



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

held on **Monday 22nd November 2012** at 7pm

This meeting was held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Gravel Hill, Wombourne, WV5 9HA.

Present – Committee Members-

Councillors: Barry Bond, Mike Davies, Mark Evans, Dan Kinsey, Alan Peace (Vice-Chairman), John Pike, Mary Roberts, Ken Upton (Chairman).

Present – Non-Committee Members-

Councillor(s): None

Clerk: Rachael Wright

Public: 34 members of public

45/21 – Apologies

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Cheryl Davies, Claire McIlvenna, Robert Reade and Daisy Tait.

46/21 – Declarations of Interest

None.

47/21 – Approval of last Committee Meeting minutes from 25th October 2021

Members approved the minutes of the last meeting.

48/21 – Matters arising from the minutes of 25th October 2021

None.

49/21 – Lease at Brickbridge Playing Fields (max 1 hour)

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and thanked them for attending the meeting.

He reiterated to everyone that the purpose of the meeting was to gauge views from residents living in houses surrounding the fields as to what their thoughts were on their long term future, for example, were they happy with the current facilities, or would they like to see more play equipment as an example. He reminded everyone that the playing fields were not included in South Staffordshire Council's consultation on the Local Plan, and it was purely coincidental that the lease was up in 2023 after 65 years.

He opened the floor to questions and comments, and in summary the points made were:

- There were small pockets of land not owned by South Staffordshire Council who currently lease the playing fields to the Parish Council, including some owned by FG Davies and the Canal and River Trust.
- The Parish Council currently pay a peppercorn rent for the lease, however, this could be subject to change in the future if South Staffordshire Council decide to change the terms of the lease.

- It's possible that the management of the playing fields could be taken over by a Committee who sit outside of the Parish Council which comprise of Parish Councillors, but also local residents, representatives from the football clubs and Police for example.
- Members of the public noted how beneficial the open space was during lockdown allowing them to get fresh air and exercise.
- Everyone in attendance agreed the volume of anti social behaviour and issues at the playing fields had disappeared since the gate had been locked, although there were some concerns over the 4.30pm closure being too early.
- Some members of the public noted their disappointment that some of the facilities that used to be based there such as public toilets had been knocked down, and most agreed the facilities on site needed to be updated.
- Councillor Dan Kinsey reiterated that the playing fields are public open space, and if South Staffordshire Council were to decide not to renew the lease, they would have an obligation to provide the same green space elsewhere in the village which is virtually impossible as the space is not available, therefore he hoped this re-assured residents of the long term future of the fields. It was noted the all weather pitches at Wombourne High were owned by the school and could not form part of the open green space discussed.
- Councillors agreed that it may prove difficult to lock the gates at 8.30pm in the summer, however, we have pledged to do that by employing a Park Warden, and will seek support from the local Policing team if required.
- Many residents agreed the best use of the fields was to keep them for football, but would like to see enhancements such as a small gated play area, exercise equipment, poo bins and free bags, benches, a proper pathway around the edge of the football pitches for dog walkers, and most agreed that the space should be better advertised for use of the whole village, not just those who live directly around it.
- Councillors agreed there were some parking issues due to the volume of people playing football on weekends, particularly linked to Wombourne All Stars, however, they had recently proposed some improvements such as marking out the car park which may assist with that.
- It was suggested the new lease should include a maintenance of the hedge along Brickbridge Lane which makes walking along the pavement difficult due to the overgrown weeds.
- It was noted that Wombourne Youth Action Team (WYAT) raised funding for the MUGA, which should remain in place.

The Chairman thanked all members of the public for their feedback, and informed them no idea was off the table, so everything discussed would be taken into consideration by the Parish Council when negotiating the future lease with South Staffordshire Council.

The meeting closed at 8.07pm.

Signed:

Dated: