

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COUNCIL HELD ON 26 November 2020

ITEM 13 – ASHBOURNE RECREATION GROUND PAVILION

QUESTIONS - Presentation by John Lake, Chairman Ashbourne Recreation Ground Sports & Community Partnership (Speaker)

The Ashbourne Recreation Ground Sports & Community Partnership (ARGSCP), a community organisation of volunteers, has been working hard for 3 years to provide a new modern quality sports and community hub for the sports clubs and residents in Ashbourne.

The commitment and professionalism of the ARGSCP was recognised in very positive comments made by many DDDC councillors when the project was last considered at your Council meeting on 27 August.

The ARGSCP is now at the point to let a contract to build the project.

What has changed since 27 August 2020

The English and Wales Cricket Board (EWCB) has confirmed that it is prepared to invest £250,000 in the project.

However there is a major condition which is that all monies need to be committed and spent by 31 January 2021.

The Ashbourne Pavilion project is the only project in Derbyshire being supported by the Derbyshire Cricket Board and EWCB for major capital funding in 2020-2021. If the EWCB funding is not spent then the Pavilion project will lose that investment which cannot be carried forward to another year.

Therefore, commencing work on site in January 2021 is critical and the EWCB need confirmation that the Partnership has confirmed funding to let a contract to build the Pavilion by December 2020.

Current Funding Position

The cost of building the new Pavilion (Phase 1) is £779,000.

A contractor has been selected by the ASCP for the project and is ready to start on site in December 2020.

Indeed the ASCP has already agreed a contract with Western Power to divert the HV cable that runs underneath the existing Memorial Pavilion with the work ready to start in December.

The ASCP expects to have confirmed funding for the Pavilion Project by mid December of £619,500 from:

DDDC	£115,000
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Football Foundation	£250,000
EWCB	£250,000
Duke of Devonshire Trust	£4500

The ASCP therefore needs to have an additional £159,000 to be able to let a building contract to be able to spend the EWCB funding by 31 January 2021

The ASCP has outstanding funding applications to a variety of funding organisations of £250,000 as listed in Appendix 2 of the committee report.

None of this potential funding will be considered and approved by the respective funding organisations until late January 2021. Therefore any further grant approvals for the Pavilion project will come too late to enable the ASCP to let a building contract in December 2020.

This is why the request for DDDC to agree a further £175,000 for the Pavilion project on an ‘as required basis’ is so important.

The District Council is effectively underwriting the letting of a building contract in December to ensure that the EWCB funding of £250,000 is not lost.

Draw down on DDDC funding of £175,000

This will not be required, if at all, until June 2021 due to the structure and timetabling of the building contract.

By which time ASCP will know how much of the outstanding funding applications of £250,000 have been successful. ASCP has spoken to key potential funders about not using the DDDC reserve funding of £175,000 if our applications to them have been successful and they have agreed that any funding approved by them can be used to offset using the DDDC reserve funding.

Moving Forward

The implementation of the new Pavilion project on the Ashbourne Recreation Ground is at a critical stage.

This is entirely down to the hardwork of local volunteers with support from the District Council’s officers who are likely to have secured over £600,000 of external grant investment into Ashbourne by mid December 2020 and hopefully in excess of £800,000 by early 2021.

In addition to the funding that the ASCP has brought into Ashbourne it also means that the District Council will save on year to year maintenance and repair costs for 50 years. A further saving to the Council of several hundred thousand pounds.

The building of the new Pavilion by ASCP will also save the District Council the cost of replacing the existing Memorial Pavilion which officers have indicated could be significant.

ITEM 16 – CORPORATE PLAN 2020-2024 – PERFORMANCE 2020/21 AND PRIORTIES 2021/22

QUESTIONS from Mr Peter Dobbs, a local resident of Ashbourne, on the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan.

- 1. In view of the slippage in targets indicated on p50 of the agenda, how confident are the Council that the promised 'Air Quality Action Plan' will be in place by March 2021 as promised in the Corporate Plan ?*
- 2. If the March target is not expected to be met, what new date is currently indicated?*
- 3. In this regard could an update on the status of the appointment of the preferred contractor for the 'Detailed Assessment' of NOx pollution on Buxton Road in Ashbourne be provided?*

Although I hope it is not intentional, significant delay in carrying out certain statutory responsibilities gives the impression that work in this area of the Corporate Plan is not being given a very high priority.

- 4. What will the Council be doing to reassure those residents who live on busy and congested streets like Buxton Road that their health is not being ignored?"*

RESPONSE

Thank you for your question, Mr Dobbs.

