

Girton Parish Council

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The Pavilion
Girton Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road, Girton

Minutes of the Sport and Recreation Committee held on Wednesday 28th July 2010 at Orchard Close Community Centre

Present: Cllrs. M Wilson (Chair), P Johnson, G Clare, CMR Wilson, L Miller

10/64 Apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Noble. The Chairman noted that the meeting was inquorate and that all business items (10/67-10/73) would need to be deferred. It was requested that Items 10/71 and 10/72 be considered for approval by the next Parish Council meeting to enable orders to be placed. With the agreement of those present it was agreed to proceed with a planning discussion.

10/65 Members declaration of interest:

None.

10/66 Public session:

No members of the public were present.

10/74 To receive and note the Financial Officer's paper on VAT.

The Chairman noted that although the paper had been referred to the Planning and Resources Committee the Committee did have a direct interest as application of VAT on user charges when users did not meet the required criteria meant that VAT would need to be considered as an additional factor in setting fee rates – notably for one off bookings - further information would be brought to a later meeting. An analysis of bookings and income was underway.

10/75 General Planning Discussion:

The discussion was based partly on reviewing the report of last years planning meeting. Chief points covered included:

Finances and Resources.

1. Concern was expressed that the allocated reserve funds had not been protected for the current financial year as had been requested. Unless these reserves were adequately ring fenced and replenished long term planning and long term health of sport and recreation in the Village would suffer.
2. Improved financial data and software for the preparation and reporting of Council finances was needed.
3. From the perspective of a four-year forward plan in the current year S and R budget has very little flexibility over essential commitments. The Chairman noted that as general reserves are depleted then an underspend on the year if possible to build up these reserves seemed to be prudent.
4. Additional income would be required to take forward any new plans for subsequent years. This increase in income would come from increases in user fees but an increased contribution from the Council's precept income was also appropriate.

5. Income from fees. The variability of income year to year was noted. The previous year had seen loss of income from MUGA due to extreme weather conditions and from the Hall due to heating problems. Modifications in charging models introduced last year will be reflected in the income seen this year.

6. Charges for 2011/12. Current CPI inflation rate is 3.2% - this equates to a 66p increase on a fee of £22. A simpler formula of rounding up increase to nearest pound was generally considered more straightforward. An annual increase was considered essential this coming year.

7. Cricket fees had been increased by £10 increments over several years to bring them to parity with other fees. There was discussion over whether a further increment should be made or for the application of a general percentage increase. Both options will be brought forward to the meeting setting fees.

8. In looking at the three years beyond the current year the priorities appear to be:

Resurfacing of the MUGA which had a remaining life expectancy (with maintenance) of another 3-4 years.

Fitting out of loft space and installation of lift in Pavilion (noted as overdue by Sport England in 2003).

9. Planning for both projects towards the end of the four year cycle meant that consultation could proceed while funds were being identified. In particular the replacement of the MUGA would require consultation over the purpose of the courts as it was noted there was a tension between demands for exclusive football use and the needs of other sports for an all weather outdoor surface.

10. The fitting out of the roof space as requested by Sport England for youth club/sporting activity was seen to fit in well with informal contact with the youth leader who had indicated a need for additional interior space for youth club activities.

11. Several other aspects future planning could be taken forward through a small sub-group looking at the footprint of the Recreation Ground now that the carpark fence has been installed. This group could identify where if possible additional features could be accommodated eg.

Additional seating around play area etc

Picnic table provision.

Teen-age shelter.

Cricket all weather practice wicket

Signage

12. User meetings held on a six monthly basis would benefit from a focus on multi-year planning and maintain realistic expectations.

13. Demarcation of responsibility – this had been a major issue last year. The revised Committee structure may resolve some of the problems but issues such as ditches and hedging required regular checking to make sure if action was being taken. A case could be made for taking this aspect back within the S and R orbit. In the longer term if a separate Trust is managing the Recreational facilities in place of this committee then the absolute clarity over what is whose responsibility (Trust/PC) will be essential.