

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 13

meeting date: 29 OCTOBER 2019
title: GENERAL REPORT
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To update on the 3G pitches, arrangements to access Edisford river bank, and inform on Christmas parking.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives –
 - To help make people's lives healthier and safer
 - To ensure a well-managed council

2 RIBBLE VALLEY 3G

A partial handover of the site was given to the Council on 23 September 2019. The main pitch and the two 5-aside areas were opened to the public for the first time.

The response has been very good, with many local clubs and informal groups booking in advance to use the surfaces, and the feedback has been very positive. Owing to the poor weather, there has also been a number of weekend matches played on the pitch as well, as all the Council grass pitches have been unplayable for the past few weeks.

A recent schools' sports event saw hundreds of young children from across the borough's schools participate in a football event.

From the outset, a high standard of behaviour has been sought from players, officials, coaches, and spectators, with only those involved in a sport being allowed onto the surfaces, and spectators and parents being asked to keep to the tarmac surround. The footwear used is prescribed to certain styles to prevent damage, and it must be clean. This is all designed to ensure the surfaces remain in the best condition possible. For example, taking hot drinks and sports-type drinks is not permitted, as they can stain the surface. To date, apart from a few transgressions and some people arguing that they are exempt, the response from the users has been very supportive.

The contractor has been hampered in finishing the multi-sport surface because of the recent weather. It is hoped these will be handed over to the Council shortly.

The toilet block and building will be commissioned and available by November, following the electrical supply work being completed.

The reinstatement of the grass areas around the development is subject to the weather, and, currently, it is likely to be the spring before any meaningful work can be carried out.

3 EDISFORD RIVER BANK ACCESS

The completion of a 2019/20 capital bid to improve access arrangements for blue badge holders to the disabled car parking spaces at Edisford river bank is nearing completion. The Council agreed that the previous arrangement, whereby drivers had to unlock then relock a padlocked gate using a RADAR key, was not a good way of accessing the river bank. This often led to the gate being left open for any unauthorised vehicles to gain access and, on occasion, led to vehicles that had gained access being locked in.

The investment by the Council means that blue badge holders may obtain a fob from Ribblesdale Pool or the reception at the Borough Council Offices, after leaving a refundable deposit of £20. The fob automatically operates a new barrier, providing access to the disabled spaces by the river bank. Drivers do not have to leave their vehicle to operate the barrier, either entering or leaving the area.

The fob, which remains Council property, may be retained for as long as drivers need to use it, be that a day or several years. Upon returning the fob, their deposit will be returned.

During the hot summer of 2018, there were issues with unauthorised access to the river bank which saw 40 to 50 cars parking on the grass among families picnicking, leading to concerns about an accident occurring.

A number of fobs have already been given out and, together with improvements to pedestrian access, will continue to ensure that this very attractive local tourist hotspot is made as safe as possible for all users in the future.

4 CHRISTMAS PARKING

In order to support the retail sector and local economy in the run up to Christmas, it is proposed that we offer, once again, free parking on Saturdays during December. The car parks affected would be those in Clitheroe town centre – Railway View, Lowergate, and the Market car parks, in addition to Barclay Road car park in Longridge.

This year the effective dates for each Saturday are:

- 7th December
- 14th December
- 21st December

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Further updates and information regarding activities within Community Services will be reported to future meetings.

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For further information on Ribble Valley 3G, and Edisford Riverbank Access,
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For further information on Christmas Parking,
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Community Services Committee / 29.10.19 / Mark Beveridge, Adrian Harper