

Minutes of Amenities Committee Meeting Held Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 6:30 PM

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr J Sayers

Councillors : Cllr Ju Burns, Cllr S Doherty, Cllr A Lloyd

Officers : S Larking, A Spencer

1 Apologies for Absence

Election of Chair:

RESOLVED that Cllr John Sayers be elected to chair the meeting as the chair was unable to attend

Apologies received from Cllr Josh Burns, Cllr Desmond, Cllr Ferguson, Cllr K Hughes, Cllr Mullen and Cllr Y Sayers.

2 Declarations of Interest

None received.

3 Public Participation.

None received.

4 To Confirm the Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of 6th October 2021 be approved as a correct record.

5 Amenities Manager Update - Committee Resolutions

Members were informed that DT Hughes would start work to move the power supply for the water pump at Whinney Brook Playing Field on Monday 29th November. Demolition of Pavilion to commence following a tender exercise.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 Proposed Facilities Budget 2022-23

Members considered the draft Facilities budget for 2022/23. This would be presented to Finance and General Purposes Committee on 8th December 2021 who would make recommendations to Full (Budget) Council in January 2022. The Amenities Manager noted the following:

- Amenities is the highest budget
- Income is from hire of football pitches and bowling greens
- Two options (A & B). Under Option A there is a deficit of £3,799. Option B gives a surplus of £2,106 which reflects an increase in inflation (4.2%) for the lease on the bowling pavilion and renegotiated leases for the ATC and Maghull Tennis Club. Proposed that leases brought in line with that charged for Maghull Cricket Club (MCC)
- Finance Officer continuing to develop budget options in preparation for Finance and General Purposes Committee

Key points made by Cllrs about tenancies:

Maghull Tennis Club:

- Cllr Lloyd declared an interest as his sons go to Maghull Tennis Club
- Noted that Maghull Tennis Club had been late payers as they have struggled. They have worked to increase members and offer coaching. They have limited means of raising funds other than increasing subscriptions - they don't have a bar like MCC and Maghull FC.
- Concerns that proposed increase is 60% if brought in line with MCC
- Could look at options to rebate rent if club grow membership and bring in young people
- Noted that issues with Court 1 due to moss. Jets washing/scrubbing has removed non slip surface
- Explore options for a lease with/without maintenance

ATC:

- Noted that RAF pay the rent for ATC
- Proposed increase is 25%
- Some reluctance to increase rent as proposed given work with young people
- Mayor had written to Squadron Leader following ATC's contribution to the remembrance Sunday service in Maghull

Maghull FC:

- Noted that proposed increase for Maghull FC is 300%

Scrummies (Bowling Hut, KGV Park):

- Noted that proposed Increase for Scrummies (hire of bowling hut) is 4.2%, in line with inflation
- Noted that Scrummies are a commercial organisation
- Noted that no Lease in place with Scrummies
- Concerns that they are not charged actual electricity and water usage
- Noted that while Scrummies put in a new kitchen in the Bowling Hut they got reduced rent in year 1
- Concerns raised that bowlers not able to use bowling hut for refreshments

Other points:

- Noted that income from MCC is in Department 1 (Town Hall) not Amenities for historic reasons. To be checked with Town Clerk
- Rents should go up but any increases need to be justified
- Leases need to be negotiated on individual basis given differences in footprint and facilities
- Develop a formula based on square footage and inflation
- The longer the lease the more opportunity for clubs to apply for grant funding
- Clubs put more into community than take out
- Concerns that unable to provide breakdown for utilities for some tenants (Scrummies and Tennis Club) and that charges for other tenants are not consistent
- Need to differentiate between commercial and community leases
- Lease needs to be agreed with Scrummies as soon as possible to protect both sides

- Leases should include what fixtures and fittings MTC own
- Recognise need to balance books but would prefer a precept increase of £1.00 rather than significantly increasing rents
- Concerns about Option B due to rent increases. Don't want to lose sports clubs or ATC
- Noted that most new houses are being built in Lydiate so will not generate precept for Maghull

Points made in response by Amenities Manager

- Noted issues about tennis courts. Courts are cleaned and treated. Unfortunately, courts in wrong position and moss thrives.
- Noted concerns about rent increases in Option B. Will review
- Only Amenities budget requires a precept increase
- Nominal code 7319 is for vehicle leases. Fleet needs to be replaced. Transit van failed MOT. Ranger had to be sold as failed MOT. Looking at green options. Work suspended due to Town Hall rewire

RESOLVED THAT

1. Officers to check why income from Maghull Cricket Club is included in the Town Hall Budget
2. Lease arrangements to be reviewed for commercial and community tenants and transparent methodology developed
3. Utilities to be separated for all tenants
4. Lease for hire of Bowling Hut to be agreed as soon as possible
5. Option A , a £1 increase on precept, to be presented to Finance and General Purposes Committee
6. The report be noted

7 Wickstead Play Equipment Upgrades

Members received an update on play equipment upgrades. Wickstead appointed to provide play equipment following tender via Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO). Only company to tender. No site visit before tender submitted and accepted. Following site visit Wickstead have identified some issues about accessibility to play equipment. Costs have increased from £100,000 to £150,000. Negotiation has reduced costs to £108,000 for 18 rather than 20 items. Additional costs include the need to install more wetpour surfacing and increase the size of Mersey Park to install the accessible play equipment. There will be less items at Moorhey Park due to access. Work will start in February 2022 which is later than planned but earlier than date Wickstead had offered. Delays due to supply of steel for equipment. Works will start on Hall Lane first and will take about 6 weeks. Proposed that the £8,000 deficit is met by a £1.00 increase in precept.

Key points raised in discussion

- Disappointed that getting less equipment for more money and spending more on paths and increased footprint in 1 park
- Noted that unable to retender as only received one quote
- Noted that went against Officers advice to use reserves to fund park upgrades so

unable to seek shortfall from reserves

- Keen not to increase burden on residents
- Total demands on precept to be considered at Full Council in January 2022

RESOLVED that:

- 1. Approved revisions to planned play equipment and safety surfacing installations at 6 sites**
- 2. Approved a £1.00 increase on 2022/23 precept demand to meet identified gap between committed council reserves and Wicksteed Leisure's revised costs for supply and installation of play equipment to be reported to Finance & General Purposes Committee on 8th December 2021.**
- 3. The report be noted.**

8 Tree Survey 2021/22

The Amenities Manager updated Members on the Tree Survey. Key points:

- Knowsley Council appointed to carry out Tree Survey
- Reports submitted as completed which is more manageable than previous survey
- 5 reports received to date including for Old Hall Field, Glenn Park and Balls Wood
- Knowsley marking trees which require works (unlike last time). 3 priorities for works:
1 - work required in 1 month; 2 - work required in 12 months; 3 - no allocated timescale. Majority of work in priority 2. Some priority 1 works in Balls Wood. Logs being chipped where possible; logs being taken to Balls Wood
- Some works completed by Grounds Maintenance Team (18 of 28 trees) others will require a contractor. Cost of a contractor approximately £6,000. In 2018 contractor cost approximately £25,000. Up skilling team has helped reduce costs. Team to attend further chain saw training
- Complaint that taking down healthy trees in Glen Park. All works in accordance with the results of the Tree Survey

Key points made in discussion

- Noted that planting replacement trees - over 8,000 planted across Maghull
- Concerns about flooding in parks including Roundmeade. Play equipment under water. Noted that meeting with Sefton Council arranged. Local infrastructure an issue

RESOLVED that the report be noted

9 Chair's Report

No report given

CHAIR