

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council – Football pricing update

17th April 2019

Introduction

The estates manager has been asked to prepare a report and draft a pricing policy for the parish football pitches.

Report Details

Before the start of 2019/2020 season, the parish will have acquired 22 football pitches from Swindon Borough Council. These pitches along with changing facilities, vary in condition from average to poor and the accurate usage figures are not fully known or available from SBC as the leagues manage this information directly.

From an initial introduction and brief chat, I am aware that the Swindon & District league currently use Moredon & Seven Fields for matches. Feedback was that 'these are the best pitches out of the bunch' and that's why they use them. It is also mentioned that teams from this league are desperately looking for good playing pitches to play on. From this, I have set up a meeting with the district secretary on 7th May to discuss further. Separately, conversations have already taken place with Clint Ricketts of FC Abbey Meads about their interest in using Moredon (separate pricing proposal attached).

Andy, Aaron and I went to Southbrook last week to meet with the football caretaker of Super Marine. This was to get an understanding of what's required to improve the playing surfaces. The grass at Southbrook was wildly overgrown at the time of the meeting (which has now been addressed) but it was advised that, just for the far pitch alone a tonne of soil is required to begin the process of improvement.

The standard set by Super Marine is currently beyond our capacity short term. However, the principle objective is to 'start getting the basics right' by improving the condition of the playing surfaces and making them a place where teams and parish residents want to play.

Considerations

- i. Alongside improving the playing surface, another concern highlighted as to why teams are reluctant to use council pitches, is because of having to set up and pack away on the day. Therefore, the likely revenue cost of equipment and ongoing cost for the employment of full / part time grounds person needs to be taken into account. However, this presents an ideal opportunity to bring in apprentices / volunteer workers.
- ii. There will be significant time & costs required in improving the current on-site changing facilities.

Draft Policy

For reference, the current cost of hiring a pitch through Swindon Borough Council is £91.44 Inc VAT or £76.20 when block booked for 10 - £762.00. In comparison the main pitch at Beversbrook in Calne (which is renowned for its exceptional pitch surface and facilities) is £60.00 per hire.

A vital part of this pricing policy is to make usage ascertainable and affordable for parish residents.

There are several different options of what the CSNPC could offer but I believe a simple tiered approach (as follows) could work best.

These are indicative figures that require adjustment once full costs are known and accounted for:

Tier One Adult: Pay Per Usage / Per Pitch (including set up assistance with grounds person) *

1. £70.00 per match (non-residents)
2. £600.00 block x 10 bookings
3. £50.00 per match (Parish residents)
4. £450.00 block x 10 bookings

Tier Two Adult: Pay Per Usage / Per Pitch (not including set up assistance with grounds person) *

1. £50.00 per match (non-residents)
2. £450.00 block x 10 bookings
3. £35.00 per match (Parish residents)
4. £300.00 block x 10 bookings

Tier One Youth: Pay Per Usage / Per Pitch (including set up assistance with grounds person) *

1. £45.00 per match (non-residents)
2. £400.00 block x 10 bookings
3. £35.00 per match (Parish residents)
4. £300.00 block x 10 bookings

Tier Two Youth: Pay Per Usage / Per Pitch (not including set up assistance with grounds person) *

1. £40.00 per match (non-residents)
2. £350.00 block x 10 bookings
3. £30.00 per match (Parish residents)
4. £250.00 block x 10 bookings

*prices subject to annual review

Recommendation

Allow the Estates manager to;

1. Hold discussions with the District & Sunday league to gain a full understanding of their current usage, agree how pitches can be better utilized and highlight any potential concerns.
2. When available, review the business case presented by SBC for the price/cost associated with the pitches for the Moredon sports hub, to ensure the pricing strategy is kept inline and avoid vast discrepancies.
3. Clarify revenue costs for the employment of a ground's person. List what equipment will be required for grounds keeping, confirm the cost to purchase equipment and outline any initial costs for improving the playing surfaces from their current condition.

This will enable the estates manager to calculate a concise pricing structure and bring a full report to the May L&A