

Member Questions and Responses for Full Council | October

Question	Raised By	Executive Member	Response
<p>I. The playing fields at Madley Park in Witney have not been maintained for football or other sports, and therefore have not been used for football or other sports, for a number of years. There was a 2002 agreement between WODC and Wood Green School about their community and school use. The Pitch Playing Strategy and its update provide evidence that Witney's football pitches are used heavily and more are required for training and for matches. We hear from the clubs that this is keenly felt. Please can you give Council an update on WODC's next steps to get football going again on that site?</p>	<p>Councillor Ruth Smith</p>	<p>Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy</p>	<p>A Dual Use Agreement (2002) exists between Wood Green School and WODC. This agreement has been reviewed by Leisure and Assets, which sees WODC responsible for maintenance costs and all revenue income from any hirers going to the school. In 2022 the School's Business Manager at the time confirmed to WODC that they received no requests for community bookings on the Playing Fields and that the pitches were surplus to use for curriculum time - as a result there has been no formal use of the pitches since COVID. Although, during this time Ubico have been maintaining the area as a general recreation ground and the site is available as a public open space.</p> <p>In 2023 the school appointed a new Business Manager, who has an interest in growing the sporting facilities at the school. Over the last 18 months Officers have worked closely with the school to support the delivery of their projects, including the resurfacing of the school's artificial turf pitch, which is heavily used by the local hockey club. Recent discussions have now moved to the grass pitches at Madley Park.</p>

			<p>The Council is aware that remedial works are required to bring the pitches back to a football suitable surface, this was confirmed through an independent grounds maintenance inspection that the Council commissioned. Officers are currently looking into appropriate funding to undertake the required works. But to secure this facility going forward the Leisure and Assets teams are investigating the possibility of a short-term lease to the school – to align with the covenant on the site, which specifies no transfer or sale until 2029. This will enable the school to reactivate community bookings and take on responsibility for the operations at the site. Officers are due to meet with the school shortly to take this discussion forward.</p>
<p>2. Local basketball team representatives have been in touch with all 3 tiers of council to express interest in getting the outdoor court at the Windrush Leisure Centre operational as well as indoor courts. Can you please give an update on what steps can be taken by WODC -itself or in partnership with OCC or WTC or Better - to get that</p>	<p>Councillor Ruth Smith</p>	<p>Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy</p>	<p>The Leisure team have engaged with Witney Basketball Club regarding their needs and aspirations.</p> <p>The outdoor basketball court next to the Windrush Leisure Centre is owned and managed by OCC. Therefore, it is OCC's responsibly to invest in any remedial works required. Leisure Officers are following up with their peers in OCC Estates team to discuss the future/plans for the site, with a view to securing the improvements needed.</p>

<p>outdoor court up to the current specifications for that sport, in order to unlock another amenity and sport for our area?</p>			<p>In terms of the indoor court at Windrush Leisure Centre, this is GLL's responsibility. GLL are aware of the changes to the basketball court specifications in 2021 and were looking into revamping the current hoops at the Windrush. Also, further improvement works will be happening in the sport hall through the Planning Improvement Plan that went to the Executive on 10 September.</p> <p>As a solution, Officers recommended the Club used Carterton Leisure Centre as this facility is compliant with the new specifications.</p> <p>Going forward Leisure Officers have agreed to get consultation feedback from England Basketball concerning applications which include multi use games areas to ensure the build specification meets both football and basketball's needs.</p>
<p>3. Last year, a number of trees were felled in the WODC Wood Green carpark. Local residents, who witnessed the work, have been asking me questions about the reasons and permissions for felling those trees. Can you please update</p>	<p>Councillor Ruth Smith</p>	<p>Councillor Andrew Prosser Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery</p>	<p>Towards the end of last year a number of tree works were carried out at Woodgreen offices, including crown lifts, removal of deadwood, pruning and felling of 5 trees. There were no Tree Preservation Orders on the trees and therefore no formal application process necessary for the works. The reasons for the felling included overgrown trees with poor form, outgrown space and damage to the Council's building.</p>

Council on the process that was followed for that tree work?			
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