

RECREATION & WORKS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF MEETING HELD ON 26TH MARCH 2008

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Cruse* – in the Chair

Councillors Cruse*, Hazelton*, Howells*, Mrs Knight*, Mrs Lord, McMurray, Miers*, Pasley*, Mrs Mason*, Miss Stanley, Walters

*Also in attendance at site visit Minute No. RW776

Mrs P Rendle – Clerk of the Council

Mr Louis Hauser – NSC Waste Management Contracts Officer – in attendance for site visit only Minute No. RW776

APOLOGIES

Councillor Mrs Way

RW776 SITE VISIT – LAKE GROUNDS PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Further to Minute No. RW752 and prior to the commencement of the formal Committee Meeting, some members of the Committee met Mr Louis Hauser, NSC Waste Management Contracts Officer, at the Lake Grounds Public Conveniences.

Members were pleased to note that the toilets were generally clean but whilst in a relatively good condition they could do with decorating.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hauser for attending the site meeting.

The meeting reconvened at the Folk Hall.

RW777 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Knight

- Personal interest in Minute No. RW781 Pedestrian Crossing, Harbour Road
Reason – Portishead Primary School Governor

Councillor Miss Stanley

- Personal interest in Minute No. RW779 Portishead Skatepark Project
Reason – Member of Portishead Skatepark Project Group
- Personal interest in Minute No. RW780 Provision of Playing Fields off Clapton Lane
Reason – Son plays football for Portishead Juniors FC
- Personal interest in Minute No. RW781 Pedestrian Crossing, Harbour Road
Reason – Portishead Primary School Travel Plan Co-ordinator

Declaration by members who serve on both the Town Council and District Council

Councillors Mrs Knight, McMurray and Pasley stated that any views they expressed on matters to also be considered at North Somerset Council would be provisional and based on the facts known. They would be exercising their rights to reconsider the matter afresh when the matter went before North Somerset Council.

RW778 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were two members of the public in attendance – Mr Jon Gething representing Portishead Skatepark Project Group and Mr Alan Cureton, representing Portishead Juniors Football Club. They were each invited to address the Committee during the relevant part of the meeting.

(Clerk's note – with the agreement of the Committee the agenda order was amended to accommodate the members of the public).

RW779 PORTISHEAD SKATEPARK PROJECT

The Chairman invited Mr Gething to update the Committee on the progress of the project.

Mr Gething informed the Committee that following the report to the Town Council in November a meeting had taken place with North Somerset Council officers who had agreed in principle that Kilkenny Field was the best available option for the skatepark. However, since that meeting, the Group had been informed that the Executive Member was considering a possible change in policy with respect to play provision in North Somerset and the Group had been advised that they were more likely to receive support from North Somerset Council if the Town Council agreed to take on the long term responsibility for the skatepark. Until this matter had been resolved the group were unable to move the project forward to the planning stage.

In answering questions from Councillors Mr Gething confirmed that

- The capital cost of the project, which was anticipated to be in the region of £150,000 - £200,000, would be met by the Project Group.
- The initial build cost would include provision for a 5-year maintenance period. After this period it was anticipated that maintenance of the equipment could cost in the region of £1,000 per year. In addition, Mr Gething acknowledged there would be costs for weekly and annual inspections and caretaking; this was likely to be in the region of £1,500, making a total maintenance cost of £2,500 per year.
- The Project Group intended to continue to fund-raise on an annual basis and would expect to be in a position to cover the routine maintenance costs of the skatepark.

- Fund raising was already underway but applications to the major funders could not be made until the project was more certain ie planning permission had been granted. The Group had however raised £7,000 locally and this would be used to fund the planning application and supporting noise, ecology, etc. assessments. In addition, Hydrex had offered to assist with groundworks at a value of some £20,000.
- Once planning permission had been obtained grant applications would be submitted to the major funders. If these were successful it was anticipated that building works could commence next Spring.

