

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

16th August 2018.

To Members of the Leisure Committee

Councillors Sara Bedford, Jean Bowman, Liz Burns, Jane Lay, Robin Powell, Hitesh Tailor, Alison Ward & John Wyatt (Chairman).

The next meeting of the Leisure Committee will be held at the above address on Wednesday 22nd August 2018 at 7:30 pm when your presence is summoned for the purpose of transacting the business outlined below. The press and public are welcome to attend the meeting.

Tim Perkins
Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
3. **Public Participation**
To note if any members of the public have requested to speak at this meeting, in accordance with the Parish Council's Public Speaking Arrangements.
4. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on**
20th June 2018.
5. **Reports from Allotments Representatives**
To receive reports from the Allotments Representatives.
6. **Reports from Sports Representatives**
To receive reports from the Sports Representatives.
7. **Key Projects 2018-2020**
To consider the above. (Clerk's report item 1 and enclosed report.)
8. **Usage of Playing Fields by Commercial Fitness Groups**
To consider the above. (Clerk's report item 2)
9. **Clerk's Report**
 - i. Aligning Fees & Charges Junior Teams with FA age groups. (Clerk's report item 3i)
 - ii. Contractor Performance - Quotes and Specifications (Clerk's report item 3ii)
 - iii. Leisure Committee Meeting - October 2018.

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Clerk's Report - Leisure Committee - August 2018

1. Key Projects

Item 20 - Depot Project

The depot surface is in urgent need of remedial works as it has further deteriorated over the severe winter.

The images appended to this report (appendix 1) were taken after a period of moderate rainfall, the extent of the flooding is much more significant after heavy or prolonged rain.

The works are not limited to the surface, significant improvements will be required to site drainage. Initial estimates for the works are c.£60k although there is a risk that pre-works investigations may find that further ground works are required, as it is known there were petrol storage tanks and previously stable slurry tanks under the site.

This committee needs to reach a clear decision on these works as they cannot be further deferred.

This would be an initial investment in the site, further works will be required on the barn, accommodation and site storage. Storage will be important this committee having decided to give up the Summerhouse Way Garages.

Carrying out these works, given the significant costs involved, would represent a long-term commitment to retaining a directly employed Works Team.

2. Usage of Playing Fields by Commercial Fitness Groups

The above is presenting a number of problems, there is a balance to be achieved between genuine community use of open spaces, the needs of our paying customers such as sports clubs and the wear and tear caused to the grounds and infrastructure by organised groups.

The following report from the Facilities Manager highlights some of the issues.

"I have just encountered a mouthful of whines from "organised group" then it became a huddle around me, with one member trying to calm things down.

All I was trying to ask is that they do not hang off the railings, or use the patio for their training, do not use the benches as a stepping bench, as most are paid for as memorial benches, and please do not use the new green fencing around the tennis courts for strength band pulling exercises and if they did none of that, then great but she was not prepared to listen and threw a tantrum.

I really do not need this abuse from people that feel they are entitled to be there whilst running a business on Parish Council land.

I went up to the second group who were using the bench to step up and down on and ask them not to do it, they referred me to the youth in the evening, and if I think they were damaging the bench, then I should watch them. I explained it was not about damaging the bench, it is a bench to sit on, not jump up and down off and that most of the benches are purchased by families as memorial benches to come and sit and remember a loved one, for them to come over and see this happening on them is disrespectful too. I also asked this group not to use the railings, walls and tennis fence to exercise on.

There are still two groups more that we know use the land, it makes it really not worth the hassle of approaching them if we have no resolution, this needs to be taken to Leisure, to say leave it alone or enforce it, if the latter, how?

Happy to promote fitness and we have seen the fitness pieces of equipment in other parks, maybe we should put some pieces in around the playing fields and in the wooded area which would allow the groups to do their stepping, pulling and stretching exercises without using fences and other structures which were not designed for this type of stress?"

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3. Clerk's Report

i. Aligning Fees & Charges Junior Teams with FA Age Groups.

This was discussed when Fees & Charges were agreed in the last budget cycle. The Finance Officer and Works Manager have worked to align the ages groups used by the FA with those used in the Fees & Charges schedule.

This hopefully will reduce confusion when tenant clubs are declaring the number and age groups of teams playing on our pitches.

To ease reconciliation with league and club records, an updated booking form will also ask for the team names and the league in which they play,

The first draft of Fees and Charges for 2019-2020 will be discussed at the October meeting of this committee, the above changes are cost and revenue neutral and should have no financial impact on either the club's charges or the Parish Council's revenue.

ii. Contractor Performance - Quotes and Specifications

Recently we have experienced real difficulties in getting contractors to quote for various works. Long established contractors are taking ages to come in to review works, then have to be constantly chased for quotes and on some occasions submit quotes that make you think they do not want the work.

The Parish Council is a good customer, we expect high quality work, but are flexible and we pay promptly, as such you would expect contractors to be keen on working with us.

We are trying to find alternative contractors, this is for tree works, general building works, black top, etc. But there seems to be very much a "we are very busy" or on occasions "not interested" attitude out there.

A similar problem was discussed in F&A when we had a number of contractors come in to look at refurbishing the kitchen and toilet. They then failed to submit a quote, a range of sometimes fairly weak excuses were offered.

iii. Leisure Committee Meeting - October 2018

I am not able to attend the above meeting. The Planning & Admin Officer will Clerk the meeting, the Facilities Manager and the Works Manager will both be present.

Tim Perkins
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Appendix 1 - Depot Surface Images

