

Ringwood Town Council

Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 1AT

Tel: 01425 473883

www.ringwood.gov.uk

RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Dear Member

27th February 2020

A meeting of the above Committee will be held in the Forest Suite at Ringwood Gateway on **Wednesday 4th March 2020** at 7.00pm and your attendance is requested.

Mr C Wilkins
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There will be an opportunity for public participation for a period of up to 15 minutes at the start of the meeting

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 5th February 2020

5. CARVERS WORKING PARTY

To receive the notes of the meeting of Carvers Working Party on 14th February 2020 (*Report A*)

6. LONG LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT & FOOTBALL CLUB WORKING PARTY

To receive the notes of the meeting on 6th February 2020 (*Report B*) and to note the decision made at the Full Council meeting on 26th February 2020 (*C/6433 refers*)

7. EVENTS MANAGEMENT

To receive a report from Ringwood Events Team

8. WAR MEMORIAL REFURBISHMENT

To consider the Town Clerk's report on refurbishment of the War Memorial (*Report C*)

9. SKATE PARK SURFACING

To consider the Deputy Town Clerk's report (*Report D*)

10. PROJECTS

To receive an update on projects (*Report E*)

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider exclusion of the press and public from the meeting, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, section 1(2), to transact

business for which publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature

12. PARKING ON THE BICKERLEY

To consider the Town Clerk's report (*Confidential Report F*)

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk on (01425) 484720 or email chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk.

Committee Members

Cllr Andrew Briers (Chairman)
Cllr Darren Loose (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Gareth Deboos
Cllr Hilary Edge
Cllr Rae Frederick
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Tony Ring
Cllr Glenys Turner

Student Advisors

Rhys Phillips
Ruth Port

Copied by e-mail to other Members for information

Carvers Working Party

Notes of meeting held on Friday 14th February 2020 at 2.00pm at the First Floor Meeting Room, Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood BH24 1AT

Present: Cllr Hilary Edge (HE)
Cllr Rae Frederick (RF)
Cllr Peter Kelleher (PK)
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly (GO)

In attendance: Christopher Wilkins (CW)
Charmaine Bennett (CB)

Absent: Cllr Andy Briers
Cllr Jeremy Heron

1. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Cllr. Andy Briers, Cllr. Peter Kelleher was proposed by Cllr. Frederick and seconded by Cllr. O'Reilly. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Kelleher be elected as Chairman of the Carvers Working Party for the present meeting only.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. Briers had tendered his apology for absence and this was accepted.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.

4. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the meeting on 2nd July 2019 were approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

5. DETACHED YOUTH WORK PROJECT

Members considered the report of Sarah Clift to which it was noted CB had made a significant contribution (Annex A). Members commended the report as a credible and useful description of the current provision for young people in the town and basis for consideration of policy options for future provision.

Members agreed that significant progress has been made in developing the use of what is now Carvers Clubhouse and were keen to support further development; stressing that its primary purpose is to provide facilities for young people. The desirability of developing stronger links with Ringwood School was agreed but how this might be achieved in practice was unclear. Members were keen to explore options for expanding the opening hours, especially some evenings. Members accepted the advice from officers that this would have cost implications and it is unrealistic to expect a café and other facilities aimed primarily at young people to generate income equal to the running expenses, let alone generate a surplus. Members expressed a desire for clearer and more regular financial reporting.

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It was agreed that the detached youth work model was probably the only affordable means by which the Town Council could investigate further and make some provision for the needs of older teenagers, especially those deemed unlikely to engage with the clubs and activities listed in the report. Although members did not exclude a role for the Clubhouse in this work entirely, they stressed the detached nature of the work; it and the management of the Clubhouse should be regarded as separate.

The Town Clerk suggested that matters had reached a significant turning point and it would therefore appear timely to review the Business Plan previously approved by councillors.

RESOLVED:

- 5.1 That officers should prepare a draft Corporate Plan (to replace the current Business Plan and to cover both the future management of the Clubhouse and other facilities at Carvers and the delivery of youth services by the Council) for consideration at the next meeting of this Working Party;**
- 5.2 That officers should investigate options for the delivery of detached youth work by an outside organisation under contract to include an estimate of costs and possible sources of grant support or other sources of funding and report on these to the Working Party as soon as practicable; and**
- 5.3 That officers should prepare proposals for the reporting of income and expenditure related to the operation of Carvers Clubhouse and the delivery of youth services.**

ACTION: CW & CB

6. PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE BUSINESS

Officers reported several issues currently affecting the use and management of the Clubhouse and other facilities at Carvers:

- The erosion of the tennis court line-marking and subsidence affecting one of the three courts;
- An approach from a professional tennis coach wanting to trial some coaching sessions for young people;
- Requests from Ringwood School and RACE, through the REAL Working Party, to allow tree-planting at Carvers;
- A further predicted decline in the use of the cricket square in 2020 over previous years; and
- The inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the existing floor-cleaning machine.

