**Enfield Sport General Meeting**

on

September 21st 2021

at

Enfield Drill Hall, 1 Old Park Avenue, Enfield, EN2 6PJ

**MINUTES**

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| Attendance (17): |  |
| Simon Parkinson (SP): | Chair |
| Martin Baker (MB): | Vice Chair, Enfield Ignatians RFC |
| Harold Webb (HW): | Treasurer, Ellenborough Table Tennis Club / Winchmore Hill Club |
| Paul Wotten (PW): | Bury Lodge Bowls Club |
| Glynis Neal (GN): | Bury Lodge Bowls Club |
| Mick Collins (MC): | Enfield Ignatians RFC |
| Alan Dilley (AD): | The Broomfield Club |
| Les Kyprianon (LK): | Southgate Olympic |
| Ian Lennox (IL): | Cockfosters Cricket Club |
| Craig Rutter (CR): | Enfield Rangers FC |
| David Taylor (DT): | Northampton Exiles CC |
| Nicola Hyde (NH): | Enfield Croquet Club |
| Terry Warner (TW): | Arnos Bowls Club |
| Mick Printemps (MP): | Arnos Bowls Club |
| Chris Ray (CW): | Minchendon Association |
| Leslie Cohen (LC): | Arnos Bowls Club |
| Sue Roedel (SR): | Enfield Drill Hall |
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| Also in Attendance: |  |
| Mark Bradbury (MBY): | Director of Property and Economy, Enfield Council |
| Apologies: |  |
| David Malleson: | North Enfield CC |
| Ian Day | Southgate County CC |
| Alan Collingbourne: | Trent Park Runners |
| Christine Hamilton: | Enfield Town FC |
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|  |  | Action |
| 1 | Welcome and Introductions |  |
| 1.1 | SP welcomed all and thanked SR for hosting the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves. |  |
| 1.2 | SP thanked MBY for attending the meeting and asked him to provide a response, once MB had presented the Enfield Sport position on Lease issues. SP explained that he would ensure that there would be discussion about agreed actions, prior to MBY having to leave the meeting. |  |
| 2 | Lease Negotiations with Enfield Council |  |
| 2.1 | MB introduced his presentation by advising that he was speaking on behalf of all Clubs and that he would be dividing the presentation in to 3 parts, with the first part looking at Principles, the second part looking at Strategic Issues and the final part look at Operational issues. |  |
| 2.2 | In terms of Principles, MB made the following points: |  |
|  | * There is major concern that the Council treats sports clubs as commercial organisations and provides them with commercial Leases that takes no account of the social, economic and community value of the clubs’ activities. Linked to this point, there is no formula or methodology in place to recognise and factor in this value when Lease negotiations take place; * It is not clear whether the Council value the contribution that sports clubs make in the borough and the role they play in helping the Council to achieve wider policy objectives, including those relating to health and wellbeing, crime and community safety and community cohesion; * Many clubs have not received and agreed Heads of Terms with the Council, prior to receiving Leases, resulting in clubs receiving Leases that include important terms that have not agreed and which they cannot accept; * Clubs are disappointed that the Council’s sports officers are not consulted about Lease terms and are not involved in the Lease negotiations; * The Council is not consistent in its dealings with sports clubs, in terms of applying different approaches and practices in relation to negotiating Leases and Deeds of Variation. |  |
| 2.3 | In terms of Strategic Issues, MB made the following points: |  |
|  | * Clubs are concerned about a “chicken and egg” situation, where they are told by funders that they must have security of tenure before an application can be submitted for external funds (a Lease of at least 25 years is normally required) and are told by the Council that they should prove that they have secured external funding before long Leases can be considered. This is preventing clubs from improving their facilities and in some cases, putting their future in jeopardy; * Some clubs have been in negotiation with the Council for many years about new / re-newed Leases; * Licences (for playing fields) need to be aligned with Leases (for buildings). Having one without the other is not helpful to clubs; * There is a concern about the Council adopting varying practices in relation to the Landlord and Tennant Act, 1954 and offering varying lengths of Leases, with some clubs being offered 99 years, other clubs being offered 25 -30 years and some clubs being offered less than that; * Enfield Sport and individual clubs should be allowed to see the calculations that the Council use to establish rent levels. |  |
| 2.4 | In terms of Operational issues, MB made the following points: |  |
|  | * There is a frustration about the length of time to takes the Council to deal with issues arising from the Lease negotiations and the lack of response from certain Council officers when clubs raise issues with them; * The involvement of several different officers in the Lease negotiations, including officers working in the property team and legal department, has resulted in an inconsistent approach from the Council when negotiating Lease terms; * The Clubs would like clarity on the status of the agreements (formal and informal) that have been reached with Keith Hellen, given his impending departure from the Council. |  |
| 2.5 | In response to the points set out above (in 2.2 to 2.4), MBY made the following points: |  |
