

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of the public present.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 2nd May 2018 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr Andy Briers (Chairman)
Cllr Angela Wiseman (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Anne Murphy
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Tim Ward

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Meetings Administrator
Jade Eaton, Student Advisor
Charlotte Hardy, Student Advisor
Isaac Skirton, Student Advisor
Cllr Jeremy Heron

OS/5771 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Loose and Cllr Ring.

OS/5772 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

OS/5773 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 4th April 2018, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

OS/5774 THE PLACE

The Manager of The Place provided Members with a progress report.

Referring to *Annex A*, she indicated that the opening of the building through the Easter holidays had been reasonably successful, despite the weather. She had talked to people using the park and gained some positive feedback about the facility.

Members were provided with a calendar for the next few months, which indicated regular weekly bookings, a sports camp and activities for the Summer. It was hoped that the café would be open at half term and that a Summer menu would be offered, in partnership with Ringwood School, as an extension of the free school meals scheme. There had been some anti-social behaviour, but not when The Place was open and it was hoped that, as the building is used more, this behaviour will be deterred.

The interviews for the Chef role had taken place and two candidates had been offered the position as a job share. A meeting was scheduled for later this week in order to determine how this will work in practice.

She also reported that The Place had achieved a 5* hygiene rating, which is valid for a year.

In respect of branding, the Manager was working with officers at NFDC to give The Place an identity. The strategy being adopted was to look at the whole of Carvers as a recreation facility with all activities run at Carvers tying into the brand. Once ideas were in place, promotion of Carvers (and The Place) would follow with signage and a greater presence on social media. Members were content for officers to finalise the branding.

In terms of fees to be charged for Carvers, a structure would be created, to be adopted in future years, however Members agreed that this year's fees be heavily discounted to attract as many interested parties as possible and maximise bookings.

Members agreed that there is no need for the Manager of The Place to attend Committee meetings until after the Summer opening. A written report however was to be provided.

Members were pleased with what had been achieved so far and highlighted that at the Full Council meeting, Sgt Mitchley, New Forest West Neighbourhood Policing Team had complimented the way the Manager had worked with the police and PCSO's to resolve anti-social issues. They wished to acknowledge this and congratulated her on her approach in handling historic problems experienced at The Place.

RESOLVED: 1) That the update in respect of The Place be received;
2) That the branding of Carvers be delegated to officers;
3) That fees for the use of Carvers this year be heavily discounted and a structure for future years be created;

ACTION C Wilkins / C Bennett

OS/5775

EVENTS MANAGEMENT

Cllr Day reported that the street party in the Market Place would include the televising of the Royal Wedding, live music and the FA Cup Final. A number of local businesses had been very generous in sponsoring the event and a revised poster would be circulated, listing those who had contributed.

Detailed plans were being prepared and some volunteers had been recruited. He invited anyone wishing to help to contact the events team events@ringwood.gov.uk. He thanked everyone on the team for their hard work and the office, for their assistance, which had been kept to a minimum.

RESOLVED: That the update in respect of the Royal Wedding event on 19th May 2018 be received.

OS/5776

PROCUREMENT OF PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Town Clerk indicated that this item refers to the potential £40,000 project, to overhaul play equipment at the three main play areas in the town. Due to its size the project falls under the procurement regulations and requires a formal invitation to tender. The tender has been

advertised on contract finder with a deadline of 18th May and he hoped that there would be a number of interested companies.

In order for the formal procedure to progress, a structured evaluation of bids would need to be undertaken by a panel of three Councillors and he invited Members to put themselves forward for that role. It was also suggested that a Student Advisor be appointed to provide a different perspective and to experience local government procurement, in practice.

RESOLVED: 1) That Cllr Heron and Cllr Murphy be appointed to a panel for the purpose of evaluating tenders for the procurement of play equipment;
2) That Cllr Loose be invited to join the panel, with Cllr Briars as reserve; and
3) That Charlie Hardy, Student Advisor, be appointed to the panel.

ACTION C Wilkins

OS/5777 PROJECTS

A2 – War Memorial Repairs – The Town Clerk was waiting for the memorial to be examined and to be provided with a list of work to be done. Those involved were aware of the timescales involved and would try to prioritise this.