Members raised other issues, including the possibility of creating a Multi-Use Games Area on the tennis courts and possible improvements to the skate park.

The Town Clerk pointed out that there is the potential for conflict between these and that considering each in isolation might therefore be unwise; there would be advantages in having some form of longer term management plan for Carvers.

RESOLVED:

- 6.1 That officers should proceed with the tennis-coaching trial and report the outcome in due course;**

- 6.2 That officers should investigate options for replacing the floor-cleaning machine and present a suitable business case for the recommended option to the appropriate committee at the earliest opportunity; and**
- 6.3 The development of a management plan for Carvers should be considered at the next meeting of this Working Party and members and officers should prepare for this by considering all issues and options considered relevant for inclusion.**

ACTION: ALL

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that Working Party should meet next on Friday, 20th March 2020, starting at 1pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.45pm.

Youth Services Provision in Ringwood

Report by Sarah Clift, Detached Youth Worker

Version: DRAFT 3 / FINAL

23 January 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report has been prepared on a consultancy basis by Sarah Clift. I was commissioned by Ringwood Town Council to undertake a research project with the following scope:

- To research the current provision of youth services in Ringwood;
- To identify any gaps or needs that are not being met; and
- To produce a written report for the consideration of Ringwood Town Council about those gaps and needs and practical measures, amenities or services which could be provided in order to meet them (in whole or in part).

1.2. It was based on fieldwork completed between May and September 2019.

Methods used included the following:

- speaking to young people in and around Ringwood
- speaking to parents
- speaking to adults involved with the provision of services for young people in Ringwood
- speaking to those affected by anti-social behaviour in the town
- visiting youth clubs and projects in other areas
- phone calls and face to face meetings with professionals
- internet research

2. CONTEXT OF YOUTH SERVICES

2.1. Youth services, meaning those outside the formal education sector, designed to support and encourage children and young people, have declined significantly in recent years. The Independent, on 24.9.19 reported youth services have been 'decimated by 69%' in less than a decade.

2.2. Figures show that average spend on youth services (which includes both statutory and voluntary sector services) per local authority dropped from £7.79m in 2010 to a planned expenditure of just £2.45m in 2020. Nearly a third of local councils have planned cuts that would see their spending on youth services decline by 80 per cent since 2010-11, while the vast majority of local authorities (83 per cent) are set to cut their funding in half over a nine-year period.

2.3. There is a fear that a reduction in youth services pushed more children and young people into street violence and there has indeed been an increase nationally in knife crime, with figures for 2018 being the highest since comparable records began in 2011.

2.4. Youth service provision is limited in the town. The voluntary organisations who do provide services in the area have experienced significant reductions in grants and many are looking at new ways of providing their services.

3. GROWING UP IN RINGWOOD

3.1. The Ringwood Town Plan acknowledges that there is a dissatisfaction with

facilities for young people in the area¹.

- 3.2. According to the respondents, the younger the children the more they love Ringwood for its *position in the New Forest, open spaces, play areas, the animals and wildlife, its 'beautiful houses'*.
- 3.3. Children "*loved Carvers, the sports centres, swimming pools and local attractions such as the skate park*".
- 3.4. By the time they reach adolescence, "*young people's priorities and perception have clearly and naturally changed. Their answers to the survey show that they still love many of the same characteristics of the town that they loved whilst children. However, they are much more aware of lack of facilities and amenities for their age group, with 45% of them complaining of having nothing to do.*"
- 3.5. Young people felt that there were insufficient shops to cater for their interests and needs. Public transport is too expensive for many to take advantage of the choice available in the larger centres (a return ticket to Bournemouth Square from Ringwood is £5 for anyone under the age of 19).²
- 3.6. Its Your Choice (a charity who provides information and advice to young people at Carvers Clubhouse every fortnight) have found that they are being asked by an increasingly younger group of people for help and support. They are often presenting with issues relating to anxiety and finding information overload online and need help to make sense of all the information that they can access.
- 3.7. In 2016 as part of 'Love Ringwood' local churches did a survey asking young people "what hurts the most". More than 1700 people responded with some very sad issues raised. The majority of responses relate to exams and homework.

