

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 29TH JANUARY 2015

DONNINGTON RECREATION GROUND CENTENARY FIELDS

REPORT OF: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AND LEISURE SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr LIZ CLARE

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Council to actively engage in The Fields in Trust's National Centenary Field programme and to nominate Donnington Recreation Ground (Appendix 1) as a potential National Centenary Field site.
- 1.2 The Council has developed a positive relationship with Fields in Trust and has in recent years dedicated three sites, Telford Town Park Arena, Stirchley Playing Fields and Malinslee Playing Fields as Fields in Trust under the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge.
- 1.3 The Centenary Fields programme has been established to commemorate the centenary of World War 1 and is a national partnership between Royal British Legion and Fields in Trust. Telford & Wrekin Council has been approached by Lilleshall, Donnington and Muxton Parish Council to dedicate Donnington Recreation Ground as a Centenary Field.
- 1.4 A further three potential sites have also been identified that potentially meet the criteria namely, Dawley Park, Hartshill Park and St Georges Recreation Ground. It is proposed to enter into consultation with the respective Town and Parish Councils and landowners with a view to nominating these as potential National Centenary Field sites.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **To nominate Donnington Recreation Ground for protection under the Centenary Fields programme and to consult on the other identified Parks and Recreation Grounds with the view of further nominations.**
- 2.2 **To delegate authority to the Assistant Director Law Democracy and People Services following consultation with the Assistant Director Neighbourhood and Leisure Services, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture and stakeholders, to execute any Deeds of Dedication should the nomination(s) be accepted.**

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Ensuring neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained. Improving the health and wellbeing of our communities and addressing health inequalities.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	The facility would remain an accessible community resource providing opportunities for the whole community, contributing to local wellbeing and community cohesion. Dedication as a Centenary Field may also provide opportunities to further build on the strong local military links.
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	Assuming any nomination is approved by Fields in Trust then it is required that a Deed of Dedication be completed within six months.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT		Designation of Donnington Recreation Ground as Centenary Field should not impose any additional financial liabilities on the Council. Once designated the Centenary Field will be protected for use as a recreational area in perpetuity which may impede or frustrate future developments in the Designated area. JAC 221214
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	As set out in the body of this report Centenary Fields is a National initiative which aims to protect war memorial fields, parks and green spaces created in memory of those who lost their lives during World War 1. If members agree nomination and this is accepted then an appropriate deed will be drawn up and the title deeds and charitable trust deeds will need to be checked to ensure compatibility.
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDSY	Yes	Donnington
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Royal British Legion and Fields in Trust are leading a nationwide initiative aimed at securing recreational spaces in perpetuity in honour of the memory of the millions of people who lost their lives in World War 1.
- 4.2 The modest objective of this new programme is to encourage every local authority in the UK to nominate at least one recreational space to be dedicated as a Centenary Field to commemorate this significant milestone in our history and to create a tangible local legacy that will be valued by the local community for generations to come.
- 4.3 The Centenary Fields programme aims to protect the war memorial parks and playing fields given in memory of those who lost their lives, or other green spaces that local authorities may want to dedicate.
- 4.4 Fields in Trust want the network of protected fields to be established by November 2018, with all deeds of dedication signed by this time. Any sites where the deed is not signed by this time will not become Centenary Fields.
- 4.5 A site could be a war memorial park or recreation ground, memorial garden, park or recreation ground that contains a war memorial or other valued green spaces. If there isn't a war memorial on the site then it must have some significance to WW1, for example it could be playing a key role in the local WW1 commemorations. As time goes on there will undoubtedly be some good examples of how sites are connected with WW1, and these will be promoted as applicable.
- 4.6 Each application will be assessed through a site visit but as a minimum, the following criteria must be met:
- The Landowner of the site must complete the application form,
 - Evidence of ownership, and where relevant freehold interest must be produced for this particular site this will involve establishing and confirming the extent and remit of the Duke of Sutherland's Trust.
 - The principal use should be outdoor recreation, sport or play. However, sites can also include facilities such as pavilions, village halls, indoor leisure or heritage facilities that are established for community recreational purposes
 - Sites must have public access
 - Sites should be accessible in terms of location and affordability for the local community

- Sites should have local managers who are responsible for the quality of the facilities, maintenance and development, improving participation and financial and operational sustainability
- The Landowner must be able to sign the agreed Deed of Dedication within six months of submitting an application

4.7 The first stage in the process is for the landowner to complete an application form and this will be followed by a site visit, after which the landowner will be told whether the site is acceptable as a Centenary Field or not. If the site is accepted the legal process then starts and sites will be protected in England via a Deed of Dedication. Fields in Trust will draw up the draft deed and then the landowner has a chance to make amendments. When all parties are satisfied with the deed it will be signed and then registered with the Land Registry. The site is then able to order a Centenary Fields commemorative plaque and can organise an unveiling event.

The costs are as follows:

- Any legal costs associated with agreeing the deed
- The cost of installing the commemorative plaque – which will be provided free of charge
- The cost of registering the resulting restrictions with the Land Registry – currently £80 for up to three titles

It is not necessary for the sites involved in the programme to change their names

4.8 Fields in Trust does accept that on rare occasions communities change and land use changes accordingly. Parts of sites, or very rarely, whole sites can therefore be disposed of provided the disposal is of clear advantage to, and in the best interests of, the community from a recreational perspective. The criteria which Fields in Trust applies to replacement facilities are that they should be of:

- At least equal size
- Better quality
- Serving the same community in terms of catchment area

Additionally, and very importantly, the entire proceeds of any disposal should normally be re-applied to new sport, recreation and/or play facilities, with priority given to outdoor before indoor facilities.

4.9 Donnington Wood Recreation Ground was established on 21st December 1925 after the Duke of Sutherland sold the site to a group of Lilleshall miners. In 1957 Wellington Rural District Council was appointed Trustee. Donnington Recreational Ground is approximately

1.04ha in size comprises 2 football pitches, a junior play area, a ball court, a skatepark, allotments, bowling green and tennis courts.

- 4.10 There are memorial gates located at one of the entrances to the Recreation Ground, either side of the gates are lists of names of Donnington people who lost their lives fighting for their country in Worlds Wars 1 and 2. (See Appendix 2).
- 4.11 Part of the land is still in Trust to the Duke of Sutherland's Estate and is in charitable status. The Borough of Telford & Wrekin acts as Corporate Trustee of the Donnington Recreation Ground.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 5.1 The dedication of the site would secure its future use for recreational purposes with public access and protect a valuable community open space in perpetuity.
- 5.2 Parks and open spaces provide opportunities for both formal and informal recreation and contribute significantly to local wellbeing, community cohesion and general quality of life for all generations.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 6.1 None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

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