

# Full Council Meeting – 7 February 2023

## Portfolio Holder Report for Sports, Parks, Leisure and Phosphates – Cllr Derek Perry.

### Parks and Open Spaces

#### Parks and Open Spaces

Work to improve the following Council Play Area's has been tendered and programmed for completion by March 2023. These works are funded by a mixture of S106 funds and the Councils capital budget.

Play Area	Completion Date	Funding	Update on works
Walkers Gate Road, Wellington	Complete	S106	Completed
Heavitree & Compton Close, Taunton	Complete	S106	Completed
Greenway Rec, Leslie Avenue (Gym Equipment)	March 23	S106	Contract awarded
Crofters Green, Taunton	March 23	Capital budget	Contract being awarded in January
Humphreys Road, Wellington	March 23	Capital budget	Contract being awarded in January
Cleeve road	March 23	Capital budget	Contract awarded
French Weir	Feb 23	Capital budget	Contract awarded
Victoria, Viridor, Hawthorn Park	March 23	Capital budget	Contract awarded

### Leisure

#### Leisure Centres (Everyone Active)

SLM continues to perform well in delivering the operation of our leisure facilities. Membership numbers have generally been maintained for health and fitness in spite of new 'budget' facilities being opened in the town. Wellington in particular has seen a strong membership performance.

Swimming lesson numbers remain strong in all pools.

The rising costs of utilities remains the largest single challenge facing the industry and our centres and some measures have been taken to mitigate the effect but the overall impact is expected to be a cost of more than £250,000 above budget for utilities.

The Council has partnered with SLM to instal LED lighting in the tennis centre at Blackbrook and the sports hall at Wellsprings to both reduce costs and reduce emissions. Further such schemes may be undertaken in 2023.

We have opted not to increase the rates for electricity generated by the solar panels in order to further support SLM (who utilise all electricity generated in this way)

Vivary golf course has enjoyed a good year in terms of usage. The Council has worked in partnership to erect additional safety netting to prevent balls being struck into nearby properties/roads and is exploring ongoing flooding issues on holes 5 & 6.

The wet start to January has no been helpful and the course has been closed for several days due to waterlogged areas.

## **Leisure Projects**

Tennis Court Refurbishment – discussions continue to be held with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) regarding the project to upgrade the four tennis courts at Vivary Park and Cheddon Road.

Taunton Green Pavilion – refurbishment and compliance work at the Taunton Green Pavilion on Cheddon Road are well advanced and once complete the Baseball Club will move from Victoria Park to Taunton Green and make the latter their 'home ground'.

Norton Fitzwarren Playing Field – the work to create a new playing field with a football pitch, tennis court, car parking area and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Norton Fitzwarren has progressed significantly despite the cold weather in December and the usual winter rainfall.

The stone subbase and base levels of the car park, tennis court and MUGA have been installed alongside required kerbing and drainage.

It is expected that top layers will be installed as soon as weather permits.

Work to create a full-sized football pitch will take place in spring 2023.

## **Phosphates**

### **Strategic Solution for Phosphates**

As Members are aware, on 5 October 2021, Full Council approved an Interim Strategy of mitigation measures. The Planning Phosphates Sub-Committee is overseeing this programme. This Sub Committee has considered a number of officer reports on various matters and updates on the interim programme.

The Council circulated a survey to all affected applicants in October 2022, to gauge the level of demand for the P credits generated by the Council's phosphate mitigation projects and to understand the extent to which impacted applicants were pursuing their own phosphate mitigation measures. A summary of October's survey results were presented to the agents/developer forum meeting of the 29 November 2022. The meeting provided an opportunity for officers to outline the process for P Credit Allocation and for affected applicants to ask questions.

In December 2022, details of the Council's SWT Phosphate Credit Scheme were uploaded on the SWT website. Further details, including the provisional list of planning applications eligible for the first round of SWT P credits is available at

<https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/planning/phosphates-on-the-somerset-levels-and-moors/>

An initial offer letter for SWT P Credits was sent out in December 2022 and a final offer letter based upon P calculations is now being sent out to applicant(s) with details to complete the S106 agreement so that these applications can be determined. It is anticipated that a small number will need to be determined by the planning committee and it is likely that this will require an additional meeting of the Committee in February.

Further information about the Defra National Nutrient Mitigation Scheme, were received in November 2022 but it is still being developed. The Defra letter can be viewed on the Council's website.

Work with the other Somerset authorities to update the phosphate calculator is nearing completion. A meeting has been arranged with Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Wessex Water - to agree technical amendments / sign off the use of the Somerset P calculator for local use in January. This meeting involves policy and DM leads within all the Councils, including Dorset Council.

Cllr. Perry