

**MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS TRUSTEES SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 15  
OCTOBER 2019**

**Present:** Councillor Edwards (Chair);  
Councillors Ayub (Vice-Chair), Gittings and Warman

**Apologies:** Councillors Emberson and James

**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**2. REPRESENTATIONS**

With the permission of the Chair the following people addressed the Sub-Committee regarding the reports submitted to the meeting:

Steve Brown (Caversham Trents Football Club)  
Alastair McLean and Robin Bentham (Warren and District Residents Association)  
Councillor Ballsdon (Chair of the Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee and Mapledurham Ward Councillor)

**3. LANDSCAPE UPDATE**

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing an update to the Trustees on the programme of works to implement the approved Landscape Master plan and on the works by the Department for Education (DfE) to the Mapledurham Playing Fields community carpark.

The report explained that the sports pitch regrading and drainage works had started in June 2019, and was continuing with the aim to re-provide improved sports pitches by the start of the 2020 football season. While the works took place Caversham Trent FC were being accommodated between Mapledurham and Christchurch meadows playing fields. The Council's parks service had installed the gravel footpaths on the western side of the playing fields and work had started to install the new children's play area with the aim to open it for use by the October 2019 half term holidays. Other planned works included tree planting and a boundary fence to the Hewett Avenue side of the playing fields in November/December 2019, and installation of the central avenue footpath and lighting, and trim trail, in April/May 2020.

The report explained that Kier, the DfE contractor, had started work on the MPF car park on 2 September 2019 and were looking to complete the initial phase of car park works in 11 weeks, and then commence the school build. The finished car park surface of block paviours would be installed following the main works to the school, and Kier were exploring closing the car park for a very short period whilst this work took place. Details on the timing and duration of the closure would be reported to the Trustees. The proposed small overflow parking area adjacent to the existing car park was currently

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being used as a site compound by Kier, carrying out the car park improvement works and building the school. Once these elements had been completed and Kier had decanted from the site, the overflow parking area could be constructed.

**Resolved -**

**That the works to implement the landscape plan and DfE works to the MPF community car park be noted.**

#### **4. PAVILION IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving an update on the pavilion refurbishment scheme and seeking authority to submit a planning application and procure a contractor for the first phase of work.

The report noted that since the previous meeting of the Sub-Committee the pavilion had re-opened for hire, in July 2019. The main refurbishment works would be funded through the £1.361m premium from the Department for Education (DfE) which had been paid to the Trustees on 20 August 2019 and £85K section 106 planning gain allocated to the scheme. Whilst waiting for the DfE payment the Council had commissioned initial scoping and design work for refurbishing and potentially extending the pavilion in the future, and a draft layout of the pavilion had been agreed by the main user groups in early August 2019.

The report explained that the scheme was split into two phases. The first phase was to refurbish the pavilion and re-configure the internal layout for more efficient use of the space, and the second phase was an extension to provide additional sports changing spaces, a new main entrance, and a small extension at the rear of the building. The first phase had been assessed as within the current budget allowance of £825k (including fees and contingency) for refurbishing the pavilion. The second phase was beyond the funding currently earmarked for the pavilion.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which summarised recent discussions with the Berks and Bucks Football Association and a consultant working on behalf of the National FA, at which it had been explained that the provision of additional changing rooms would not be a funding priority. Following consultation with Caversham Treants FC, it was therefore proposed to remove the additional third and fourth changing rooms from the scheme. The update report also summarised comments received through the Management Committee including a request for more storage space with easier access from the main hall and querying the need for an office and additional meeting space.

