

**BURWELL PARISH COUNCIL**  
***The Jubilee Reading Room***  
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Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Burwell Parish Council held at Gardiner Memorial Hall, High Street, Burwell CB25 0HD at 7.30p.m. on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Present:** Liz Swift (Chair), Lea Dodds, Michael Geary, Gus Jones, Clive Leach, Jim Perry, Sara Phipps, Michael Swift, Geraldine Tate, Paul Webb, Brenda Wilson, and Chris O'Neill.

Others present: Craig Mulhall and Andrew Wilkinson (Mulhall Leisure Consultancy), Brenda Kibblewhite and David Lewis (This Land), John Waters and Denise Cornwell (Burwell Football Club) and five members of the public.

**FC/171023/1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence had been received from Linda Kitching, Helen McMenamin-Smith, Charlie Milner, Jenny Moss, and Ian Woodroffe.

**FC/171023/2 Declarations of any interests known to Councillors**

There were no declarations made.

Liz swift explained to those attending the meeting that the only item for consideration was the Consideration by the Council to accept the land on Newmarket Road, Burwell under the Section 106 Condition (Planning Application 15/01175/OUM) for the provision of a Sports Hub.

She continued to explain that should the Council agree to accept the land, then a Public Meeting would be held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 where members of the public could ask questions and give their views.

**FC/171023/3 Presentation on behalf of the Burwell Sports Hub Taskforce**

Craig Mulhall and Andrew Wilkinson from Mulhall Leisure Consultancy introduced themselves and informed those present of their involvement to date since their appointment by This Land. They have carried out a needs assessment, which has included researching what facilities are available in the village and surrounding area, if it is fit for purpose, what is missing and if land were to be available, what could be realistically provided. The research included visits to the village and existing facilities and looking at other sport plans for the village and area. In general Burwell and the surrounding area was found to be well provided for sports, but there is a shortfall for football and a fitness facility (gym). This is in line with the East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) Sport and Leisure Report. Discussions have also taken place with the Burwell Football Club who confirmed that there is a definite shortfall of pitches particularly at peak times and when the weather is wet. There is also a lack of facilities which have floodlights. Data used is based on the current population and not speculated growth levels.

Based on the findings ten options have been suggested for the site, including the first option of doing nothing, the options were then reduced down to five. Craig Mulhall explained how it is important that the options are viable, for example a swimming pool may be a popular choice but would be too expensive to build and run and therefore not viable. He then continued to explain that the Council should consider going for the most aspirational option. Andrew Wilkinson reported that they are engaging and building a relationship with some of the key stake holders, the Football Club, ECDC, Football Foundation and Cambridgeshire Football Association. Representatives from both the Football Foundation and the Cambridgeshire Football Association have visited the proposed sports hub site and the other pitches in the village and all felt that the proposed area is the correct place.

Mulhall Leisure Consultancy has provided a fee quotation for the next stage of the work, which will involve compiling a funding application to the Football Foundation. The Football Foundation has the most funding available and has indicated that they are likely to be interested in providing funding for a 3G facility. Applications do take time to complete, and benefit from a sound relationship with the organisation and with the proposed project being on the Local Football Facilities Plan framework. Work for an application can take around 12 to 18 months so submission would be aimed at late 2024. The continuation of the relationship with

the stakeholders needs to continue. Match funding will be required. Initially the Council will need to make a firm decision on the option that they wish to choose. Planning permission will be required. It is thought that the project could be delivered around 2026.

Members of the Council were then invited to ask questions.

Q. Will the pitches only be able to be used for football?

A. The Football Foundation supports funding towards 3G pitches and buildings and are keen that the facilities provided can be used for a variety of sports.

Q. If the Council agrees to take ownership of the land, at which point is there no return?

A. The acceptance of the land will run a long side the funding applications, so probably when match funding agreed.

The 106 Agreement states that the transfer must be made prior to the 100<sup>th</sup> dwelling being occupied, but commitment does need to be prior to this. The land will be transferred in good faith.

Q. The Parish Council has a good reputation with the Football Foundation and the Football Association. Will Mulhall Leisure Consultancy identify other possible funders for match funding?

A. Yes. Mulhall Leisure Consultancy has a comprehensive knowledge of other possible funders. There is also a possibility that the Football Club could take advantage of changes to Gift Aid which could generate a further funding source.

Q. What percentage of funding is likely to be awarded by the Football Foundation?

A. Probably around 60-75%.

Q. There is a £150K difference between Options 9 and 10, would a 9v9 3G pitch not be suitable?

No, the full-sized pitch will be far more beneficial. It can be split into four playing zones, and it is unlikely that a 9v9 pitch will be supported by the FA.

Q. Concern has been raised about the impact 3G pitches can have on the environment, with the EU looking to ban rubber crumb pitches by 2030. It is hoped that 4G pitches will be more environmentally friendly, but research is showing that this may not be the case. Should we be investing in such a facility?

A. The FA is aware of the concerns, but the impact on the environment from a 3G pitch needs to be balanced out with the environmental impact of grass pitches, with petrol and chemical being used for the extensive maintenance. Work is ongoing to address the issues that have been identified. Sport England guidance will be followed when delivering the pitch and if Sport England is a funder, they will want to see the most up to date pitch installed.

Q. Does this indicative cost of Option 9 of just over £2 million include the leveling out of the site?

A. No this does not include the leveling of the site. This Land has agreed to hand over the site, levelled and with drainage. This is in writing.

Michael Swift spoke to the Council of how the Football Association had highlighted the need for more outdoor pitches in Burwell. Despite being the largest village in the district, Burwell does not have the sports facility provision associated with having a secondary school in the village. Pitches at the Recreation Ground, Margaret Field, and School. Many of the teams have to travel outside of the village to practise and play. The Sports Centre has a small artificial pitch and should be involved with discussions. We need to bring football back to the village and need an artificial pitch. Artificial pitches last over 10 years with very low levels of maintenance required. In comparison, grass pitches will need cutting, weeding, seeding etc. which all will add to the pollution levels. Bringing football back into the village will require less car journeys to Bottisham and Newmarket. If fewer pitches are required at the Recreation Ground or Margaret Field, more could become available for the planting of wildflowers and trees. 10 years ago, the Recreation Ground was very tired with broken tennis facilities, and aged play equipment and skate park. Funding spent on the Recreation Ground has changed the facility to what it is today, most of the costs covered by grant funding. We need to create this sports hub for the future of our community.

**FC/171023/4 Consideration by Burwell Parish Council to accept the land on Newmarket Road, Burwell under the Section 106 Condition (Planning Application 15/01175/OUM) for the provision of a Sports Hub.**

Michael Swift proposed, seconded by Paul Webb that Council should accept the land on Newmarket Road, Burwell under the Section 106 Condition (Planning Application 15/01175/OUM) for the provision of a Sports Hub.

***Following a vote by members present with 6 in favour, 1 against and 5 abstentions The Council resolved to accept the land on Newmarket Road, Burwell under the Section 106 Condition (Planning Application 15/01175/OUM) for the provision of a Sports Hub.***

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Signed

Dated: