

BWMA report to EPC Meeting of 21st January 2019

The Committee met for its January meeting on 8th at Blackbourne with 19 of the 26 members present.

It was noted with considerable approval that Planning Application had been lodged and that the timetable for the Wesley refurbishment was being adhered to. It was anticipated that permission will be granted by the end of February or very soon after that and that, meanwhile, Building Regulations Applications are in with every hope of approval by mid-March. External funding is being actively sought but the option of a Public Loans Board application is factored into the EPC's finances currently under scrutiny towards the 2019 / 2020 budget. The forthcoming substantial new housing developments in the village will provide additional funding up front as well as uplifting the Council Tax Base providing enhanced income into the future making a loan feasible. Public support is a necessary prerequisite to such funding and there will have to be a formal consultation process with current user-groups well to the fore. To this end, it is suggested that user groups draw up a brief statement as to why the scheme is to be recommended to the community at large for presentation to the next Committee meeting. The projected down-time for demolition and re-building is projected to be 8 months with the latest date for signing the building contract currently set for 1st May. The interim arrangements for accommodating displaced user groups are well in hand with the Carpet Bowls Club considering a change to afternoon sessions which could be accommodated at Blackbourne and with the possibility of the use of the Fire/Police station in reserve for small general meetings. The problem of storage during the down-time might best be addressed by the purchase of a lorry body which the Chairman is investigating.

There are now 3 quotes secured for the repair to the Jubilee Hall roof and these are with the Loss Adjuster for forwarding to the insurer. There is a possibility of the Council having to fund the security fencing for the duration of the contract.

Cllr Jayne Storey has responded to the request for help with Elmswell projects from her SCC Locality Budget and has indicated that she is minded to lend support of some £4,275.00 which includes a contribution towards professional fees for the Wesley project.

Potential over-use of the Blackbourne football facilities is currently causing some concern as EYFC has, without consultation, begun to use the full-sized pitch which has formerly been the preserve of EFC and which, as it also serves as cricket outfield, can only take a limited number of games. The Chairman is in touch with both parties and, until further notice, use of the full-sized pitch at Blackbourne is restricted to EFC. It was noted that the facilities at Grove Lane have, to date and for many years, proved to be adequate for EYFC's use in conjunction with the informal playing space at Blackbourne.

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In response to a Police request, and in the interest of reducing anti-social behaviour on the part of groups of boy-racers, the car park gate at Blackbourne has recently been locked whenever bookings have allowed, leading to the lock being smashed off when a vehicle, thought to be parked overnight, was locked in. The company owning the vehicle has agreed to pay for the new lock. Consequently, the wording of a sign at the Blackbourne car park entrance was discussed with particular regard to the gate locking and appealing to dog owners to act responsibly. A new sign format was agreed for immediate installation. Meanwhile, all other signage, other than when immediately related to a hiring, is to be removed.

Following the Christmas lull, Blackbourne use is now back to pre-holiday levels and the resurgence of bookings promises that Blackbourne will be busier than ever this year. Final costings on the Wesley scheme might allow re-visiting the project to provide more Chamberlayne storage and increased office space. Meanwhile, there is some maintenance necessary because the extension is not to happen.

Peter Edmonds
Secretary

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Secretary, BMA