

**A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD
WAS HELD ON 3 NOVEMBER 2008**

The Mayor (Councillor Kimber) (P); Councillors Beavis (P), Burgess (P), Chegwyn (Chairman) (P), Edgar (P), Mrs Forder (P), Langdon, Murphy (P), Salter (P), Smith (P) and Wright (P).

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, notice had been received that Councillor Hook would replace Councillor Langdon for this meeting.

36. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was received from The Mayor (Councillor Kimber) and Councillor Langdon.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

38. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 8 September be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

39. DEPUTATIONS

It was reported that no deputations had been received.

40. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from the public.

PART II

**41. REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR NON-SPORTING USE OF
LEISURE LAND**

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager which examined the current level of fees and charges for use of Council leisure land. The report examined whether the range of requests could be suitably accommodated and whether the Council could demonstrate it was receiving an appropriate level of income to offset any costs that may be incurred. The report offered a more robust system ensuring a consistent approach in setting charges for the various user groups.

The Chairman advised Members that the purpose of this report was to achieve

a fair and transparent tariff for the use of Council leisure land that would reflect the actual cost to the Council of the use of the land and also to include the reinstatement costs.

Members agreed that it was not always easy to distinguish between commercial events and those that could be deemed community events as these often included a profit element, for example, a car boot sale. However, it was agreed that charity events were those that were run by a registered charity and could be more easily identified. The Chairman indicated that if it was necessary for a decision to be made as to whether a charity be allowed to run an event free of charge, he would consult with the Leader and Group Leaders to decide if the matter could be decided by them or needed to be brought before the Board.

A Member expressed concern that notice had been given that the Licensing Board would be hearing applications for the Licensing of events on a number of Council owned areas of leisure land, including Stokes Bay and the Alver Valley that were in the remit of the Board. These applications were for licences which would be valid until 2 am. He considered that the Community and Environment Board should have had the opportunity to debate these licence proposals and to consult with the Police prior to them going before the Licensing Board for consideration. He requested that a motion to withdraw the licence applications be put before the Board.

The Head of Legal Services was asked if there would be a cost implication to the licence applications being withdrawn at this stage and he replied that there would.

It was suggested that Stokes Bay and the Alver Valley covered large areas of land and that consideration should be given to them being broken down into smaller areas in relation to the booking of events.

The Chairman replied that the fees were based on the perceived number of people attending an event. If there were different charges for different sized areas of land at Stokes Bay or the Alver Valley it may tempt event organisers to cut costs and hire an area of land too small for the number of people they hoped to attract, with resulting Health and Safety issues.

It was further suggested that because an area of land for an event would be taken out of use to members of the public during the set up time, 100% of the fee should be charged during set up days as opposed to the 25% charge indicated at paragraph iii) in Appendix B to the report. The Chairman felt that this would make the costs too high to attract events to the area and be counter productive. Some Members felt there would also be the concern that organisers may cut corners with Health and Safety issues in order to set an event up quickly to save costs. It was requested that a motion setting the charge at 100% on set up days be put to the Board.

A Motion requesting that set up fees should be 100% of the chargeable rate was proposed and seconded. On being put to the vote the motion was lost on the casting vote of the Chairman.

A Motion was proposed and seconded requesting that the current licensing applications for Council owned leisure land be withdrawn and brought before the Board for consideration after consultation with the Police. On being put to the vote the motion was lost on the casting vote of the Chairman.

RESOLVED: That the level of fees and charges contained in Appendix B to the report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager be recommended to Full Council as part of the 2009/2010 Budget process.

42. PROPOSED PROVISION OF A DRAINAGE SYSTEM TO THE FOOTBALL PITCHES AT BROOKERS FIELD

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager which sought the Board's approval for the use of Developer Contributions for the provision of a drainage system to service the football pitches at Brookers Field.

RESOLVED: That the use of £70,000 of Developer Contributions from the Sports Pitches Fund to help finance the scheme, subject to a grant of £70,000 being received from the Football Foundation, be approved.