4. CRIME RATES, CHALLENGING AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- 4.1. Within the national context, Ringwood is a relatively safe place to live and work.
- 4.2. However, the crime rate for the New Forest is higher than the average crime across similar local areas and there has been an increase in the crime rate in the New Forest area between June 2016 and June 2019.³
- 4.3. Several people during the research period for this piece of work stated that crime and antisocial behaviour from young people in Ringwood is an issue.
- 4.4. This has included young people congregating at Sainsburys, stealing stock and in at least one instance assaulting a member of staff.
- 4.5. There have also been instances of challenging behaviour exhibited by young people at Carvers Clubhouse resulting in a small number of young people being banned from the centre over the past 2 years. These tend to be cyclical – for the past 2 years staff have experienced challenging behaviour at the end of the

¹ Ringwood Town Plan, 2008, pp 52-53

² <https://www.morebus.co.uk/find-my-fare> - correct January 2020

³ <https://www.police.uk/hampshire/1NW01/crime/stats/>

exam period and then during the summer holidays.

- 4.6. Council property including the Clubhouse and the toilets at the cemetery have been damaged by young people over the past 12 months. Several incidents of arson have been reported by Council staff, although we do not know the ages of those who committed these offences.
- 4.7. There have been reports of young people using catapults to damage property and more concerningly using them to harm animals.
- 4.8. There is a perception that Ringwood has a serious drug problem. That is not necessarily borne out in the crime statistics where detection/reporting rates are very low.
- 4.9. It is worth noting of course that often the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour by young people are other young people and so any initiatives to tackle this issue will have the effect of improving the experience of other young people in the town.

5. PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

- 5.1. Both the New Forest Local Plan and Ringwood Town Plan assumes a growing population. Whilst a high percentage of residents are likely to be in older age groups, the new housing developments can be expected to attract families, leading to a growing youth population. The existing shortage of provision for young people in the area, and resulting antisocial behaviour, are therefore likely to worsen in the medium to long term.

Analysis of existing provision

6. CARVERS CLUBHOUSE

- 6.1. Carvers Clubhouse (previously known as The Place) was opened in 2015 and is a purpose built centre for the enjoyment of all young people in the area owned and managed by Ringwood Town Council.

- 6.2. It was based on a business plan developed by pupils in Ringwood School who stated that:

“Our main aim is to provide the young people of Ringwood, a rural isolated New Forest town, with facilities in a purpose built, permanent venue. This would enable ALL the young people of Ringwood to have an inclusive space where they can relax, meet friends and develop social skills in a safe, comfortable, café style atmosphere.”⁴

- 6.3. Once the building opened in 2015 initially the sole service which operated from the centre was a drop-in youth club offering advice and support which had operated at Belinda’s, the bakery, for nearly ten years and had moved to a tennis pavilion on Carvers.

- 6.4. Unfortunately, the centre developed a reputation for challenging and anti-social

⁴⁴ The Space business plan, 2011

behaviour and the drop-in service was closed in 2017. This reputation spilled over into other areas of the Recreation Ground and there have been periods of time when Ringwood School staff have advised younger pupils to not visit the skate park outside of times when there are likely to be families using the park.

- 6.5. In January 2018 Ringwood Town Council surveyed the pupils at Ringwood School to see what service/provision/opening hours they would like the Clubhouse to operate but the overwhelming feedback was that it had such a reputation that young people did not want to attend at all.
- 6.6. Since then the Council have developed the use of the centre to be a focal point for families and young people in the area. Facilities on offer include a community café, table tennis, games and toys both indoors and outdoors and various specific events organised at the café and in the recreation ground such as skate park competitions.
- 6.7. Charmaine and the cafe staff (Albert and Chris) have worked really hard to make the cafe successful and to create a lovely atmosphere. It is used by all generations with the view that if young children and their families attend and view the centre as a safe space for them, this will continue as they grow older and provision can adapt and grow for older children and teenagers as demand does.
- 6.8. There appears to be a strong correlation between a busy and used building and a reduction in anti-social behaviour in the park and on the skate park.
- 6.9. A number of regular hirers use the centre. These include the following:
 - It's your choice drop in for 11-25 year olds;
 - Young Carers - Community First New Forest 7-18 year olds; meet at the cafe and use the play park; and
 - LGBTQ+ Break out fortnightly youth group for 11-19 year-olds, which is not advertised.
 - Preschool music classes
 - Free family yoga and community yoga
 - Exercise classes for mums with young children (not currently running)
- 6.10. Another issue raised was in relation to the skate park. Children are using the skate park with scooters; young people I have spoken to are scared of hurting them, and parents are also concerned an accident may happen. The ideal solution would be a smaller scooter park for younger children. There are also times when the skate park is very quiet (early to late mornings) and this might be an ideal time for parents to bring young children. It may be worth advertising this more widely.
- 6.11. Young people have also asked for more bins and floodlights for the skate park. A roof over the skate park would be ideal, allowing it to be used in all-weather but unlikely to be granted planning permission.