Attached to the update report were amended plans reflecting the removal of the extra changing rooms and additional changing space with access off the main hall. Plan 1a identified the extent of works to be undertaken in the first phase of the works, for which approval to seek planning permission and procure a contractor was sought within the previously agreed available £825k budget (inclusive of fees and contingency). Plan 2a showed the potential future developments including additional storage, office/storage

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space, extended kitchen and relocated main entrance. The pavilion users had requested that both phases of the scheme be submitted for planning approval, to enable the second phase to take place when funding was available.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Culture be authorised to submit a planning application for the whole scheme to refurbish and extend the existing pavilion;**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services and the Assistant Director of Culture be authorised to procure and implement the first phase of the pavilion works, including the appointment of STL Architecture Ltd as lead architect, within the funding limits set out in the report.**

**5. MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out proposals for changes to the Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Proposed new Paragraph 5 for the Charity Commission Scheme on the Committee of Management
- Appendix 2 - Proposed new Mapledurham Management Committee Terms of Reference

The report noted that the development of the proposal to build the school had resulted in a number of requests for the management committee make up to be reviewed, and changes made to reflect the involvement of organisations representing beneficiaries and making use of the Playing Fields and its facilities. Local groups with significant current involvement included Mapledurham Lawn Tennis Club, Caversham Trents Football Club and Warren and District Residents Association. When the school opened another large group of beneficiaries would be making use of the playing fields introducing a range of both opportunities and pressures.

The Sub Committee were asked to consider proposals for a revised Management Committee of between seven and nine members with the following representatives:

- Two individuals appointed by Reading Borough Council
- An individual appointed by Reading Borough Council who is a Reading Borough Councillor from the ward in which the playing fields are situated
- A representative of Mapledurham Parish Council
- A representative of the Football Club
- A representative from the Tennis Club
- A representative of other major users of the Playing Fields

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- A representative from the local residents association (WADRA)
- A representative from the School Head teacher/Governor/Parents

A draft set of provisions reflecting the above and other aspects of the composition of the Management Committee and conflicts of interest was attached to the report.

At the meeting it was recommended that the proposals be amended to specify that members of the public could attend Management Committee meetings as observers, that the Chair of the Committee would be elected by secret ballot, and that the provision to allow electronic meetings be kept under review to ensure that transparency was maintained.

**Resolved -**

**That the proposed new Paragraph 5 for the Charity Commission Scheme on the Committee of Management (Appendix 1) and proposed new Mapledurham Management Committee Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) be adopted with the amendments recommended at the meeting.**

### **6. MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS - DEED OF DEDICATION**

Further to Minute 15 of the meeting held on 7 May 2019 the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report setting out a draft Deed of Dedication for Mapledurham Playing Fields, which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report noted that at its previous meeting the Sub-Committee had authorised officers to investigate the implications of the charity entering into a deed of dedication, and liaise with Fields in Trust (FIT) and the Charity Commission regarding entering into a deed of dedication in respect of the Mapledurham Recreation Ground Charity. The Council's external Legal advisers Veale Wasborough Vizards (VWV) had obtained and reviewed FIT's standard draft deed of dedication and made a number of changes to it to reflect the Council's role as trustee of the Charity. The resulting draft Deed was attached to the report.

The report summarised the key undertakings included in the draft Deed and explained that it essentially provided for the Council (as trustee of the Charity) to undertake that it would not take certain steps in relation to the Ground, including disposal of all or part of the Ground by way of sale or the grant of a long lease to a third party, or building new buildings on the Ground for anything other than the Charitable Purpose, without the consent of FIT.

The Sub-Committee were asked to consider whether pursuing the draft Deed would be in the best interests of the Charity, and if so to authorise officers to discuss the detail of the terms with FIT and also seek the views of the Charity Commission.

**Resolved -**

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- (1) That seeking to negotiate a draft of the Deed with FIT be agreed as being in the best interests of the Charity and its beneficiaries;**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to progress negotiations with FIT, with a view to presenting a final draft for consideration and (if thought fit) approval by the Sub-Committee;**
- (3) That the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to seek the views of the Charity Commission on the entry into the Deed and to confirm the position to the Sub-Committee in advance of any decision to enter into a Deed.**

(The meeting closed at 7.20 pm)