

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2021, AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE.

Committee Members present:

S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper, Mrs M Cooper (Chairman), S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, G Russell, B Saunders, J Talbot

Also present:

Town Clerk – Mrs K Elliott-Turner, Councillor Mrs L Anderson, 2 members of the public, 6 representatives of Letchworth Roller Hockey Club (LRHC)

94/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Clarey.

95/21 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of members interests. There were no requests for dispensation. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

96/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Not at this time.

97/21 PRESENTATION ON PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY FACILITY AT RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD MUGA

Councillor Buck and Russell have conducted a survey of residents to ascertain what they like, don't like and what they would like to see in the future at Riverside Playing Field. Following the results of the survey, they approached a local sports club, whose committee members are Stotfold residents, one of whom is an associate partner in a local architectural practice, to pull together a proposal for consideration by the committee.

Representatives of the LRHC gave a presentation on a proposed community activity hub, which will facilitate the growth of local clubs and provide an alternative events venue. This would be situated on the MUGA site at Riverside Playing Field.

The proposal includes an indoor sports and events venue, with flexible meeting and business rooms, car parking, café with indoor and outdoor seating, and play area for younger children. The proposal also includes a replacement skate park within Riverside Playing Field and updated play equipment for older children. It is proposed that the facility is run as a Charitable Interest Company.

Members asked questions about its location on the edge of the countryside, the proximity to the flood plain and mitigating measures, proximity to neighbouring development and mitigating measures, the sustainability aspects of the proposal, parking provision, traffic movement analysis and funding sources.

The representatives of the LRHC were thanked for their presentation and then left the meeting, together with the members of public.

Members discussed various aspects of the proposal, noting that this meets much of the findings of the recent survey, and considered that further exploration needs to be done to determine if this is a feasible project.

RESOLVED that to investigate the feasibility of the proposal, the Clerk discusses with Central Bedfordshire Council Assets the leased section of Riverside Playing Field to accommodate the route through to the proposed building and parking requirements, and submits a pre-planning application, with additional discussions with planners if required, at the Town Council's expense.

This is option 1, further options will be provided to members to consider at the January committee meeting, which will include a refurbished MUGA, skate park, play equipment, etc. Once all have been received and considered by the committee and checked for feasibility, the public will be asked for their views on the options.

98/21 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Councillor Buck advised that he has passed his RPII Operational Training, following his recently attended course. This allows him to carry out quarterly operational checks, the Handyman continues to do weekly checks and ROSPA or Play Safety carry out annual checks.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.45pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: