

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE  
DATE 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

**Officer:** Helen Ball (Town Clerk)

**GREENFIELDS RECREATION GROUND**

**Purpose of Report**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) To update the Committee on recent engagement with the Greenfields Community Group
- (ii) To update the Committee on activity on site following acquisition of the land adjacent to the Recreation Ground
- (iii) To provide delegated authority to officers to proceed with project specification and tendering

**BACKGROUND:**

The Deputy Town Clerk and Head of Resources have led on the various streams of acquiring the parcel land adjacent to the Recreation Ground which has been subject to the Supreme Court Hearing. That process has been dealt with primarily through the Finance & General Purpose Committee and Full Council.

On 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024 the Leader, Ward Member and various officers met with Fay Easton (Chairman) and Colin Harper (Treasurer) Greenfields Community Group (GCG) to discuss long held aspirations of improve the recreation ground. The Group had raised a total of £40,000 (grant funding and internal fundraising) to undertake improvements with their Wishlist as follows:

1. Removal of hedgerow between the acquired land and the remainder of the recreation ground
2. Retention of trees
3. Planting of sapling trees to create a community orchard & quiet open space
4. Rewilding areas
5. Additional seating & bins
6. Installation of solar lighting
7. Communal area to plant fruit trees, vegetables & herbs
8. Fencing off the Electricity Station
9. Information board
10. Naturalised area with wood chip pathways

There was also a request for a Green Gym for which they had received £20,000 Awards For All Funding and a defibrillator on site.

The meeting allowed officers to set out the process by which any infrastructure installed on Town Council land had to be undertaken; this included the necessary permissions, procurement arrangements as well as ongoing future repair & maintenance.

The need to clear the acquired land for public use was discussed. Legislation precluded the ability to work on site before the nesting season was over, but officers would make reasonable efforts to clear the site by the end of September to enable the future use of the site to be considered.

The meeting also allowed officers to understand the provenance of the funding available. The Head of Resources has recently had extensive email exchange with Dr Peter Day regarding funds that were acquired as a result of their successful outcome in the Supreme Court and whether there was any obligation for repayment that might reduce their levels of spend. The Group were able to assure the Town Council that the Group had rights to use the funds how they saw fit.

The Town Clerk did at the meeting raise concerns that the level of funding would not be enough to realise their whole aspirations and that it would be hugely beneficial if they could prioritise their wishlist. This would allow for any projects not realised to be added to the Shrewsbury Place Plan; this provided that there had been the adequate level of public consultation.

The Town Clerk also wished to manage the Group's expectations in what can be achieved and when. Current lead times with contractors was discussed. It was highly unlikely that streetlights and green gym equipment would be on site until the New Year.

It was also noted at the meeting that a request had been made to layout a junior football pitch on-site. The demand for junior football pitches in the town cannot currently be met by supply. The Operations Manager's report makes reference to the need to consider Greenfields Recreation Ground for this purpose.

The outcome of the meeting was that the Town Clerk would arrange a meeting on site for relevant officers to determine the realistic programme and specification of works to allow for tendering and consideration of spending, taking into account the Group's £40,000 budget. The meeting is set for **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September**.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That this Committee agrees:**

- 1. the principle of allowing infrastructure on the Greenfields Recreation Ground, subject to the necessary permissions and agreement on repair & maintenance;**
- 2. the allocation of officer time to work on developing proposals and tender arrangements;**
- 3. the matter to be discussed further by both this Committee and the Finance & General Purpose Committee once projects had been developed.**