

GREAT WAKERING CYCLE SPEEDWAY CLUB (Min 798/83)

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the current arrangements in connection with the Great Wakering Cycle Speedway Club's use of the cycle speedway track at Great Wakering and seeks Members' endorsement for the future management and maintenance of the track.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Great Wakering Cycle Speedway Club has its home track on Great Wakering Playing Field. The track was laid by the club in 1981 with some financial assistance from the Council. The club is small with 30 members whose ages range from 8 – 70 years, the majority of whom live within the Rochford District and it caters for a specialist sport for which no other provision exists, the next nearest track being Ilford.
- 2.2 The track and perimeter fencing is laid on Council-owned land without the benefit of a lease or licence. The club undertakes all maintenance of the area. As the sport is so specialised, it is the opinion of Officers that use of the track is limited to the club and their invitees.
- 2.3 In 1983, the Director of Leisure obtained agreement from Members to levy a charge to the club of £56 per year, which equated to a charge of £2 per match or training session. This was intended to bring the clubs use of the track in line with the hiring of any other Council sports facility.
- 2.4 This charge was paid direct to Great Wakering Sports Centre. This arrangement was never changed when the leisure contract was awarded to the Council's leisure contractor who still collects the fee. Effectively, the club is paying an annual fee, which now amounts to £83 per annum for which it receives no benefits in return.

3 WAY FORWARD

- 3.1 Over the years, the club has faced difficulties in finding the funds for the upkeep of the track and it is mainly due to the goodwill of club members and residents in the village that the track has been maintained to a standard which only just complies with the requirements of the British Cycle Federation, the sports Governing Body. A small membership handicaps the club from ever being in a position to raise enough funds to bring the track up to a standard commensurate with that of other clubs. If the track were virtually

maintenance-free, this would enable the club's financial situation to improve.

4 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Provision of sporting activities is proven to divert young people away from crime and anti social behaviour. There is a history of problems caused by young people in this area.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 If the track is properly maintained, the visual appearance of the area would be greatly improved. An improved facility may encourage new members to join the club.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The club's use of the track should be formalised by way of a lease or a licence. A licence would be the preferred option, the terms and conditions of which to be agreed by the Head of Legal Services, with the licence fee being set at a nominal amount.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The track is currently in need of new fencing, which for a metal, low maintenance fence, is estimated to cost £4,500. Officers will work with the club to apply for an Awards For All lottery grant to fund this.
- 7.2 In order to minimise the maintenance requirements, it is suggested that the perimeter of the actual track is concreted. This is estimated to cost in the region of £3,700 for which, if Members are minded to approve the recommendation, it is suggested that a one-off grant be awarded to the club during the forthcoming financial year.

8 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The track lies within the Great Wakering Parish Council area.

9 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RECOMMENDS**

1. That Officers assist the club in applying for a grant to renew the track fencing.
2. That the matter is referred to the Corporate Resources Sub Committee to consider:
 - a) Awarding a one-off grant of £3,700 to the club to concrete the perimeter of the track during the 2001/2002 financial year.

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- b) To formalise the clubs use of the track by preparing a licence, the terms and conditions of which to be agreed by the Head of Legal Services.
 - c) The licence fee to be set at a nominal amount.
3. That Officers assist the club in advertising the facility in order to attract additional members. (CD(F&ES))

Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)

Background Papers:

Previous Committee report
Correspondence with the club

For further information please contact Miss E McIlwaine on (01702) 546366