7. RINGWOOD SCHOOL CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

7.1. Ringwood School has at least 30 lunchtime and after school clubs, including the following areas:

- Performing Arts
- Chess
- Journalism
- Debating
- Sports

7.2. The school's Ofsted report states that 'the school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding', and this ethos extends to engaging with outside agencies to support pupils when necessary. This already includes funding free lunches over the summer holidays at Carver's Cafe for pupils entitled to free school meals.

8. RINGWOOD LEISURE CENTRE

8.1. The Leisure Centre runs a wide range of activities for young people. They have a teen active membership which costs £32 per year and reduces admission to the gym and pool to £2.20 per session. They also offer concessionary rates but these don't seem to apply to the annual fee. Activities are listed in the Appendix below.

9. OTHER CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN RINGWOOD

9.1. Ringwood Fire Cadets is a "uniformed youth organisation which inspires and empowers young people to be the best they can be". It is open to all young people aged 13 to 17 years (they must leave on their 18th birthday). It is delivered through the Fire and Rescue Services.

9.2. The service is particularly successful in Ringwood and has been run by volunteers for 20 years. There is a strong partnership with the police who have recommended young people to attend the weekly group who perhaps may otherwise go down a different and more disruptive path. Potential cadets and parents are interviewed prior to joining and cadets learn essential life skills including first aid, firefighting skills and team work.

9.3. Appendix one shows additional activities and clubs available for young people in Ringwood.

9.4. However, many of these activities have a cost attached or require a good deal of parental support. They may be seen to be an activity aimed at 'middle class' young people or not be open to all. Therefore they may exclude groups of young people who have much less to access and will feel the disadvantages of living in a rural town such as Ringwood.

OTHER MODELS OF PROVISION

10. TRADITIONAL YOUTH CLUB

- 10.1. At present there is no dedicated youth club in Ringwood. A service existed until 2017 but closed because of issues with anti-social behaviour. In the business plan for 'The Space' referred to above it stated that young people wanted a space which was for them but without structured activities i.e. not what would be considered a 'traditional' youth club.
- 10.2. Without a youth club there is no community youth worker in the town who can provide on-going information, support and advice. However, there are plans in place to look at growing their existing service from Its Your Choice and opportunities to work in partnership should be welcomed.

11. DETACHED YOUTH WORK

- 11.1. The detached youth worker model has been considered but not fully implemented. As noted below, in my section on Bursledon, this is a popular model across Hampshire, and many projects are able to fund this through substantial grant money for prevention of antisocial behaviour.
- 11.2. Detached youth work involves making contact with young people in their own territory without the use of a building or activity and exploring their needs, building relationships with them and providing informal and social education and support. Youth workers operate across designated areas specifically targeting hot spots as identified by the Police and other services to help tackle anti-social behaviour.
- 11.3. Bursledon (a village in Eastleigh) is an excellent example of the detached youth worker model having a positive impact on youth provision and limiting antisocial behaviour.
- 11.4. I shadowed a shift with 2 youth workers from Youth Options in Bursledon. Youth Options (a charity providing youth work services across the region). The staff had excellent relationships with the young people and good contacts with the Police and other agencies. In Winter the Youth Options are renting a café as a drop-in centre for young people, using government funding intended to combat antisocial behaviour.
- 11.5. Ferndown and Fordingbridge
- 11.6. I visited both Ferndown and Fordingbridge Youth Clubs. Both have buildings which are a good size and layout necessary for a youth club, and also have enclosed outside areas only opened when staffing levels are adequate for outdoor activities. Both clubs also have kitchen areas, which I consider essential.
- 11.7. I noted that Fordingbridge also has detached youth workers, and that they have been able to offer tailored support to individual young people.

