

Full Council Meeting – 29 September 2020

Report of Councillor Dr. Richard Lees – Sports, Parks and Leisure

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

Section 1 – Leisure Events

Events

When Government announced an easing of lockdown, event and promotional booking enquiries started to come in. We worked to create a COVID-19 Secure Risk Assessment for events and promotional bookings.

Current guidance has allowed officers to support and facilitate the following events and activities:

Reboot Fitness Classes

Regular session over multiple parks and open spaces.

Goodland Gardens

Fitness Activity

Small Yoga classes

1-2-1 Personal Training Session

Castle Green

Taunton Independent Market

A new independent market will appear on Castle Green which will take place on the second Sunday in the month starting again on 13 September 2020

Moorlands

Rowland and Anderton Funfair

13 September – 4 October.

French Weir Park

Stokes' Funfair

23 August – 1 September

Longrun Meadow

Orienteering

6 September

Park Run

Looking to resume from late September

Section 2 – Everyone Active

Community Sport and Health

In line with Government guidelines, Everyone Active has reopened its leisure centres, swimming pools in addition to its golf course.

Blackbrook, Wellington and Wellsprings is offering gyms and classes, which has been extremely popular. Each gym session will be for a 50 minute period, allowing a 10 minute period for staff to clean equipment before the next session.

Swimming pools offer programmed classes and lane swimming. Everyone Active is now preparing to offer family swim sessions and a broader range of pool activities in line with the guidelines. The Spa has reopened, but due to social distancing, the Thermal Spa has remained closed.

Everyone Active is pleased to be able offer indoor tennis and recommenced their indoor coaching programme. Team sports can also restart when each sport's national governing body has published a government-approved action plan and related guidance on playing safely. Everyone Active are contacting all hirers and those with block bookings to confirm their requirements within the constraints of social distancing and the sport's national governing body's guidance.

Everyday centres will continue to close for an hour during the day to fog (sterilise) all machines and gym equipment, this will also take place at the end of each day.

Section 3 – Play and Recreation

Play equipment repair and replacement grant

Since the last report Covid-19 halted all playground works.

The S106 function also moved from Planning into External Operations.

Since moving across to the new Directorate, major projects have commenced relating to both the design of parks and open spaces and the administration of S106 Agreements.

The outcome of these projects will inform future decisions surrounding the repair and replacement of play equipment.

Section 106 Funding

The level of S106 funding contributions is negotiated with developers during the planning application process. Somerset West and Taunton Council normally receives the actual payment of these S106 monies either when the development work commences or at a previously agreed phase of the development.

We continually monitor all agreements for payment trigger points. Once these trigger points are met then an invoice to the developer is raised. Once the money from the development is received for the area then the relevant Parish/Town Council is informed. The Parish/Town Council and Community Engagement Leads inform the community of the available funding and seek suitable projects to come forward and apply.

S106 Funding awarded

The awards are made to parish/town councils and community organisations where facilities that are provided are open to the general public with no membership restrictions, and have a wide public and community benefit.

E.g. play areas, community village halls, sports & outdoor recreational facilities that contribute towards the provision and/or enhancement of the community.

Assistance is continually being given to applicants with potential forthcoming projects.

The following projects have been advanced since the last report, with use of Section 106 funding:

Completed Projects

- Creech St Michael allotments project for water butts, path etc.
- Creech St Michael Village Hall for disabled toilets and associated works

Ongoing Projects

- Bishops Hull Village Hall & Playing Fields for new equipment in the park on the recreation ground
- Wiveliscombe Community Centre project for lift and fire escape
- Baseball pitch at Victoria Park equipment (fence)
- Dragon's Trail Project enhance area along the canal
- Creech St Michael Parish Council for recreation ground
- Hamilton Road Allotments project
- Bicknoller Village Hall-community shop project
- Watchet Bowling Club-hall and gym project
- North Curry - Outdoor Sport Recreation
- Stogursey Parish Council for notice boards
- Regal Theatre Minehead for redevelopment of basement for changing area
- Minehead Town Council for outdoor gym equipment at recreation ground
- Minehead Eye for a climbing wall
- Watchet Town Council for new MUGA

Over the last 3 months we have recently granted the following projects

- Creech St Michael Village Hall for toilet block and kitchen - £37,471.56
- Bishops Hull Hub, new community hall build - £236,196.52

We are frequently assisting communities and organisations with their on-going projects.

Section 4 - Parks and Open Spaces

Team sports have now taking place on open spaces again, with risk assessments in place in line with government guidance on the both the Safe Return of Outdoor Sport and Recreation in England and Return to Recreational Sport Framework. We continue to work with the sports clubs to make this as easy as possible for them.