

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

26th September 2023

At a meeting of the **Recreation Committee** held on **Tuesday 26th September 2023** upon the rising of the Planning Committee.

Present: Councillors K Cogman (Vice Chairman), P Duigan, A Greenwood, L Monument and P Morton.

Also in attendance: Town Clerk Tony Needham and Deputy Town Clerk Jillian Barron,

1. **To receive apologies for absence.**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Brooks and H King.
2. **Declaration of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **To consider refining the draft site selection report for new sports pitches.**

The committee recommended refining the draft site selection report for the new sports pitches as follows:

For sites not already excluded because of flooding and biodiversity, the following could apply:

1. Removing sites with a flood risk score of less than 4 – (justification, sites that flood will be unusable at times of heavy rainfall)
2. Remove sites with a soil type score of 3 or below. (Justification – greater ‘carrying capacity’ on better soils so less land required and potentially less drainage required)
3. Remove sites with groundwater score of less than 3 (justification – could be water logged and difficult to drain)
4. Remove sites with a topography score of 2 (justification - cost of correcting any slope would be expensive)
5. Remove sites with no water course (justification if drainage is needed in the future, it would be costly with no water course nearby)
6. remove sites with planning permission or where a planning application is about to be made.
7. Remove sites which clearly have difficulty with vehicular access.
8. Remove sites that are too small and could not be grouped or bring a site back in to join another site if it were excluded for a minor reason.

The sites left following this process will be those which are most suitable for sports, these would then be assessed for accessibility and planning factors. If following this process no sites are left then sites would be added back in based on the criteria with the least cost to resolve any establishment factors.

4. **To consider delegating authority to the Clerk to confirm final design for the Play areas.**

The committee recommended delegating authority to the Clerk, in consultation with Councillors, to approve the final scheme and progress the project to the planning application stage.

5. **To consider drainage issues for Toftwood Recreation Ground.**

Following concerns raised by Dereham Saints Football Club relating to the drainage of the site, a site visit was arranged with a drainage engineer. The engineers observations were that while the underdrains are of an age where it would not be a surprise if they were failing, it was felt that even if new drains were installed, the effectiveness of any drains would be dependent on the effectiveness of the ditch network, particularly downstream of the site. Downstream of the site, the ditch network is not being effectively maintained and in places is being deliberately blocked.

The committee agreed to take the advice from the engineer which was:

- 1) Over the winter observe the water levels in the ditch, relative to the level of the underdrain outfall and how well the ditch network functions.
- 2) Take action to ensure that the ditch network downstream of the site is functioning properly. If the ditch network functions as it should, then it will benefit all the properties in the area as well as the Recreation Ground.

The committee recommended that the Clerk write to the offending property owners reminding them of their riparian responsibilities to maintain water courses.

Chairman