12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1. It is clear from the research that the findings from the Ringwood Town Plan in 2008 still stand- in that there are gaps in provision of activities for young people in the town.
- 12.2. Growing up in Ringwood can be a challenge for some young people not least due to its geographic location.
- 12.3. There is a degree of antisocial behaviour and criminal activity which is committed by young people. Often the victims are other young people. Reducing levels will positively affect other young people in the town.
- 12.4. There are many young people who are now starting to use Carvers Clubhouse again which is a sign that its previous reputation may be lifting, at least for some. This gives us some opportunity to look at widening provision. Consideration needs to be given to any staffing implications.
- 12.5. There are few resources to go around so working in partnership with other agencies should be welcomed.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1. The Council should look at options for engaging the services of detached youth workers on a permanent basis with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour and supporting those young people who are not engaged in other formal activities in the town. This could be done 'in-house' by recruiting and managing a team or seeking the expertise of an external agency with specialist knowledge of this area of work.
- 13.2. To recognise the growing popularity of Carvers Clubhouse and ensuring that staffing levels are adequate and staff are trained to deal with challenging behaviour more confidently
- 13.3. Consider a trial period of opening the café later on a weekday evening for young people's sole use.
- 13.4. For the Council to work in partnership with the police to pre-empt poor behaviour at set periods at Carvers and in other 'hot spots' in Town
- 13.5. Look at options for making the skate park safer for all age groups.
- 13.6. Review options for floodlights at the skate park and provide more bins
- 13.7. Encourage increased use of the tennis courts and review booking arrangements.
- 13.8. Look at developing more diversionary activities over holiday periods (such as football and sports for young people).
- 13.9. Ensure that young people are aware of the range of activities in the area (marketing and promotion).

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Annex A

14. GENERAL REMARK

- 14.1. Some of the options presented in the paper will have resource implications which can be researched further once Members have identified priorities and preferences. Opportunities for seeking external funding should be sought.

Appendix one: existing clubs and activities for young people in Ringwood

Ringwood Leisure Centre

- swimming
- use of gym 12+ with supervision
- Splits Gymnastics for children and young people
- junior kickboxing
- junior self defence
- taekwondo
- New Forest Trampolining Club

Scouts

- Beavers
- Cubs
- Scouts, Explorers
- Scout Network

Guides

- Rainbows
- Brownies
- Guides
- Rangers

Sports clubs

- Ellingham and Ringwood Rugby Club
- Ringwood Town Football
- New Forest Cycling club
- New Forest Mountain Biking Club
- New Forest Junior Netball (Hoops)

Horse riding

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- Bagnum Stables
- Burley Manor Stables
- Green Cottage Riding for the Disabled , Three Legged Cross

Drama, Dance and Performance

- Forest Forge youth theatre 7-21 years of age
- Stage Coach Performing Arts

Fishing: Ringwood and District Anglers' Association; from 14 years upwards

Sailing: Spinnakers Sailing Club, junior and youth

Waterskiing: Ellingham Waterski and Wakeboard Association, including disabled

Air Cadets: Ringwood and Fordingbridge Squadron, male and female-ages 13-17

Fire Cadets: Ringwood Fire Station,13-17 year old

Long Lane Sports Development and Football Club Working Party

Notes of meeting held on Thursday 6th February 2020 at 7:00pm in the First Floor Meeting Room, Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood. BH24 1AT

Present: Cllr Andy Briers
Cllr. John Haywood
Cllr Darren Loose
Cllr Tony Ring

In attendance: Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Jamie Burton, NFDC
Steve Cuss, AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust
Phil King, RTFC
Chris Till, RTFC

1. Election of chairman

Cllr. Briers was proposed by Cllr Ring and seconded by Cllr Haywood. There were no other nominations.

Cllr. Briers was duly elected chairman of the Working Party until the first meeting after the next annual meeting of the Council.

2. Apologies for absence

There were none.

3. Declarations of interest

It was noted that Cllr Briers is an allotment holder at Long Lane and Cllr Loose is involved with the football club, therefore, each has a non-pecuniary interest in the matters to be discussed.

4. To agree notes of last meeting held on 10th September 2018

The notes were agreed as a true record.

4. Sports facilities improvements (inc. 3G AGP) project

Members considered the report from the Town Clerk on development of the project since the last meeting (Annex A).

Jamie Burton reported that similar projects have been completed successfully elsewhere in the district but would require the preparation of a Funding Plan, a Usage Plan and a Development Strategy together demonstrating financial and managerial sustainability.

The general conclusion was that the Town Council and Ringwood Town Football Club are unlikely to be able to develop a viable project within the foreseeable future without outside assistance.

5. Proposal from AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust

Steve Cuss explained the role of his Trust as the charitable community sports arm of AFC Bournemouth. It is closely associated with the premier league club but is legally separate

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from it and has no direct involvement with the club's professional teams. He outlined their existing activities and facilities, including the work they already do in Ringwood and the links they have with Ringwood schools and RTFC.