A3 – Cemetery Improvements – Proposals are being drawn up and will be brought forward to Committee for consideration.

A4 – Mansfield Road verge – The Town Clerk was waiting a response from the Rotary Club, as it had been suggested that it may be in a position to donate the beech trees for the hedge.

A5 – Carvers Recreation Ground – Proposals to enhance Carvers, including repairs to the fencing around the play area and possibly a modest car park, would be brought to Committee for consideration once they were finalised and costings are ascertained.

A6 – Front deck mower – The mower has been purchased at a net cost of £11,596. This includes the trade in of the old mower, which was valued at £3,000.

B1 – Roller – mower replacement – The new machine has been delivered. There was no specific budget for this and the net cost was £4,750, taking into account the trade-in value of £750 for the two attachments.

C1 – Long Lane feasibility study – Following the approval by the Committee of the Working Party's policy document, the football club were invited to consider it and prepare their own document. The two were consistent and compatible and in order to take the project forward to the next stage a feasibility study was required.

On NFDC's advice the landowner of ten-acre field was consulted on the possibility of a longer-term agreement and a procurement process was undertaken for the study. A consultant was chosen and the cost of the study is £5,250. This will be met in full by developers contributions, held by NFDC.

The Town Clerk met with the Chairman of the football club and the consultant, to discuss the brief in detail and to look at the facilities, clubhouse and grounds. The first draft of the report will be available in 4 weeks and a meeting of the Working Party will be called to consider the findings, which will include other sources of funding. The timing for a bid to the Football Association for funding would need to be around February 2019.

New project planner - The Town Clerk invited Members to suggest items to be included in the new project planner report. An initial view was that tennis at Carvers be considered as a project for 2019-20 budget and options be investigated with the assistance of Cllr Loose.

RESOLVED: That the update in respect of projects be received (*Annex B – revised*)

ACTION C Wilkins

At the end of the meeting, all Members joined Cllr Day in thanking the Student Advisors for their attendance at meetings and their contribution to discussion. He wished them well for their exams and for the future.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

RECEIVED
30th May 2018

APPROVED
6th June 2018

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Easter Holiday Café at Carvers- Report

It was agreed to open the Café at Carvers during the Easter holidays with the following objectives:

- i To talk to users and potential users of Carvers about our future plans for the centre and the facilities
- i To provide a service during what would be a busy time in the park
- i To test operating models

We opened 8 weekdays over the holiday period for 4 hours per day. The weather was not kind to us at all! 3 of those days were so bad that only a handful of people (mostly dog walkers) made it out into the park at all during the opening hours.

We provided the following:

- Café- selling teas, coffees, confectionery, ice cream and cakes (bought from Belinda's bakery in Poulner), free water (popular with the skate park users)
- Toys for pre-school children (these were donated to us by Teds Toys in Ringwood, with kind thanks to them)
- Indoor and outdoor games for older children
- Table tennis
- Free use of the toilets

In all, 249 people came into the centre during the opening days. On two days we had no visitors due to the poor weather. During the second week (5 days of opening), 169 people came into the centre- 58 adults, 25 children and 37 teenagers.

We banked just under £200. We are still waiting for final invoices to come in (for the cake for example) but £90 of this was from £48 worth of stock most of which has a shelf life to last the summer at least (if not longer). Stock had been purchased from Booker, cash and carry and New Forest Ice Cream.

How did we promote the Café?

Promotion was always going to be difficult because at the moment the signage around the park is very poor and we weren't going to be able to change that for this opening- we need to wait until we have branding available for the centre. We also have no social media presence. It will take time for us to reach young people themselves through social media and so the main focus was to reach parents who would then pass the information onto their children or bring them to the café depending on their age.

We opened a new Facebook page- Carvers, Ringwood and included at least one post on there per day and we paid a small amount (£4) to boost the post for more people to see it. We increased from 0 'follows' to 59 by the end of the period. Information was shared on Ringwood Town Council's Facebook page, Netmums Ringwood, Ringwood Junior school PTA, Poulner Junior School and other local parenting sites. It was shared with Ringwood School who were able to circulate it to some pupils but not all.

