

RECREATION COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 10TH APRIL 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the **RECREATION COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 10TH APRIL 2024** at 7:00pm

PRESENT

Councillor Tony Armstrong (Chairman) and:
Councillors: Eddy Adam, Martin Ashcroft, Lindsey Aston, Arun M. Chandran, John Clark, Neil Collinson, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Andy Hill, Joanne Jones, Neville Jones, Sandra Kirby, Brian McAnaney, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Michael Stead, Anne Woodward and John Woodward.

OFFICERS

Mr Dan Austin (Town Clerk)
Mr Steve Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)
Mrs Judith Thexton (Head of Leisure and Events)
Mr Lee Williams (Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator)
Mr Andy Clark (Sports Complex Manager)
Mrs Vikki Anderson (Corporate Assistant)

IN ATTENDANCE

One member of the public.

95. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Jim Atkinson, Peter Bergg, Sandra Haigh, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, Ken Robson and Anita Sparrow.

96. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

No applications for dispensations had been received.

97. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Carl Robinson declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 relating to the Oak Leaf Golf Complex Report, as a committee member of the Oakleaf Golf Club.

98. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public complimented the Sports Complex Manager on the quality of the meals they had recently enjoyed at the Sports Complex.

99. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and:

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on the 28th February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

100. GOLF WORKING GROUP NOTES

Councillor Eddy Adam advised that although he didn't attend the Golf Working Group Meeting, he wondered if the working group needed so many Oak Leaf Golf Club Committee Members as there seemed to be lots of questions from individuals rather than on behalf of the Golf Club. He suggested it may be more appropriate to have one representative.

Councillor Tony Armstrong commented he had found the meeting to be positive and constructive, with lots of issues discussed, clarified and resolved with a positive outcome.

The Town Clerk advised that there had always been an open invite to all committee members of the Oak Leaf Golf Club, but it was always encouraged that routine questions be asked through officers outside of the meeting to allow for a more efficient working group.

Councillor Michael Stead proposed that the minutes be agreed subject to the tarmac scrapings currently held in stock for the previously agreed footpath improvements, be used to install a footpath between hole 2 and 5, rather than wait for an additional budget approval.

The Town Clerk clarified that such a decision could not be taken via the agreement of the notes as the issue was not part of the Golf Working Group recommendations, and that the footpath priorities had previously been agreed at the last Policy and Resources meeting. He further advised that a report was being brought forward to next week's Policy and Resources meeting to request an additional budget approval of the additional footpath between hole 2 and 5.

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and:

RESOLVED - that the notes of the meeting of the Golf Working Group held on the 6th February 2024 be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

101. EVENTS SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Andy Hill and seconded by Councillor Neil Collinson and:

RESOLVED - that the notes of the meeting of the Events Sub Committee which took place on 27th March 2024 be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman..

102. OAK LEAF GOLF COMPLEX UPDATE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Head of Leisure and Events outlining income and statistical information for the Oak Leaf Golf Complex, for the six-week period since the last meeting, compared to the last three years and an update of the works that had been carried out since the last Recreation Committee meeting. Members were informed that golf course income is up due to the less risk-averse policy for opening, and that driving range income is down due to only selling small baskets currently, due to ground conditions and plugging of balls.

It was proposed by Councillor Eddy Adam and seconded by Councillor John Clark and:

RESOLVED - that it be recommended that the report be received.

103. OAK LEAF SPORTS COMPLEX USAGE

The Sports Complex Manager submitted a report updating members on statistical information in relation to the attendance and income at the Oak Leaf Sports Complex for the month of February and March compared with the last five years.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and

RESOLVED - that it be recommended that the report be received.

104. OAK LEAF SPORTS COMPLEX NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The Sports Complex Manager submitted a report updating members on new developments at the Oak Leaf Sports Complex since the last Recreation Committee meeting.

The Sports Complex Manager gave a verbal update to the report advising that the local company have not yet confirmed sponsorship of the new darts board but that the bar supplier; Molson Coors have now offered part sponsorship totalling £277, resulting in a likely need to fund around £200 from the Sports Complex Budget.

Councillor Michael Stead asked if any more dartboards could be fitted in the bowls hall area.

The Sports Complex Manager advised that officers would need to wait for the lighting to be delivered and decide which way is best to fit the dartboard, to minimise disruption to the bowlers, monitor usage and then determine if a second dart board is viable.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the report be received.

105. PARKS UPDATE

The Works and Environment Manager submitted a report updating members on developments within the parks since the last Recreation Committee meeting.

Councillor Michael Stead queried the day-to-day maintenance taking place in the parks, and why the play equipment is muddy and dirty. He asked if work staff have a daily checklist highlighting the cleaning of equipment as a daily task.

The Works and Environment Manager advised that maintenance of equipment is carried out, and that the Park Patrol Service should be cleaning equipment as part of their patrols, but that some sites are very muddy at the moment due to the very wet weather. All sites were due a spring clean with a jet washer to remove green algae etc. He confirmed that there is a checklist for staff, but this does not specifically identify cleaning the equipment. However this can be easily added to the list.

Councillor Brian McAnaney queried why no work had been done on the Simpasture Nature Line in relation to solving the problem of off-road motorbikes.

The Works and Environment Manager advised that the trees needed to be lifted to get the boulders to the area as discussed. It was further advised that fencing in this area is being ripped down regularly allowing motorbikes to ride through.

It was agreed that Councillor McAnaney discuss the issue with The Works and Environment Manager outside of the meeting.

Councillor Andy Hill wished to record his thanks to the Works Department staff for the bus shelter works recently undertaken.

Councillor Lindsey Aston asked why Cobblers Hall play area wasn't included in the parks update report.

The Works and Environment Officer clarified that the report focused on the parks rather than play areas but that an update on the play areas could be added to the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and seconded by Councillor Carl Robinson and

RESOLVED - that it be recommended that the report be received.

CHAIRMAN