



General Meeting

Tuesday 22nd January 2019

Present:

L Hughes, G Stephens, B Norrington, J Hurley, A Hurley, Cllr J Redsell, Cllr S Liddiard, P Madgewick, M Maxwell, D Schreeche-Powell, J Dennison, V Papworth, M McLoughlin, R White, G Appleton, M Adams, G Heapy

Apologies for absence:

T Rawson, J Faulkner

Matters arising from previous minutes:

Minutes are put on the Sports Council website each month.

<https://www.thurrocksportsCouncil.co.uk/>

All communication is via thurrocksportsCouncil@hotmail.co.uk

No other matters arising.

Secretary

None

Treasurer

1. Most of the meeting was spent discussing our concerns at the insufficient grant we receive and how we should go forward. This year's grant of £5376 was received in August and was spent by November. The grant will be the same for the next two years. Thurrock is an area of high obesity and inactivity so sport should have a higher profile.

It is hoped that the Sports Council can make a presentation to full Council and the treasurer presented the thoughts he has about the presentation...

Summary

The role of the Thurrock Sports Council has been seriously eroded by the apparent lack of support from the Thurrock Council.

We no longer have sufficient funds to sponsor events (as were once able) and neither do we have funding to support many of the applications for funding we receive. In many cases, especially when the majority of the applicants do not have the funds to pay for their courses, without our support they would not be able to participate, this does not only affect the individual but also the many youngsters who would be coached. We would also like to be able to support Club events with a view to increasing the Club profile with the view to increase participation and membership.

Conclusion

We are all aware in today's environment of the importance of sport and leisure activities to tackle the ever-growing problems with obesity and anti-social behaviour. We believe the Thurrock Sports Council has had a positive role in helping to provide assistance in this area. However, without sufficient funding, (and this must be increased from its current level) our impact will become irrelevant.

The Sports Council achieves less now than in the past when grants of about £20 000 were received. This is due to lack of funds and lack of volunteers. We want to get more people in the borough involved in sport but we feel Thurrock Council does not have the vision to develop sport. We recognise that times are difficult for councils but sport must take a higher profile.

The Sports Council needs clubs to support them and to let them know how they can be supported. To improve sport, we need good facilities especially pitches. Bowls greens in the Borough are poor. In the past, when greens belonged to companies, they were good but most of these have gone. Ground staff need more training and support when they are being trained.

2. Active Essex are working with Active Thurrock to improve activity for those at present inactive. £28,000 has been granted and various groups have bid for money. This money is not for sport but, although not originally welcomed, the Sports Council has a representative on this committee.

3. One member raised the question that our list of grants appears to show we support only young people. It was explained that all sports groups are able to register with the Sports Council without cost and apply for grants. We do not discriminate.

4. It was explained how Government funding to councils was dealt with and that sport is low on priorities after social care etc. Thurrock keeps its council tax low but this means less money to spend. This raised a lot of discussion.

5. Members were asked to contact their own local councillors about sport provision.

6. It was explained that a lot of Council money has been spent on Orsett Heath for football but the facility is underused. The pavilions at Blackshots are being taken down but no decision has been made about a replacement.

7. It was agreed that the Sports Council will produce a petition stating that we would like sport's profile raised and funding increased. This will be sent to all clubs to collect signatures. 1500 signatures are required to put the petition to the Council. Those who sign the petition must live in Thurrock.

Planning

None

AOB

1. Clubs were reminded that they can register their club on the Active Essex website. A list of funding opportunities has been emailed to clubs.

2. Thurrock's Local Development Plan will be released soon for consultation. Members should respond to this.

3. It is difficult to raise funds but one member explained that companies often have funding officers who would apply for a club for a percentage fee. This could be worth it as completing forms can be difficult.

4. Thurrock Harriers, along with other athletics clubs, have been told they must upgrade their Hammer Cage for safety. Unless this is done, they cannot use it but they have to find £55,000 to do this.

5. There was discussion about the proposed development at Thurrock Rugby Club with the new school. Thurrock Harriers are in discussion with the school as, if the school wish to use the track, the Harriers would need help to fund the refurbishment of the track.

Meeting closed 9:10pm