Many attempts were made to provide some temporary signage around the park to alert people to the fact that the café was open. Balloons were tied along the play area and fence

A

and on the building. All of these worked to an extent but sadly were regularly removed by some of the teenagers using the park. On better weather days, having the table tennis outside and other games also helped attract attention. Although it was difficult as there was only once member of staff so leaving the café unattended was not easy, attempts were made to engage with park users. For example, giving away coffee at the end of the day to cold, wet parents watching their children on the skate park meant facebook messages of thanks and custom the following day.

Comments and feedback

Feedback was universally excellent about the building and the facilities. Examples of comments included:

- Clean, modern and fresh
- 'What a fantastic facility'
- I love that the toilets are clean
- It's so great to have somewhere which is buggy friendly- there's no-where else in Ringwood like this
- Lovely to be able to take the children somewhere why they can play and we can chat
- Prices are very reasonable- we have to pay twice that for a cup of coffee at Potterne Park
- The toys are great
- I didn't realise the ping pong was free- that's great
- Great that there is free wi-fi
- It's actually much nicer than I thought it would be (2 Ringwood school pupils who had not been in before due to reputation of the centre)
- I wish we had something like this in our town, you're really lucky (a visitor who was bringing their two children to visit friends in the town)

We also had some useful constructive feedback:

- Signage is poor- we had to guess where the building was
- Have the naughty kids moved on now (frequent dog walker who has observed a good deal of anti-social behaviour at the site)
- 'When are you going to start serving proper food again' (from someone who used to attend the youth club- was referring to pot noodles! But would also find cheesy chips and paninis acceptable)
- It's too expensive (someone who used to attend youth club who had hot chocolates for 20p etc)

Opening the café was also useful for other reasons. We developed good relationships with the PSCO's who visited several times to provide a 'presence' which was much appreciated. A particular thanks to Councillor Wiseman who not only visited several times herself but also sent others to the centre (from Poulner Infant's governing body for example) to chat to me about the centre and the services we would like to provide. It also allowed me to experience running the café first hand which will be very helpful when managing the team.

Anti-social behaviour

A small handful of teenagers did, unfortunately, cause some anti-social behaviour during the Easter holidays. There was only one day where this happened during opening times. We draw the conclusion therefore that the more activity we have taking place at the centre the more that this behaviour will be discouraged.

What happens next?

The fundamental elements of the business plan, presented to members in March, remain unchanged. I am working on a plan of activity for the summer period and recruitment for a café supervisor.

Charmaine Bennett,

Manager, The Place



Item No.	Name	Recent developments	Resource use				Finish in 2018-19?	Notes
			Finance			Staff time		
			Budget	Spent to date	Predicted out-turn			
Projects with budgetary implications (bids included in 2018-19 budget)								
A1	Play equipment replacement	Invitation to tender published on 5 th April. Bid deadline is 18 th May. Evaluation panel appointed.	£40,000	£0	£40,000	Moderate	Probable	
A2	War Memorial repairs	£1,500 earmarked reserve established. Project Outline approved on 7 th Feb.		£125	Uncertain	Moderate	Probable	Detailed specification being prepared ahead of procurement exercise. 75% grant funding anticipated.
A3	Cemetery improvements	None	£3,000	£0	£3,000	Moderate	Probable	Staff will bring forward proposals in due course
A4	Mansfield Road verge	Woodland Trust/Rotary donation of plants being explored	£1,160	£0	£1,160	Minimal	Probable	
A5	Carvers Rec improvements	Replacement play area fencing suggested by Cllrs. Briers and Wiseman	£10,000	£0	£10,000	Significant	Probable	Staff are working up options for various environmental enhancements for review by members, hopefully, at June meeting
A6	Front deck mower replacement	Delivery of new machine taken in April.	£20,000	£11,596	£11,596	Minimal	Definite	Amount spent includes trade-in on old machine (£3,000). This item will not be updated further.
Projects with budgetary implications (not included in 2018-19 budget but added since)								
B1	Roller-mower replacement	Approved at P& F in April. Delivery of new machine taken in April.		£4,750	£4,750	Minimal	Definite	Amount spent includes trade-in on old machines (£750). This item will not be updated further.
Projects with no budgetary implications								
C1	Long Lane recreation facilities development feasibility study	Town Clerk met consultant on 27 th April to finalise brief for feasibility study				Moderate	Probable	First draft study report expected in June. Working Party meeting will then be called to consider it.