43. BROCKHURST ALLOTMENTS – SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS AND CAR PARKING PROVISION

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager which sought the Board's approval for the use of funding received by the Council from the sale of land at Camden Allotments to upgrade the existing perimeter boundary fencing and gates at Brockhurst Allotments and to provide additional car parking facilities.

In answer to a Member's question it was confirmed that the new fencing would be installed in conjunction with suitable planting for added security. It was also confirmed that approximately 92% of Brockhurst allotments were in use and the proposed improvements would allow further land to be brought into use.

RESOLVED: That the use of £52,800 from the above funding be approved.

44. IMPROVEMENTS TO PLAY AREA FACILITIES

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager which sought the Board's approval for the use of Developer Contributions for improvements to Play Area Facilities at Old Road Play Area, Leesland Park Play Area and Leesland Park Skate Park.

The Council's Youth Champion advised Members that he had toured some of the parks and play areas with members of the Youth Council. They had put forward some good ideas concerning new style play equipment and he had brought some leaflets about play equipment for Members to look at. The Youth Club members had told him how pleased they were with the improvements to Leesland Park Skate Park, the concrete ramps being much quieter than the old metal ones. They were also pleased with the benches that had been installed by the Skate Park but they requested that a Youth Shelter be provided for use during wet weather.

The Chairman advised that the possibility of erecting a Youth Shelter had been considered but local residents had been against this initiative. Unfortunately, they felt this may attract vandals and drug dealers as it would provide shelter for them. He acknowledged that it was unfortunate that the children who behaved well during the day and made use of the Skate Park were penalised by the bad behaviour of others during hours of darkness.

RESOLVED: That the use of £106,500 funding for the following projects be approved:

- 1) Old Road Play Area - £26,500
- 2) Leesland Park Play Area - £15,000 (towards scheme cost of £35,000)
- 3) Leesland Park Skate Park - £65,000

45. IMPROVEMENTS TO ALVER VALLEY BMX TRACK

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager which sought the Board's approval for the use of £27,000 from Developer Contributions for improvement works at the Alver Valley BMX Track.

Darren Fells (Chairman) and James Christie (Vice Chairman) of the BMX Club were invited to address the Board. They explained to Members the very positive impact that taking part in the BMX Club activities had on the young members of the Club. For many it was the first time they had the opportunity to learn self discipline and to have their achievements recognised. This led to an improvement in their behaviour at home and at school and increased their ability to concentrate and learn at school. The Club also provided courses in First Aid and the use of computers, the latter skill also benefiting school work.

The Club were keen to improve the track both for the safety of members and to gain accreditation from the British Cycling Club. There were a number of young Club members whom the British Cycling Club considered showed the potential to become national and Olympic champions of the future. The planned improvements would enable training to take place for longer periods during the winter months, thus enabling these young athletes to reach their personal goals.

Members expressed their full support for the Club and the excellent work it was doing with young people, giving them motivation and skills and something worthwhile to do, without which some would be getting into trouble and failing to achieve at school. They also noted the involvement of the British Cycling Club and the fact that they had recognised the potential of young athletes from Gosport.

The Board Chairman advised the BMX Club Chairman that the Grants Sub Board could make grants to help young athletes to attend national and international events, as it was recognised that buying equipment and travelling to such events would be expensive. The BMX Chairman replied that the Club would take note of this potential resource as many of the young members came from families without the resources to pay for their children to compete at regional or national level and beyond.

RESOLVED: That the use of £27,000 from Developer Contributions for improvement works at the Alver Valley BMX Track be approved.

46. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman advised Members that there was funding available in the Sports Pitches Fund and the Developer Contribution Fund. If Councillors knew of projects in their Wards that could benefit from contributions from these funds, he asked them to put them forward for consideration.

The Council's Youth Champion invited the Chairman to attend a meeting of the Youth Council and he replied that he would be delighted to accept such an invitation.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.28 pm

CHAIRMAN