The Council is still working to determine if an Air Quality Management Area should be declared in relation to Buxton Road, Ashbourne as soon as possible. We are hopeful that all the work necessary to make this decision will be undertaken before the end of March 2021. If the work necessary to get to that point cannot be completed by that date we will certainly be looking to a date as close as possible to the end of March.

The contract for the Detailed Assessment is now with the preferred contractor and we are awaiting the return of a signed copy. Once the dates for this work are agreed we will review the timeline and advise you of any changes.

The Council has continued to monitor air pollution levels throughout the year. You are already aware that lockdown resulted in the closure of the laboratories that we use and in significantly lower levels of traffic pollution at times. We will continue to make the results of monitoring available to you and to others and will publish our next annual report in due course. In addition we will be reporting the findings of the Detailed Assessment to the relevant committee along with any AQMA declaration.

ITEM 20 – REVIEW OF COUNCIL ASSETS

STATEMENT (and Speaker) from Mrs J Lewis, a local resident of Ashbourne, on the ‘Review of Council Assets’ concerning the Black’s Head in Ashbourne.

“On the night the Head was removed, I objected to its removal on the grounds it was a listed structure. A DDDC Councillor confirmed it was being removed due to a threat of arson and removal has been agreed with DDDC.

I asked for confirmation of responsibility and accountability for safe keeping and was told he would be responsible for returning it to DDDC who were accountable. I asked who would be making the decision regarding replacing it as I felt very strongly it should be made by local people and local did not include places such as Matlock, Bakewell etc. He confirmed the decision would be made by local people, asked where I lived and said I had nothing to worry about as I would be considered local.

Given this commitment, I would like to know what the strategy and plans will be to ascertain what the wishes of the local people are? For example, will there be a formal voting process put in place for Ashbourne and the immediate surroundings? In my opinion, local should be defined in terms of the old Ashbourne UDC and RDC area.”

RESPONSE

Thank you Mrs Lewis for your question. The issue of the Black’s Head is on the agenda for discussion tonight and I very much hope that the debate on that item will provide you with answers to the questions you have asked.

QUESTION from Wolds Community re major housing development on Matlock's Wolds

Given the council's welcome recent local initiatives, such as creation of wildlife corridors, the regeneration of areas in the Peak Park, the target of Net Zero and the White Peak Partnership work, we would like to ask:

1: Can the allocation of 60 acres of existing wildlife corridor and important carbon sink, for a major housing development on Matlock's Wolds, still be justified?

2: Would this valuable landscape be better utilised, in line with Council's climate emergency, for re-wilding in order to maximise its carbon sequestration and capacity to hold more water?

RESPONSE:

The answer is Yes to the first question and No to the second. In more detail, the housing allocation at Gritstone Road was made in the Local Plan December 2017 by following the correct statutory process that included full public consultation and an Examination in Public by a Government Inspector. The process balanced social, environmental and economic considerations, and the operative word here is 'balance'. By properly weighing up the need for housing together with land availability and environmental concerns, the Local Plan was derived in the best possible manner. The task now is to ensure development takes place in such a way that properly considers local and global environmental issues, including climate change, alongside all the other requirements that developments have to meet.

QUESTION from Mr Dave Smith, Resident on 1970's recruitment drive to increase diversity in Derbyshire Constabulary

I would like to ask Cllr Garry Purdy the following question as part of public participation at Full Council on 26.11.20

In a recent Governance & Resources Committee meeting on 20 August 2020, Cllr Garry Purdy commented on a 1970's recruitment drive to increase diversity in Derbyshire Constabulary, which he described as a failure. He claimed that of 30 BAME recruits, only one completed the training, and that they didn't last a year.

I find it inconceivable that none of the recruits were suited to police work, and far more likely that they encountered racism within the force. I made an F.O.I. request to Derbyshire Constabulary to try to find out why these recruits left the Police Force. However it transpires that they do not have any information on why they left.

I would like to ask Cllr Purdy whether he has any evidence to explain why the recruitment drive failed. If he has none, can he state whether his comments were conjecture and if they were, whether he thinks the failure of the recruitment drive was the fault of Derbyshire Constabulary or the recruits themselves?

ANSWER

Thank you Mr. Smith for question. The point that I made at the Governance and Resources Committee merely reflected a recollection of my own professional experience in Derbyshire Police Force where I recalled a very laudable initiative launched in the late 1970's by the then Chief Constable, Sir Walter Stansfield to encourage greater equality and diversify in the Police force. My recollection was that these attempts did not result in any immediate improvement in diversity as regrettably, many of the initial recruits left the force without progressing further. It is not for me to surmise the reasons why. However, it is pleasing to note that the situation has changed significantly since that time and Derbyshire Police now have what appears to be a very successful policy on equality and diversity which is delivering a more inclusive Police force.