He explained that the Trust is hampered somewhat by their lack of a permanent base and has been talking to RTFC about the possibility of sharing their space at Long Lane. Early discussions have been positive; it appearing that their needs and the needs of RTFC would complement rather than compete with one another. The Trust is used to developing and managing precisely the kinds of new facilities that are needed at Long Lane and has access to sources (and levels) of funding not available to RTFC and/or the Council.

The Town Clerk reported that he had been consulted about these discussions and had arranged this meeting so that members could assess the idea before matters develop further. Steve Cuss explained that further development of a "ground-sharing" partnership arrangement would require a significant investment of resources by the Trust on which they cannot prudently embark without a commitment from the Council as the owner of the site. Specifically, it would be a condition of securing the funding required that the Council grant the Trust (not RTFC) a lease of the site for at least 25 years. The Council would therefore need to commit to that in principle before the project could proceed further.

It was acknowledged that the interests of RTFC and the Rifle Club would need to be protected and the project would have to demonstrate wider public benefits in order to justify the commitment of the public resources involved. The project would also have to take account of factors like the uncertain tenure and future of the "Ten-Acre Field", access to the site, likely future housing development in the town and many other issues of detail. However, members present agreed that there is sufficient merit in the proposal for it to receive further consideration and that in view of its importance and urgency it should be considered as soon as practicable by the full Town Council rather than just the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee.

RECOMMENDED:

That the commitment sought by the Trust from the Council be formulated more precisely and brought for consideration to the meeting of the full Town Council scheduled for 26th February.

ACTION C Wilkins

6. Date of next meeting

To be arranged following the Council decision on 26th February and subsequent developments.

Sports Facilities Improvements (inc. 3G AGP) Project

1. Introduction and reason for report

- 1.1 It has been a considerable time since members last received an update on this important project and it is timely that members receive an explanation of the reasons for the delay now that a critical turning point has been reached.

2. Background information and update

- 2.1 A feasibility study was completed in 2018. This Working Party accepted that it provided a basis for further discussion between Council officers and representatives of Ringwood Town Football Club (RTFC). Those discussions have continued since with the aim of working up a more detailed proposal for consideration by both organisations.
- 2.2 A project which this Council could approve would need to meet many criteria. Two of these need particular mention:
- 2.2.1 Since the capital costs of the improvements would have to be met in part by means of a grant from Football Foundation (FF), the conditions attached to such a grant must be understood and capable of being complied with; and
- 2.2.2 The stable and robust financial viability of RTFC (as an essential party to long-term land tenure and facility management arrangements) would need to have been demonstrated.
- 2.3 In the course of discussions with FF, it emerged that it requires grant applicants to show how the renewal of the facilities will be funded when they wear out. Specifically in this case, they would require RTFC to transfer £25,000 into a sinking fund every year for ten years to meet this requirement as a condition of receiving the grant needed.
- 2.4 RTFC committee members have carefully and thoroughly researched how the new facilities (especially the 3G AGP) could be used to maximize use and revenue and the effect this would have on its finances. Even taking a reasonably optimistic view of future finances, they can see no possible way of funding so large an annual transfer to a sinking fund for as long as FF would require. Accordingly, they have been forced to conclude that the project as presently conceived is not viable and have advised the Town Clerk accordingly.
- 2.5 Every effort has been made to try to salvage the project. Different combinations of new facilities have been considered, numerous third parties have been approached and consulted, alternative sources of finance have been considered and football clubs elsewhere have been asked how they were able to complete similar projects. All to no avail. The picture that has emerged is that grant-funded improvement schemes of the kind considered so far only now work for clubs significantly larger than RTFC or if, in addition to the football club, there is another major partner (such as a university, college, large school or large sports club) involved who will share use of the facilities in a way that complements rather than conflicts with the football club use and will contribute to the funding requirements. (In our case, Ringwood School considered the site too remote from the school to enable them to use it during the day. The Rugby Club were interested but this would have required use of a different type of "carpet" which would have prejudiced FF funding and RTFC use.)

