

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

26th September 2018.

To Members of the Leisure Committee

Councillors Sara Bedford, Jean Bowman, Liz Burns, Jane Lay, David Monk, 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 17th October 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 22nd August 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. **Budget 2019-2020**
 - i. To consider the latest update of Key Projects. (enclosed.)
 - ii. To consider the first revision of the committee pages for the above. (enclosed.)
 - iii. To consider the first draft of Fees & Charges 2019-2020.

(Clerk's report item 1 and enclosed papers.)
8. **Code of Conduct - Open Spaces**
To consider the introduction of the above. (Clerk's report item 2 and enclosed papers.)
9. **MuGA - Tennis Courts Refurbishment**
To consider the report from the Clerk and any update from the Facilities Manager. (Clerk's report item 3.)
10. **Evergreen FC - Pitch Fence**
To consider the request from Evergreen FC (Clerk's report item 4.).

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1. Budget 2019-2020

Key Projects

Updated projects with current status and work in progress.

Committee feedback needed on any projects that may need new or increased budgetary provision. (Possibly 22 & 23.)

Budget 2019-2020

- a. As always with this first revision of the budget this is very much work in progress, expect errors and omissions. Works Team costs allocations still need to be looked at in detail.

The following projects have been included in the budget, all were discussed at the August 2018 meeting of this committee.

- Project 20 - Depot Surface = £60,000 (min. 140v. Code 7236.)
- Project 15 - Water Fountains = £3,500 (min. 140iii. Code 7245.)
- Project 22 - Street Dressing, Lamp Post Flags = £3,000 (min. 140vi. Code 7231.)

Members need to consider if a further funds allocation should be made to the Car Park Refurbishment earmarked reserve, this is currently £25,000. Major works are expected to be required at South Way and Primrose Hill car parks in the next two to three years.

The affordability of these and any additional projects will have to be tested through the budget process.

Fees & Charges

- a. Fees for football age banded teams have been aligned with the age groups used by the FA. This makes it easier to reconcile the number of teams declared by a club with online and Herts FA published data. The booking form has also been updated to include the name of teams and also the league in which they play.

The revised banding has created one anomaly. U11-13 and U13-U17 teams are in the same charging band. In carrying out this exercise it was agreed that it should be cost neutral for the clubs and not a revenue changer for the Parish Council. This achieves that objective.

The FA age banding does specify the size pitches the various age groups should play on. In some case we cannot provide these, the simple logistics of how many pitches we can get into an area does mean some age groups will be playing on a pitch size that is not the FA specified size.

- b. Other facilities charges are broadly in line with the usual annual increases.
- c. Hire charge increases for the venues are minimal and the Facilities Manager will cover these in more detail. We have looked at comparative costs with other halls, but it is difficult to compare the facilities offered by the Manor House and Tanners Wood Hall, versus a traditional church hall and similar community halls.

Pubs are also offering no cost hire, they will make their revenue from drink and also catering income.

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2. Code of Conduct - Open Spaces

The above was discussed at the August meeting of this committee (min. 141). Officers were asked to draft a code that addressed the use of the open spaces by organised fitness groups.

Rather than starting from a clean sheet of paper we looked at what codes were out there.

The one for the Royal Parks covers most of the issues that were discussed, particularly shared use of the grounds by all users and also ensuring organised groups do have appropriate risk assessments and liability cover.

The first part of the code addresses these issues and further down the "No Go" areas mentions not using trees or furniture for training.

The code is written in a fairly neutral language, but probably needs additional words on treating other groups, officers and MoPs with respect.

It does though introduce the concept of being a licenced/approved operator and that comes with a charge, the Royal Parks charges are also enclosed.

Questions for members:

- Is this what was in mind when discussing a Code of Conduct?
- Do members want to introduce the licenced operator type arrangement for fitness groups?
- What sort of charge is appropriate?
- The Royal Parks code does include charges for personal trainers working with one or two clients. Do members want to introduce charges for personal trainers?
 - How difficult would charges for personal trainers be to enforce and could they prove more trouble than they are worth?

Officers view is that some form of formal arrangement is appropriate for organised groups, if only to cover the risk assessment and liability issues, the level of charge needs consideration. Personal trainers are fairly limited on our grounds (very much different in the Royal Parks) and perhaps formalising arrangements for personal trainers should be considered if and when this becomes an issue.

I did raise the above at a Herts Clerk's meeting. We are not the only Parish Council that is having occasional challenges with organised groups using open spaces. The "military fitness" groups were a particular concern as their "tractor tyre dragging" and similar exercises can cause serious damage to grounds in a very short space of time.

TRDC have some guidance on the hire of grounds, but this does not really amount to a Code of Conduct. I have though enclosed the relevant papers for consideration.

3. MuGA - Tennis Courts Refurbishment

As at the end of September there are still multiple problems outstanding on the refurbishment of the above. There have been a number of meetings between the Facilities Manager and Works Manager, Three Rivers DC officers, sub and prime contractors. Without going into the painful details, it has been a very poorly executed project.

The main issues have been around the quality of work, the responsiveness and overall management by the prime contractor. From a subjective stand point I have walked past the site on many occasions, staff have been wandering round, there appears to have been little or no on-site management. It is a project that has been crying out for a competent on-site foreman. Far too much PC staff officer's time has been wasted trying to stay on top of all the issues.

Hopefully by the time of the meeting the outstanding issues will have been resolved. The Facilities Manager will provide a further update.

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4. Evergreen FC - Pitch Fence

The following request has been received from Evergreen FC.

"As you are aware during the football season we put up and take down the post and rail every weekend at South Way to comply with the Herts Senior County league regulations, ensuring spectators are kept away from the touchlines. We only put up the rail along one side of the pitch but this is time consuming and we pay £120 per week for this to be done.

Conscious that Bedmond FC are allowed to keep their post and rail up permanently and in the interests of treating clubs equally we would request that Evergreen be allowed to do the same. My suggestion would be the post and rail would go up at the start of the season and be removed at the end so therefore from September through to May.

Clearly there would be cost savings for the club which last season totalled £3,400."

Mark Ward - Chairman, Evergreen FC 24/09/2018

Their point about Bedmond is not entirely accurate, they have not been given permission to keep their post and rail in place. It has been discussed in this committee, I tried to find the relevant minutes, but it was some years ago and I could not find anything relevant.

There has been some initial discussion with the potential new trustees of Bedmond about taking the post and rail down, but it has been reported that some posts are stuck fast.

Whatever decision is reached on Evergreen's request it should be consistent with the pitches at Bedmond.

Tim Perkins
26th September 2018.

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