During the ensuing discussion Members expressed their concern that North Somerset Council appeared to be considering a change in play provision policy without any consultation with Town and Parish Councils. Members also felt that this issue should be clarified before any decision was made on the long-term management of the skatepark. In addition, Members questioned the impact this change in policy would have on the new piece of play equipment to be installed at the Lake Grounds which was being part-funded by the Town Council (Minute No. RW767 refers).

RECOMMENDED that

1. District Councillors make urgent enquiries to determine North Somerset Council's position with regard to play provision.
2. The Clerk to write again to North Somerset Council requesting clarification on the change in play provision policy.
3. Further consideration of the long-term management of the skatepark be deferred until the 23rd April 2008 meeting of the Committee.

RW780

PROVISION OF PLAYING FIELDS OFF CLAPTON LANE

The Chairman invited Mr Alan Cureton to address the Committee.

Mr Cureton introduced himself as representing Portishead Juniors Football Club, on behalf of his wife who had addressed the Council at the 12th March 2008 meeting. He informed Members that Portishead Juniors Football Club now consisted of 35+ teams and had more than 350 children (boys and girls) on its register. They desperately needed a home base and more playing facilities and would like to use the new pitches being created off Clapton Lane as part of the East Portishead S106 Agreement. However, they had been unable to determine who would have rights over the land and were now asking for the Town Council's assistance.

The Chairman informed the Committee that Russ Currie, NSC Leisure Manager, had been asked to clarify the ownership and management of the playing fields and he had confirmed to the Clerk, by e-mail, that once the snagging works were complete ownership would be transferred to North Somerset Council. Ron Enoch, NSC's Sports Manager, was currently looking into how they would be managed.

Some members expressed confusion at the statement made by Mr Currie as they understood that Gordano School were expecting to take ownership of the playing field.

RECOMMENDED that

1. Portishead Juniors Football Club be advised to contact Mr Enoch direct.
2. The Clerk confirm the ownership of the playing field with David Lawrence, NSC Assistant Director (Environment and Operations), and to inform him of Portishead Juniors FC interest in using the field.

RW781 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING, HARBOUR ROAD

The Committee received a report from Councillor Miss Stanley outlining the case for a pedestrian crossing on Harbour Road, ideally to be located on the raised platform between Waitrose piazza and the Leisure Centre.

Arising from the report members noted that even though this stretch of road was subject to a 20mph speed limit, a recent survey had shown that 80% of vehicles exceeded this limit. Furthermore, it was becoming increasingly dangerous for Portishead Primary School pupils, whose parents had historically been allowed to drop off and pick up from Waitrose car park, to cross the road at this point. This had resulted in more congestion on Station Road and around the school gates. Some parents were also now parking in the Leisure Centre car park which, in turn, was having an impact on people wishing to use the Leisure Centre facilities.

Letters from NSC Destination Manager, Leisure Contracts Officer and Transport Planning Officer, Police and Headteacher of Portishead Primary School, all supporting the installation of a crossing, were circulated.

Members generally expressed their support for the installation of a crossing on Harbour Road and

RECOMMENDED that

The Town Council request North Somerset Council to act urgently to install a suitable and safe crossing on Harbour Road and install flashing school signs to highlight the proximity of the school and children crossing.

RW782 PROVISION OF A BUS SHELTER AT AVON WAY

Further to Minute No. 764 members now received details of the quotations received for the installation of a bus shelter at Avon Way (adj. to the play area).

RECOMMENDED that the quotation of £2,983.00 (2 upper polycarbonate panels and two lower coated, galvanised panels) be accepted.

RW783 LAKE GROUNDS PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Members were pleased to find the toilets generally clean and functional but considered that they could do with decorating.

In addition, some members commented that the Wyndham Way toilets were still poor, the gents being particularly bad. These toilets could also do with decorating.

RECOMMENDED that North Somerset Council be asked to arrange for the public toilets at the Lake Grounds and Wyndham Way to be redecorated and it be suggested that this work could be carried out by the Probation Service using community service placements.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm