

Minutes of the meeting of the Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board held at Cressing Temple, on Tuesday 4 December 2018.

Present:

Councillors:

S Walsh (Chairman)	Essex County Council
M Steptoe	Essex County Council
G Butland	Braintree District Council

The following officers and advisors were also present in support:

Laura Boreham	Business Development Lead, Culture and Green Spaces
Claire Bunn	Park Manager, Great Notley Country Park
Dee O'Rourke	Head of Culture and Green Spaces
Samir Pandya	Strategy & Policy Manager, Braintree District Council
Paul Partridge	Head of Operations, Braintree District Council
Cherie Root	Corporate Director and Head of Business Solutions
Sophie Campion	Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The Board received the report on Membership, Apologies and Declarations and it was noted that:

1. The membership of the Board was as shown in the report.
2. Apologies had been received from Cllr Wendy Schmitt, Braintree District Council.
3. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board held on 31 May 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Site Report

The Board received report (GTP/04/18) from Claire Bunn, Park Manager.

The following points were highlighted from the report:

- It was likely that the new member of staff would be starting in January 2019.
- Maintaining the Play Equipment was an on-going task. Ideas for improvements to the Water Play area for next year were being considered as it was showing signs of wear and tear.
- Visitor numbers were slightly down across all of the country parks and this was consistent with the particularly hot weather during the summer and the limited shady areas at the Park.

- The Zip Wire would no longer be situated at Great Notley Country Park due to refusal of the planning application by the Planning Committee.
- There were a number of events held at the Park and there would be an Events team next year.
- Building Developments along the Flitch Way were being monitored regarding any potential mitigating effects or incursions on the land.

During consideration of the report the following points were made:

- A question was raised regarding the litter collection policy at the Park, particularly at the Lake end of the Park. In response it was reported that the general policy across the country parks was to limit the number of bins, due to the issues caused by wasps and birds, and encourage people to take their litter home. Along the main play trail litter was collected daily, however at the Lake end this was done weekly, although collections were more frequent during peak periods. Concern was raised regarding the weekly collection and it was requested that this be considered further by the Chairman.
- With regard to possible land encroachments along the Flitch Way due to developments, it was reported that this could be reported to the Land Registry and noted for future searches on those particular properties.

It was **Agreed** that:

1. The Chairman, as Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste, would give further consideration to the issue raised regarding bins and litter collection at Great Notley Country Park.
2. The contact details of the officer at the Land Registry would be provided to the Country Parks Team.

The Board noted the report and update.

4. Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)

The Board received report (GTP/05/18) from Steve Wilson, Street Scene and Parks Manager, Braintree District Council and an update from Samir Pandya, Strategy and Policy Manager, Braintree District Council.

The report provided Members with an update on usage and income from the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Great Notley Country Park covering the period from 1 April to 30 October 2018.

The following issues were noted during the update:

- The total number of bookings was over 1,000 but down overall on this period last year by 13%.
- There had been 29 different organisations who had regularly booked the facilities however, Braintree Town Football Academy and Great Notley Youth Football Club accounted for around 40% of the total bookings. The facility was well used at peak times in the evenings and weekends.

- The income generation from the facilities remained in line with the same period last year (5% lower) and if this trend continued the facility would achieve breakeven point.
- The Artificial Grass Pitch requires replacement in 2019/20 as it will be 10 years old. There is funding for this in a reserve fund and the work would be subject to a tender exercise. The work would be undertaken in the quieter period to minimise disruption.

During consideration of this item the following points were raised:

- In response to a question regarding usage and engagement, it was reported that there were still some difficulties getting Great Notley Youth Football Club engaged in the Strategy and this was a key issue as they were technically the home team and therefore there was an expectation by the Football Association that they would be engaged. It was hoped that a meeting with the Chairman of the Club would open discussions.
- There had been some anti-social behaviour during some of the evening booking which had resulted in one person being banned from the facility. This was an issue that staff were mindful of.
- It was noted that Braintree Town Football Club were looking for a new home.
- Concern was raised regarding flooding of the under-pass in wet weather conditions. This was a particular concern when groups of youths were crossing the dual-carriageway to access the facilities due to the under-pass being flooded across the entire width. This issue had been raised via Member Enquiries and via the Parish Council. The Chairman agreed to escalate this issue to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure.

It was **Agreed** that:

1. The Chairman would raise the issue of flooding of the under-pass, blocking access to the Country Park and its facilities, with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure.

The report and update were noted.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The Board agreed to meet on a six-monthly basis. The date of the next meeting would be agreed in due course.

The Chairman thanked the Democratic Services Officer for her support to the Board and wished her well for the future, as this would be her last meeting.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 3.22pm.

Chairman