

## Report of the Executive Director

**INHAM NOOK RECREATION GROUND – PROPOSED LEASE WITH PHOENIX INHAM FOOTBALL CLUB**1. Purpose of report

To advise members of a proposal from Phoenix Inham Football Club to enter into 10-year lease with the Borough Council for the pavilion at Inham Nook Recreation Ground.

2. Background

Phoenix Inham Football Club was formed in 2015 and use Inham Nook Recreation Ground as their home ground. The club was created as a community facility to serve local people with parents and members all committed to the same community goals. Details of the club and its development are shown in the Appendix.

3. Proposal

Following the closure last year of the play group that had used the social room and kitchen in the pavilion, the football club saw an opportunity to expand their use of the building and create a community hub for local people to use. The club has submitted a formal application for a 10-year lease and the view of the Council's Estates and Legal teams on this proposal are detailed in the Appendix.

4. Financial Implications

At a meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee on 8 October 2020, it was resolved to allocate £11,000 to the football club to help them with their first phase of creating a community hub. This was for electrical works (£5,100) replacement windows and fascia (£2,700), new suspended ceiling (£1,200) and new kitchen facilities (£2,000). Covid lockdown restrictions delayed a meeting on site with the club and these works have yet to commence. However, they are subject to the Council agreeing the aforementioned lease. There are no other additional financial implications for the Council at this stage.

**Recommendation**

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND to the Policy and Performance Committee that the Council, subject to agreeing Heads of Terms with Phoenix Inham Football Club, grant a 10-year lease for the pavilion at Inham Nook Recreation Ground to Phoenix Inham Football Club.**

Background papers

Nil

**APPENDIX**The Club: Its formation and Development

Phoenix Inham Football Club (PIFC) was formed in 2015 and is based at Inham Nook Recreation Ground, Chilwell. They have an existing agreement to utilise the two 11-a-side football pitches at the site, together with various 9-a-side and 7-a-side pitches that they mark out to meet the fixture demands on a weekly basis. The Council maintains all the outdoor facilities on the site and this would continue with this lease proposal with the club retaining responsibility for the weekly marking of the football pitches.

The club currently has over 150 members from Chilwell and the surrounding areas.

The principal aim of PIFC is to provide football for adults and children, delivered in a social and competitive environment. PIFC runs teams at several age ranges from under 8's to a newly established men's team. The club believes that, through football, it can help the community. Membership subscriptions are kept deliberately low to maximise inclusion. This inevitably leads to pressure on resources and, as a small community run-club, funding has always been the biggest hurdle to progression.

Football is at the heart of everything PIFC aims to achieve. The club believes playing football should not be exclusive, but it is becoming too expensive for a vast number of households locally. The club aims that by 2023 it will become one of the first free to play football clubs in the country. This can only be achieved by building a sustainable infrastructure with a constant flow of funds raised by the club and the local community.

The club has achieved FA "Charter Status", an award made by the FA under an accreditation scheme that recognises and rewards commitment, quality and achievement.

Request for a 10-year Pavilion lease at Inham Nook Recreation Ground

Traditionally, the pavilion has been used by 3 main groups. These were Chilwell Bowls Club, a children's play group and PIFC. Last year the playgroup, due to falling numbers and Covid restrictions, were unable to make the project viable and unfortunately had to close. More recently, the Chilwell Bowls club have advised the Council that they are no longer able to recruit sufficient members to run a team and will no longer be using the pavilion. This season there may be limited casual bowling on the green and this will be reviewed over the coming months. Whilst both of these closures are very unfortunate, they do provide a major opportunity for the club to develop the pavilion as a community hub. There may also be opportunities to look at ways in which the club can make use of the bowling green area as a multi-use outdoor sports facility. This would however, be the subject of a separate report, at a later date.

It is proposed that the lease would be for the full building with the club responsible for internal works to the building, decoration and general repairs. All works to the

building, including the works previously agreed by the Finance and Resources Committee, would need to be approved by the Council's Property Services team. The Council would continue to be responsible for the structure and insurance of the building, together with the statutory electrical and legionella checks and utility bills. The full details would be clarified in the Heads of Terms document.

Securing a 10-year lease will allow PIFC to transform the building into a community hub and safe space for all ages and backgrounds and provide community engagement in a deprived area. Proposed initiatives include:

- District Food and Clothing bank providing a useable space to store and distribute items to the local community.
- Monthly food kitchen run by a local volunteer and qualified chef to guarantee a high level of health and hygiene, as well as implementing best practices for all food preparation and service.
- Coffee mornings for the senior citizens and those socially isolated. This would be run by volunteers a couple of mornings a week as well as providing work experience to those that need it.
- Shoe Box Campaign, to help disadvantaged children all over the world.
- Activity evenings, including providing regular dance lessons for all ages and general health and fitness evenings once a week.

The community hub concept will provide the club with a regular funding stream.

During events such as weekend football matches, live sporting events and social evenings, the clubhouse will be able to provide food, drinks and entertainment. The club will focus on low risk options such as sandwiches, snacks and bottled/canned refreshments with a healthy profit margin, whilst being affordable for all. Currently, annual events such as Christmas parties and presentation nights are a big expense. Going forward, PIFC would use the pavilion and also generate funds through food and refreshment sales, raffles and other fundraising initiatives. By designing the clubhouse as a versatile, functional space, PIFC would also look at hiring the room out for birthday parties, business meetings, health and fitness groups and other groups etc. Sponsorship is already a huge part of football at all levels and the club hopes to encourage local businesses to buy sponsorship packages.

The project will be overseen and organised by PIFC members with the long term goal of launching the Phoenix Inham Community Foundation – a small team of passionate hard-working volunteers with the collective goal of making the local community a better place for all.

PIFC has obtained a number of quotes relating to the cost of developing and refurbishing the pavilion into a community use facility as referenced in the financial implications section of this report.

PIFC has provided its accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020 for scrutiny. Total income amounted to £9,361 from subscriptions and fundraising. Expenditure for the year totalled £9,398 which mainly related to pitch hire, match and league fees, referees' expenses and other running costs.

### Comments from Estates and Legal

The Heads of Terms is currently being drawn up and, subject to committee approval. of the lease proposal, will form the basis of a 10-year lease which will be prepared by the Council's legal team. The lease will include an annual review of the work that PIFC are doing and an assessment of their accounts to make sure the project is viable.

The land is registered under Title number NT417747 at HM Land Registry. The land seems to have been registered as a whole/under one title to include the neighbouring residential properties including The Flatts, Wheatgrass Road and Valley Road.

There are no restrictive covenants prohibiting the Council from entering into a lease with the Club on the above basis or any restrictive covenants relating to how the land should be used.

### **Other considerations**

Another consideration to have is to make further enquiries into the structure of the Football Club, whether, for example, it is incorporated or unincorporated and should the community hub project not be successful the potential financial impact on the Council. This should have already been considered by the Estates team when negotiating the Heads of Terms.

To conclude, from a land /restrictive covenant perspective there is nothing prohibiting the Council from entering a lease with the Club on the land. Additionally, the Club's legal structure is an important factor that need to considered before completion of the lease.