

Council Meeting - 2 October 2018

Report of Councillor Mrs Vivienne Stock-Williams, Sports, Parks and Leisure

Good sports, parks and leisure facilities improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.

1. Community Leisure

Play and Recreation

1.1 **The following works have been advanced** since the last report, using either the Taunton Deane Replacement Play Equipment Budget and/or Section 106 Agreement funding:-

- Comeytrove Park, Taunton – installation of a log cabin climber. The climber has been installed and will be ready for use as soon as the bark place surfacing has been laid; and
- Victoria Park, Taunton – the 7.5 m tower slide is currently being manufactured. The pre-construction site meeting for the Baseball Pitch has been held and a start date is awaited. Tenders for the construction of the Beach Volleyball Court and slide have been returned and the contract awarded.

1.2 **The following works are in hand:-**

Orders have been placed for the following replacement play equipment:-

- Blackthorn Gardens, Taunton – Replacement swings;
- Carey Grove, Creech St Michael – Supernova Roundabout and balance beam;
- Colman Road, Taunton – Replacement flat swings and pod swing;
- Galmington Park, Taunton – Replacement slide and multi-unit climbing frame;
- Gillards Close, Rockwell Green – Replacement cradle swings;
- Lyngford Park, Taunton – Replacement for removed under 5's springy tractor;
- Pyrland Avenue, Taunton – Replacement for removed roundabout;

- Redlake Drive, Taunton – Gravity bowl and mini nest swing Taunton Green – for redundant single red, green and blue arch swings to be replaced with hexagonal swing unit.

1.3 **Section 106 Agreement Funding for Play, Sport, Allotments and Community Halls**

Work continues monitoring housing developments for payment trigger points and assisting communities and organisations with their on-going projects.

At Bishops Hull the new sports pavilion at the Recreation Ground is nearing completion.

Assistance has been offered to Creech St Michael Allotments in deciding on a suitable project for S106 funding.

Stoke Road Allotments are completing their improvement projects and drawing down S106 funding.

West Monkton Village Hall has started on their agreed improvement works to the hall.

1.4 **Capital grant scheme for Voluntary Village Halls, Sports Clubs and Allotments and the Parish Play Area Grant Scheme**

Awards have been made to the following halls, sports clubs and parish play areas:-

- Ash Priors Village Hall - new boiler;
- Cotford St Luke Community Hall - new chairs;
- Combe Florey Village Hall – extension;
- Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club - court upgrade;
- Wellington Bowls Club - door lock;
- Norton Fitzwarren Village Hall – flooring;
- Comeytrove Community Hall – kitchen; and
- Wellington Squash Club - carpet

1.5 **Summer Sunday Bandstand Concerts**

The 2018 Summer Sunday Bandstand Concerts season has concluded. It was another successful series of concerts which were well received by the community. In Wellington Park there was a record 3,500 attendances during the concert season.

The ever popular Carols around the Bandstand have been planned to take place on Monday, 17 December 2018, in Vivary Park, Taunton.

2. GLL (Taunton Deane)

Community Sport and Health

Scam and Fraud Talk for Taunton Walk Group

- 2.1 34 Walk Well in Taunton Deane walkers attended a workshop led by Trudi Henderson, a Community Banker from NatWest, after their weekly walk at Wellsprings. Trudi gave an interesting and informative workshop on Scams and Frauds, detailing how to protect yourself and your family against on-line fraud plus doorstep and phone scams. Leaflets, advice and stickers were available to collect after the session.
- 2.2 Following the interest shown by the Taunton and Wellington Walk Well Group, GLL are now looking to provide a series of other workshops including fire safety.

Walk Well in Taunton and Wellington

- 2.3 The new Autumn programme has just been launched across the partnership, with many enquiries from new walkers; GLL anticipate that the numbers will continue to increase throughout the Autumn months.
- 2.4 Total participations for the year so far have continued to climb, with Taunton having 3,384 participants and Wellington 1,880. This success would not have taken place without the dedication and enthusiasm of GLL's volunteers, who have so far contributed 1,863 volunteer hours.

Swim Vouchers

- 2.5 Families in North and East Taunton were given free swim vouchers to use over the summer months through a scheme supported by Taunton Deane Borough Council. The vouchers were distributed through the parent/family support advisers, Children's Centres and schools.
- 2.6 Swimming lessons were offered to Year 6 pupils from Lyngford Park School who did not meet the Year 6 National Curriculum swim criteria. Two of these pupils discovered a great love for swimming and not only achieved their Level 1 award but Level 2 as well.

Change4Life - Star Wars

- 2.7 400 Change4Life 'Train Like a Jedi' packs were given out to children this summer through GLL's Taunton and Wellington leisure centres, outreach activities and holiday camps. The packs aimed to encourage children to become more physically active by experiencing new games and activities, and rewarding them with Star Wars stickers each day.

