

4 December 2018

Community, Health and Housing Committee

**Requests By Shenfield Cricket Club for Additional
Fixtures of Courage Playing Fields Park Field**

Report of: *Stuart Anderson – Deputy Operations Manager*

Wards Affected: *Shenfield*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 As Members will be aware, Shenfield Cricket Club use two areas at Courage Playing Fields [see appendix A], the first is the clubs original field on the land and is the field named in the 1950 deed of gift as the “Cricket ground situate upon the property”.
- 1.2 The 27th February 1950 deed of gift makes one reference to the Shenfield Cricket Club “*allow the Shenfield Cricket Club to have use of the cricket ground situate upon the property for so long as the Shenfield Cricket Club remains in existence and upon such reasonable terms as have been and as may from time to time be agreed between the Council and the Shenfield Cricket Club*”.
- 1.3 The second field is the main park field and permission was granted by the Council via the Leisure, Recreation and Arts Committee on the 27th September 1993 for the club to establish a second cricket square on site due to the increase in playing members at the club.
- 1.4 This permission was granted with conditions, two of which were that the facility should be used for cricket on one day of the weekend and the other that the permission be reviewed at a later date [min. 304].
- 1.5 Each year, prior to the season starting, the club submit to the Council a list of fixtures for that season that are due to be played on the [second] main park field.
- 1.6 In recent years the list of fixtures has increased in number and two seasons ago the club requested use of the field on both days of the weekend so that it could take part in an initiative to introduce young

children to the sport of cricket, this has meant that the Council's permission has been needed before fixtures could go ahead.

- 1.7 Due to the timing of when fixtures are released by the respective leagues against the calendar of Committee meetings it has not always been possible to grant the club permission for all the requested fixtures in time before the season commences.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That members delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer in conjunction with the Chair of Committee to approve the fixtures list submitted by Shenfield Cricket Club for the use of the main park field at Courage Playing Fields prior to the commencement of each season.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The land was conveyed to the Council by the Courage family by two deeds of Gift dated 27th February 1950 pursuant to section 268 of the Local Government Act 1933, to hold and administer the property for the purposes of Public Open Space, recreation grounds and playing fields.
- 3.2 A second deed of gift dated 5th October 1951 dealt with a smaller piece of land adjacent to the St Mary's School.
- 3.3 The Council has title to this land under registration No EX762070 and are therefore the freeholders and custodian of this public open space inclusive of the cricket ground.
- 3.4 The intention behind this was to provide much needed publicly accessible open space to the residents of the rapidly expanding ward of Shenfield. As part of the deed of gift an area of land was also highlighted to provide playing facilities i.e. square and wicket for Shenfield Cricket Club.
- 3.5 The club have utilised this piece of land as their home ground since the deed of gift, however in 1993 they approached the Council with a request to expand their facilities into the adjoining park field next to the main cricket field.

- 3.6 This request was considered by the Leisure, Recreation and Arts Committee on 27th September 1993 with permission granted for the club to establish a second square and wickets on the park field.
- 3.7 This permission was granted with conditions, two of which were that the facility should be used for cricket on one day of the weekend and the other that the permission be reviewed at a later date [min. 304].
- 3.8 Each season the club have notified the Council in advance of the upcoming fixtures for the season so that they may be published on site on notice boards. The intention of this is that families are aware of when a match may be played on the park field and can plan their social recreation around these.
- 3.9 Unfortunately, the release date of fixtures and the timing of the committee calendar means that it is not conducive to bring the list of fixtures back to committee for a decision prior to the season commencing.
- 3.10 In previous seasons this has resulted in there being a delay in getting approval for the fixtures to take place and ultimately led to the Club not being able to take part in certain initiatives or fixtures because the Council's permission had not been obtained.
- 3.11 In order to address this issue, it is proposed that the Committee delegate authority to authorise the seasons fixtures list to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Chair of Committee.
- 3.12 This process will allow a decision to be made in a timely fashion outside of the Committee meeting cycle whilst still retaining control of the activities that take place on a Council asset.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 Should members be minded to not to support this recommendation then it is likely that the Council will not be able to formally approve the fixtures list prior to the start of each playing season. This is due to the cycle of Committee meetings not be compatible with when the fixtures list is historically submitted.
- 4.2 This could result in Shenfield Cricket Club not being able to fulfil its fixtures obligations nor being able to take part in national lead cricket initiatives if permission is not granted in time.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To introduce an expedient process by which the fixtures list of Shenfield Cricket Club [fixtures on park field only] can be approved outside of the Committee cycle calendar.

6. References to Corporate Plan

- 6.1 To ensure the provision of efficient and effective services to our residents and businesses.
- 6.2 Providing increased customer satisfaction in the quality of Council services.
- 6.3 To Increase access to the Borough's leisure opportunities.
- 6.4 Making Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts Interim Chief Finance Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312829 /
jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications with this report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Paula Harvey, Corporate Governance Solicitor & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 paula.harvey@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.2 The Council discharges the function of approving the fixture list for the Shenfield Cricket Club for the use of the main park field at Courage Playing Fields through the Community and Housing Committee. The recommendation to delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the chair of the Committee is lawful and in accordance with the Council's powers and duties.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Health & Safety implications**Name & Title:** David Wellings, Health & Safety Officer**Tel & email:** 01277 312500 david.wellings@brentwood.gov.uk .

- 7.3 To minimise the Council's risk exposure and maximise public safety on the Park pitch from cricket balls during play, the agreed netting and signage arrangements continues to be installed, maintained in a good condition and pegged to prevent gaps in the netting. This will be prior to each match on this pitch, and this to include the additional fixtures, should these be granted.

8. Appendices to this report

Appendix A - Plan of site showing cricket facilities and park area.

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Stuart Anderson
Telephone: 01277 312500
E-mail: stuart.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk