

# DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

A virtual meeting of the **Recreation Committee** held on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021** upon the rising of the Heritage and Open Spaces Committee meeting.

**Present:** Councillors A Brooks (Chairman), C Bunting, K Cogman, P Duigan, L Monument and P Morton.

Also in attendance: Councillors S Green, H Clarke, H King, Town Clerk Tony Needham, Town Council Officer Gemma Drew and Daryl Spencer (Dereham Saints).

1. **To receive apologies for absence.**  
There were no apologise for absence.
2. **Declaration of Interest.**  
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **To elect a Chairman.**

Councillor K Cogman proposed Councillor A Brooks, seconded by Councillor C Bunting. There were no other nominations, it was agreed that Councillor A Brooks be Chairman of the Recreation Committee.
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Councillor A Brooks took the chair.

4. **To elect a Vice Chairman.**

Councillor C Bunting proposed Councillor K Cogman, seconded by Councillor P Morton. There were no other nominations, it was agreed that Councillor K Cogman be Vice Chairman of the Recreation Committee.
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*The meeting was adjourned*

Daryl Spencer gave an update on Dereham Saints. He thanked the Council for fertilizing the pitches during lockdown.

There are issues with dog mess being left on the pitches.

The entrance from car park is always flooded and like a bog.

Lack of space is another issue. Ideally, they need space for one more adult-sized pitch and a smaller junior size pitch. Floodlights could help so they could play early evening games, however these would cost around £8000 and an increase in use of the existing pitches would also result in the grass wearing quicker.

Councillors thanked Daryl Spencer for all the work Dereham Saints do for the

children of Dereham and suggested that a number of Councillors should attend a training session to take a look at the pitches and also to show their support.

*The meeting resumed*

## 5. Consider Playing Pitch Strategy

There is a significant shortage of football pitches and likely to be a shortage of rugby pitches in future. Dereham Town FC shortage of space could be addressed if it secures a 3G pitch. Some of the deficit could be reduced by improving pitch quality – but this is limited and the Strategy did not take account of the Public Health Act 1961, section 52(3)(a) which may limit the area to be used exclusively for a sports club to one third of the total area. It may be possible to form community use agreements with the schools, but this is not likely to provide the long-term security clubs would need.

The Committee recommended that the Town Council take legal advice with regard to section 52(3)(a) of the Public Health Act 1961.

The Committee recommended that the Town Council liaise with the schools with regards to community use of their pitches.

## 6 Consider Play and Open Spaces Assessment

The Town Clerk explained the Assessment clearly showed what and where deficits were. The next steps could be discussed under the next agenda item.

## 7 To consider improving Play Provision following on from the Play and Open Spaces Assessment

The Play Assessment identified a significant lack of LAPs across the town. It was not possible to map all the potential areas that could form LAPs as part of the assessment, it is known that suitable places exist across the town. The Town Clerk explained that if the Council begin with sites in their control, work would be carried out faster than land that was not in its control

The Committee recommended the Town Council use the Play Assessment to invite tenders for the play equipment on the sites outlined.

The Committee recommended the Town Council use the full budget of £200,000 towards the play provision.

The Committee recommended that the Town Council write to Breckland Council to ask them to improve play provision at Sandy Lane open space and the Highfields area.

The reason for the recommendation is that Breckland Council has control over Sandy Lane open space and also controls the open spaces in the Highfields area.

The Committee recommended that the Clerk compile a schedule of potential parcels of open space which could be used as Local Areas for Play or community seating areas. Councillors would make suggestions to the Clerk and the schedule brought back to a future meeting.

**8 To consider next steps for addressing shortfall in open spaces**

The Play and Open Spaces Assessment identified a shortfall in open space, particularly south of the A47. Overall Dereham has a deficit in open space equivalent to 15ha; if the area south of the A47 was looked at in isolation, it would have a deficit of 22ha.

The Playing Pitch Strategy along with the Play and Open Spaces Assessment have both been steps towards developing a compelling case to justify acquiring land. The Town Clerk explained it would now be prudent to reengage with NP Law to find out what the next step would be. They would not be expected to produce a report, it would just be a few hours legal work.

The Committee recommended that the Town Council should reengage with Solicitors at NP Law to review progress so far and map-out the next steps for Councillors to consider.

**9. To consider adopting open spaces from Persimmon Homes development 3PL/2019/1526/D**

The Town Clerk explained that as long as the Town Council budgets for the maintenance as the properties become occupied then there would always be a budget available. If the Town Council did not create a budget and the Referendum Principle came in, there would no ability to budget.

The Committee recommended adopting open spaces from Persimmon Homes development 3PL/2019/1526/D. (*Amendment made at Full Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021*)

**10. Exclusion of press and public**

Proposed by Councillor P Duigan seconded by Councillor L Monument it was agreed to pass a resolution to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting on the grounds that the Business to be transacted is confidential and publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest

**11. Update on sports clubs in Dereham**

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the sports clubs and their contributions to the Town.

12. **Update on acquiring additional land**

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the process of acquiring additional land.

**Chairman**