Facilities

Wellington Sports Centre

Wacky Wednesdays - Wellington

- 2.8 In partnership with the Wellington One Team, GLL staff attended each of the 5 Wacky Wednesday events held across Wellington during the summer holidays. Staff provided a variety of sporting and craft activities for the children and offered advice about lessons, parties and courses to parents. The events had a real community feel to them, with Police horses and the Fire Brigade visiting the sessions. The five events attracted a record-breaking total of more than 1,000 children and adults.

Blackbrook Leisure Centre and Spa

- 2.9 The General Manager, Ben Wilkinson, has introduced a new policy regarding the recycling of plastic. This will ensure that the plastic products sold in the Better Coffee Corner and leisure centre vending machines are fully recycled and do not end up in landfill.

Wellsprings Leisure Centre

2.10 Wellsprings Holiday Activities - Daily Mile!

Children attending the holiday activity programme at Wellsprings Leisure Centre participated in the 'Daily Mile' each day, come rain or shine. Between them they achieved the fantastic total of 724 miles!

2.11 Inclusive Holiday Play

Wellsprings Leisure Centre worked in conjunction with Somerset County Council's Short Breaks Team to provide additional support throughout the summer holiday for children with disabilities and individual needs.

The funding provided staff for an additional 14 days of the holiday, enabling support to be provided for 6 children.

3. Leisure Procurement Project

- 3.1 Our current leisure contract with GLL ends on 31 July 2019 and the project to secure an Operator for the new contract is progressing on schedule. We are offering an 8 month and 10 year contract starting on 1 August 2019 with the potential to extend for a further 10 years depending on performance.
- 3.2 Following the completion of the Early Market Engagement process, where potential Operators were asked to submit information to assess their suitability, experience and financial standing, the Authority has now sought Detailed Submissions (ISDS) from each of the five remaining bidders.
- 3.3 Evaluation by a team of officers and Councillors took place during August 2018 with the aim of reducing the number of Operators to be taken to the next stage to three.
- 3.4 We are currently issuing and responding to clarifications following the receipt of the ISDS submissions and we anticipate that this will be complete by late-September 2018.

- 3.5 The next stages are to invite the shortlisted Operators to attend Competitive Dialogue sessions in October 2018. At these sessions we will explore any final legal, contractual, operational, financial and technical issues before asking all bidders to submit their 'final tenders' in November.
- 3.6 These will be evaluated in December 2018 before the contract award in the first months of 2019.
- 3.7 A main aim of the contract remains to significantly reduce, or preferably remove altogether, the cost of providing leisure services across Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

4. Parks and Open Spaces

Grass Cutting

- 4.1 The weather has been a big factor for Open Spaces during the second quarter of the financial year, with a long hot and very dry season leading to grass drying out and not needing to be cut as frequently.
- 4.2 This has meant some adjustment to our watering schedule to compensate, but I am happy to report that our floral borders and roundabouts have been kept in fine condition throughout the summer and have elicited regular compliments.

Rough Sleepers and Travellers

- 4.3 We have had several issues during the past three months with 'rough sleepers' setting up tents in public parks and with travellers gaining unauthorised access to our Open Spaces and leaving large volumes of waste.
- 4.4 Staff have reacted quickly to these incidents and worked with our Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator, local Police and residents to address these issues and manage the impact on the public.

Housing Grounds Maintenance

- 4.5 Housing Grounds Maintenance has continued to be handled effectively, with the ongoing improvements across the Borough being considered very favourably by tenants. As the growing season draws to a close, further work will begin to bring more of the long neglected areas up to standard. This work will continue throughout the winter.

Events

- 4.6 Several events in our Open Spaces have been held including the Fake Festival in Longrun; Concerts by Paloma Faith, Billy Ocean and The Kaiser

Chiefs in Vivary Park in addition to the annual Flower Show; several Food Festivals and community events in Goodlands Gardens, Somerset Square and Castle Green. These, and many other, events have been very successful and are likely to be repeated next year.

Vivary Park Lake

- 4.7 The postponed project to desilt the Lake in Vivary Park is expected to be completed by the mid to end of October and will result in a much improved watercourse for wildlife and the public's enjoyment.

Wellington Park

- 4.8 Following the vandalism of the fountain in Wellington Park, a replacement three-tiered fountain has been sourced and installed, bringing Wellington Park up to a very high standard.
- 4.9 Volunteers from The National Citizen Service asked to help us and several teams of young adults worked very hard to paint benches, play equipment in Waterleaze Play Area and the new fountain. My thanks to Richard Burge's son and friends for their excellent work.

Green Flags

- 4.10 Standards across our Parks have been recognised by both Britain in Bloom and Green Flag with awards being made to many of our parks, nature reserves and play areas. The Green Flag Heritage Award Flag was recently raised in Wellington Park for the 15th consecutive year. This was a fitting farewell tribute to Josep Galicia who originally introduced the scheme into Taunton Deane at this venue.

Councillor Vivienne Stock-Williams