- 2.6 The Clerk has since also received indications from Football Association sources that 3G AGP facilities tend to require regular use by about 40 teams to be financially sustainable. This bears out the calculations made by RTFC, which currently runs a little under 30 teams and is, therefore, under the “critical mass” required to go it alone.
- 2.7 However, the need for the new facilities remains as great as ever. RTFC’s clubhouse has major dilapidations and the changing facilities for teams and match officials are inadequate. The lack of a full-sized, all-weather playing surface is preventing RTFC from expanding its youth teams and offering more opportunities for girl’s and women’s football, walking football and so on, as it otherwise could and would like to do. Apart from the Rifle Club, there remains no provision on the site for any sport other than football.
- 2.8 Improving the facilities is essential to the Council’s current strategic plan for the site and to the appropriate use of developer contributions collected by NFDC and provisionally allocated to this site. Accordingly, the Council may have little choice but to review and revise its strategy for the site (which could have implications for the allocation of the developer contributions) unless some means can be found of increasing predicted usage of the new facilities.
- 2.9 With this predicament in mind, RTFC has been discussing with a local Community Trust whether their respective needs are compatible and could be met by proceeding with some form of facility-sharing arrangement. The Town Clerk was recently made party to these discussions and desires members to have an opportunity to hear what is being discussed and say if it is worth pursuing further. All parties are keen to work towards clarifying any “red lines” that any such arrangement could not cross if it is to receive the necessary Council support.

For further information, contact:

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War Memorial refurbishment

1. Introduction and reason for report

- 1.1 Planning for the proposed refurbishment of the War Memorial has progressed in that a detailed specification of works has been prepared, a competitive tendering exercise undertaken and a grant award received from War Memorials Trust. These developments have disclosed a funding gap and decisions are now needed on how this is to be filled.

2. Background information and options

- 2.1 The War Memorial is a listed building. The kind of work that can be done to it is therefore tightly controlled. For this reason, a survey was undertaken and a detailed specification of works prepared by a local architect in consultation with the Conservation Officer at New Forest District Council and War Memorials Trust. The work includes repointing, stonework repairs, repairs (but not changes) to the lettering and light cleaning.
- 2.2 The listed status also dictated that the tendering process be restricted to suitably qualified and experienced conservation specialists. The conclusion of that process was that the works found to be necessary will cost £8,471. War Memorials Trust has awarded a grant of 50% of the cost - £4,240. The balance of £4,231 needs to be sourced before the works can be commissioned from the contractor and a formal re-dedication planned – ideally in time for the centenary of the original dedication in 1921.
- 2.3 The Council is holding the unused balance of the public donations for the Memorial Lantern project. Further expenses for this are still expected (the new timer and a plaque have yet to be installed) but even so a surplus may remain. It would seem fitting for that surplus to be applied to the refurbishment of the memorial but it is unlikely to exceed a few hundred pounds at most.
- 2.4 There was always an expectation that this Council would provide some funding for the project but no figure has been discussed pending receipt of the grant award decision from War Memorials Trust.
- 2.5 Some form of public appeal or crowd-funding would be another natural source of funding (since the purchase of the site and the building of the memorial was funded by public appeal in the first place). However, this would require organizing and publicity. These tasks could be left to officers but councillors may consider it more appropriate that it be led by them and wish to appoint a task and finish group to do that (in which case suitable terms of reference can be prepared for approval by the Council at its meeting scheduled for 25th March).

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

- 3.1 Whether the surplus contributions for the Memorial Lantern project (if any) should be applied to refurbishing the War Memorial.**
- 3.2 What contribution the Town Council should make to the cost of refurbishing the War Memorial.**
- 3.3 Whether the balance needed to refurbish the War Memorial should be raised by public appeal.**
- 3.4 If so, whether a task and finish group should be formed to oversee that appeal and which members should serve on it.**

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RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE4th March 2020**SKATE PARK SURFACING****1. Introduction and reason for report**

- 1.1 An area of astroturf in the middle of the Skate Park has been vandalised and requires replacement. There is no budget available for repairs to the Skate Park and a Member decision is required as to whether funds can be released from the Play Area Provision.

2. Background information and options

- 2.1 The Skate Park was constructed in late 2015 and was officially opened in February 2016. Within the design there is an area of astroturf that covers a French drain. The area of astroturf is approximately 23m².
- 2.2 The astroturf has been vandalised by fire in two separate areas and has started to lift, exposing the drain beneath.
- 2.3 Two quotations have been obtained to replace the astroturf on a like-for-like basis; £1,654.06 and £2,105. Quotations have also been received for two alternative surfaces; £1,982.45 for wetpour and £2,086.10 for mulch.
- 2.4 Descriptions of the three different surfaces are as follows:

Artificial Grass – would be stuck down using Polyurethane Resin Binder and applicable artificial grass glue. Due to the shape of the area and to avoid significant wastage, there would be one join in the artificial grass, at the point where a small area protrudes from the larger area.

