asked to make a small financial contribution towards the event

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Small Holding & Allotments Act 1908 places a duty on the Council to provide allotments, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19 provided the Council with the power to provide community centres. The payment will be ancillary to those powers and duties.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision

#### **Risk Assessment**

Officers are not aware of any risk implications associated with this decision.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

### **10. REPORT FOR DECISION – CRAMMER WALL**

#### **Recommendation**

The committee is recommended to agree to ring fence the balance of the earmarked reserve, used for the repair to the Town Council portion of the wall, for use on the remaining wall repairs.

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To seek guidance from members about the balance of the unspent reserve for the Crammer Wall repair.

#### **Background**

Following the completion of the repair works to the Council's element of the Crammer wall, £24,033 remains unspent in the earmarked reserve.

Officers are aware that the PCC for St James Church are seeking funding to repair the church's section of wall and although there have been a number of informal meetings between the council and the church, no formal request has been received and no scheme has been put forward. It is clear the wall needs to be repaired and there is an expectation from local residents that the work will be sooner rather than later.

#### **Options Considered**

The committee needs to decide if they wish to ring fence the whole balance of the reserve to help meet repaired costs once they are known.

#### **Implications & Risks**

##### **Financial and Resource Implications**

The funding highlighted in the report has been precepted for the crammer repairs using the appropriate powers.

##### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Public Heath Act 1936 s260 provides the council with the power to deal with ponds and ditches.

##### **Environmental Implications**

The full environmental implication for the works is unknown, however these would be established prior to the commencement of the work

##### **Risk Assessment**

Officers are not aware of any risk associated with this decision.

##### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

#### **11. REPORT FOR DECISION – LIGHTING THE PLAY AREA ON THE GREEN**

##### **Recommendation**

That the committee advises officers if it wishes to pursue this matter.

##### **Purpose of the Report**

To guide officers on the future provision of lighting for the new play area on the Green.

##### **Background**

During question time at a previous meeting of this committee, it was requested that the issue of the lighting of the play area on the Green be brought forward as an agenda item.

At the time this issue was raised there were concerns about level of use and conflict between different age groups.

Officers are seeking instructions from members on how they would like to progress this matter.

In guiding officers, the committee should consider the comments of the police architect liaison officer with regard to lighting, which is summarised as follows "*Areas where you do not want to be come gathering spaces after dark should not be lit.*" This advice was given in relation to Hillworth Park but the comments are equally relevant for the Green.

### **Options Considered**

The committee needs to guide officer how they wish to progress this issue.

### **Implications & Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Financial implications are unknown at this time.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s 19 give the council powers to provide play areas

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are not aware of any environmental implication associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

Officers are not aware of any risk implications associated with this decision.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998 the committee has to determine if the installation of lighting on the Green will increase or decrease crime issues.

## **12. REPORT FOR DECISION – GREEN LANE CHANGING FACILITIES**

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the existing building, which has served as a toilet and changing facilities at Green Lane Playing Field for the past 12 years should be demolished as it is now in a dangerous condition.

### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the present state of the building and to ask the Committee for consent to proceed with demolition work.

### **Background**

The changing room building has been subjected to numerous acts of vandalism, most notably over the past 6 months, and is now in an unsafe condition.

Windows are broken, sanitary ware smashed, interior walls and doors wrecked, and ceilings damaged. Water pipes and fittings have been damaged so the water has now been turned off. Equipment such as corner flags and football nets have now been removed. All keys have been returned to Devizes Town Council and the building has been locked from the outside. There are now no facilities available at the site.

The future of the site is uncertain and has been for some time. There are no available funds to cover the cost of constantly replacing equipment and repairing the building. Although we are still taking bookings for use of the football pitches, we cannot offer any changing facilities, and therefore organisers and referees may prefer not to use the pitches. This will have a direct impact on future bookings and income.

Costs are still being incurred as the site has to be maintained – e.g. grass cutting and marking out the pitches.

The site is not secure and the apparently neglected empty building invites further vandalism in the area, including recent usage by off-road vehicles and people setting fires.

### **Options Considered**

As no decision has been reached with regard to the future of the site, and the building in its current state is unusable and dangerous, it is recommended that the building should be demolished and the site cleared. Quotations are being sought for this work.

### **Implications & Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no funds set aside for this work and it is recommended that the funds be taken from reserves.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

Under the Public Health Act 1875 s164, Local Government Act 1972 Sch 14, Para 27, Public Health Amendment Act 1890 s44, Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10, Local Government Act 1976 s19 and Public Health Act 1961 s54, the Council has power to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications.

**Risk Assessment**

Risks of further damage to the building and site are medium to high if it is not demolished.

**Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

**13. REPORT FOR DECISION – THE OLD LOCK UP**

**Background**

Since the last report the rope support on the stairs has been completed to the satisfaction of officers.

**Current Status**

Officers contacted Wiltshire Council in an attempt to get an input into any health & safety concerns. No response or contact has been forthcoming.

Additional works required to complete the project are as follows:-

Appropriate LED Lighting (including emergency lighting)	£1860
Removal of Old cisterns (when Lock-up was used as an Air Raid Shelter) and making good of brickwork surrounding new fire door	£ 200
Door Furniture on Fire Door	£ 150
Manikin	£ 200
	—————
Total	£2410

The condition of the stairs and the external door are considered adequate although subsequent remedial works may be required. Furniture may also be a consideration if the lock-up was to be used to it's full potential.

**Implications & Risks**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

A grant for £5000 from Kennet District Council was fully utilised in the removal of the Old Oil Tank and remedial works to the stairs. The committee needs to decide if the proposed expenditure would be recovered in the longer term with income generated by bookings taken by Ghost Tours, Museum visits and the potential usage as a film set. The funding highlighted in the report does not form part of the current year precept.

**Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

Power to contribute to Tourism under The Local Government Act 1972, s.144.

**Environmental Implications**

Officers are not aware of any environmental implication for the proposed works.

**Risk Assessment**

Officers have resolved to detail a risk assessment for members of the public who enter and exit the lock-up including fire exit procedures.

**Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

**14. QUESTION TIME**

Members will be allowed a short period in which to put questions on matters within the remit of this Committee which are not contained in the report of matters formally considered by the Committee at this meeting. The question may be answered at the meeting or may be referred back to the Committee at a later date. The question may not be the subject of any further details.

TOWN CLERK