|  | * He has been in post since 2018 (approximately 3 years); * The last 18 months have been very challenging as a result of the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic; * He was appointed with a remit to review and improve the Council’s property services function; centralise functions and develop the corporate landlord role; review the Council’s property portfolio (value of £1.2 billion); identify where additional income could be generated and ensure the right level of staffing resources were in place; * He is also responsible for economic development and has recently taken over responsibility for the re-structured culture team; * He has appointed Adrian Smallwood to manage the property function and has approval to appoint more staff; * He will ensure the best possible hand-over from Keith Hellen to the person who will replace him; * Ideally 3 people are needed to look after the properties in parks and in sports grounds, not 1; * The portfolio holder and Cabinet Member is Cllr. Mary McGuire, who has responsibility for Finance, Procurement and Property. She will only become involved when political decisions are required: officers deal with operational matters; * In general, Members are only involved when significant departures from standard Lease terms are being considered; * He will “bundle up” any Member decisions that are required in reports to Cabinet; * The legal framework that the Council is working within is the Landlord and Tennant Act 1954, which requires Councils to secure market value through the disposal of its properties and other assets. The Council can be challenged in the courts if this cannot be demonstrated; * Having said the above, the Council has flexibility through its “General Disposals Consent” powers to forego income, where wider community benefits that have a social and economic value can be demonstrated; * If the value of the loss of income is less than £10m, the local authority can take the decision to proceed, albeit such decisions could still be challenged in the courts. Where the value is over £10m, a decision from the Secretary of State is required; * Property Services officers have to follow the Council’s Procurement Rules; * He wants to get to a point where there is a definition of “social and economic value” in the Procurement Rules and that he is given delegated authority to apply this definition, without having to go back to Cabinet to secure its approval; * He would like to work with Enfield Sport to determine how clubs can demonstrate the “social and economic” value of their activities; * He wants achieve consistency in the Leases that are offered to sports clubs, in terms of rent levels, the length of Leases and repairing responsibilities (to ensure that clubs maintain facilities and the Council’s assets retain their value); * He is in principal in favour of long Leases, so that clubs can secure external funding; but the Council needs to avoid a scenario where clubs are provided with long Leases and then fail to invest in the way that they had promised to do so (Brimsdown Sports and Social Club was referred to); * He said that clubs will need to demonstrate good governance and financial probity before the Council can consider providing long Leases. |  |
| 2.6 | In response to questions and points made by club representatives present at the meeting, MBY responded as follows: |  |
|  | * He will look at the rent levels the Council is stipulating in Leases; * He understands the point about Leases and Licences needing to be coterminous, so that clubs can demonstrate security of tenure to external funders; * Enfield Sport and clubs should read the Council’s Corporate Plan and demonstrate how their activities meet the objectives included in that Plan; * He is happy to attend future meetings of Enfield Sport |  |
| 2.7 | SP thanked MBY for his openness and transparency and expressed a desire, on behalf of Enfield Sport, to work with him to address the issues that had been raised at the meeting. |  |
| 2.8 | The following actions were agreed with MBY: |  |
|  | 1. Enfield Sport should provide MBY with a summary of the issues facing each of the sports clubs represented at the meeting that are involved in Lease negotiations with the Council. Enfield Sport will secure responses from all the individual sports club and provide one overall response to the Council. | SP/ Clubs |
|  | 2. Enfield Sport representatives would meet with officers in the Council’s Property Services team on a regular basis; | SP/Mark Bradbury |
|  | 3. Enfield Sport and the Council to consider how the parties can work together to establish a formula or methodology that can demonstrate the social and economic value of the clubs’ activities and to consider how clubs can reasonably demonstrate good governance and financial probity; | Enfield Sport / Council Officers |
|  | *(MBY left the meeting at this point)* |  |
| 2.8 | SP and MB agreed to produce a framework for clubs to complete, which would provide a common approach to identifying the issues that sports clubs have faced in negotiating Leases with the Council. The Framework will allow clubs to identify their own individual concerns. | SP/MB |
| 2.9 | It was noted that there are Council elections in 2022. |  |
| 3 | Minutes of the last Enfield Sport General Meeting on 15/7/21 |  |
| 3.1 | The Minutes of the Enfield Sport General Meeting held on 15th July 2021 were agreed. |  |
| 4 | Any Other Business |  |
| 4.1 | SP asked that all clubs ensured that they had completed membership forms and paid their membership fees for 2021. |  |