This surface would be exempt from any shrinkage problems. With the use of appropriate binder/glue, there should be no issues with vandalism through pulling up the grass, however when there is a join in any surface, this is a possible weak spot. Similarly to the problems experienced previously, artificial grass is more susceptible to fire damage than the other surfaces

Mulch – recycled rubber from shredded lorry tyres that is then colour coated (autumn mix is proposed). Would be mixed with a Polyurethane Resin Binder and fixed to the existing area by priming the surface and edges with the same binder. There would be no joins and it is fully permeable, meaning there would be no issue with the drainage gully. Any rubber surface can experience shrinkage over time, and with enough accelerant fire damage can still be caused.

Wetpour – purpose-made rubber crumb. Wetpour is harder wearing than Mulch hence its use in areas of heavy footfall within play areas etc. Would be mixed with a Polyurethane Resin Binder and fixed to the existing area by priming the surface and edges with the same binder. No joins and fully permeable. Can experience shrinkage over time and with enough accelerant fire damage can still be caused.

- 2.5 There will be £15,000 available in the Play Area Provision from 1 April 2020.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

- 3.1 Whether the vandalised astroturf should be replaced.**
- 3.2 What type of surfacing to use.** It is recommended that wetpour would be the best compromise of durability, fire-resistance and cost.
- 3.3 Whether the cost can be funded from the Play Area Provision.**

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Item No.	Name	Recent developments	Resource use				Finish in 2019-20?	Notes
			Finance			Staff time		
			Cost & source	Spent to date	Predicted out-turn			
Projects with budgetary implications (bids included in 2019-20 budget)								
A1	Play equipment replacement	Painting and snagging issues have been resolved. The final stage payment has been released.	£44,000 Reserves	£44,000	£44,000	Minimal	Finished	Funded £40K from earmarked reserve with balance from general reserve. This item will not be updated further.
A2	War Memorial repairs	See separate report.	c.£8,500 Grant, budget & ?	£125	Uncertain	Significant	Very unlikely	Carried forward from 2018-19. Grant awarded by War Memorials Trust leaves funding gap. Awarding of the works contract and timing of the works will depend on the filling of that gap.
A3	Mansfield Road verge	The new hedge has been planted by Council grounds staff and will be monitored and maintained by them.	£585 Donations	£585	£585	Minimal	Definite	Carried forward from 2018-19. This item will not be updated further.
A4	Carvers Rec improvements	Semi-permanent table-tennis table being ordered and launch event being planned for Easter.	£10,000 CIL	£4,300	£10,000	Moderate	Probable	Carried forward from 2018-19. Officers will further investigate options for the adult outdoor gym in due course
A5	Grounds department workshop & store facilities	Tendering for the feasibility study is in hand.	£3,000 Budget	£0	£3,000	Moderate	Possible (study only)	Feasibility study into consolidating workshop and storage facilities in new secure facility (inc. financial impacts of implementation)
A6	Tree Management Plan - Survey	SLA entered into with NFDC. Updated advice received on progress and impact of Ash die-back. The first site reports now received.	£5,416	£0	£5,416	Minimal	No	An initial three-year programme to create a database to inform a rolling tree safety inspection regime across the Council's estate
A7	Tree Management Plan – Tree works	Tree works confined to urgent cases only pending outcome of survey work.	£8,060	£0	£8,060	Moderate	N/A	Implementation of the new policy on prioritised tree safety work



A8	Christmas Lights – Replacement/re-procurement	A meeting between the panel members, the contractors and officers scheduled for 3 rd March.	£17,000 Budget	£0	£17,000	Moderate	Definite	
A9	Pocket Park Boardwalk	The Flood Defence Permit has been issued and a purchase order placed. Work is expected to commence once ground conditions allow.	£15,585 Earmarked reserves	£11,085	£15,585	Moderate	Possible	The timber boardwalk is being replaced with one built from more robust and durable composite materials and the works have been arranged with regard to procurement, environmental protection, safety and insurance considerations.
Projects with budgetary implications (not included in 2019-20 budget but added since)								
Projects with no budgetary implications in 2019-20								
C1	Long Lane recreation facilities development feasibility study	Ground-sharing proposal from AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust approved in principle for further discussion				Significant	Unlikely	
C2	Bickerley drainage works	Further ground works by Wessex Water’s contractor are scheduled for April. Work continues on concluding the compensation claim in the meanwhile.				Moderate	Unlikely	Officers are working to secure the promised management plan and conclude the compensation claim.