

## **AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**28 JULY 2020**

#### **EXERCISE CLASSES**

Over the years the Council has had a number of exercise classes using its recreation grounds. There has never been a significant amount at any one time and currently there are no official users but it is believed there is 1 user at each of Ferryfield, Forstal Road and Eccles. The user at Ferryfield is on a Saturday, at Forstal Road 1/2 occasions a week on an ad hoc basis and for Eccles all that has been seen is a facebook page with no information on usage. The Council has not given permission for these but if it had received an application it would seek to obtain a copy of their insurance and their risk assessments. Council policy is to make no charge.

However, with the recent lockdown and continuing outdoor activity, the Council has received applications from 2 potential users at Forstal Road and a further user at Eccles. These applications are in addition to the existing unofficial users. In terms of insurance, the Council has been informed by its own insurers, that any unofficial use of the sites could invalidate the insurance of the trainer. Therefore, it is quite possible that the existing unofficial users might wish to apply to make their usage official.

With the regular use of all the Council recreation grounds by other users such as the football clubs at all of the recreation grounds, at some point in the future the return of mini rugby at the Ferryfield and by greater numbers of the general public the Council should formulise its policy on this matter.

The policy should have the following conditions that would need to be applied to any application for an exercise class at any of its recreation grounds:-

1. Each applicant will need to supply a copy of their insurance
2. Each applicant will need to supply a copy of their risk assessments for the use of the site for their activity.
3. No charge will be made
4. In the respect of Forstal Road exercise classes be limited to 2 areas only namely next to the Tennis Courts and the area next to the rear car park behind the community centre.
5. In respect of the Ferryfield limited to 2 areas only at the front next to the play area and the other on the cemetery side.
6. In respect of Eccles only 1 exercise class at any one time on an area agreed with the Council outside of the football pitches.
7. No music can be used at the tennis court site at Forstal Road due to potential disturbance to residents of Powell Close.

8. Not to use the play areas under any circumstance
9. Not to use the Muga and tennis courts under any circumstance
10. Any existing APC equipment in the open area of any of the recreation grounds not to be used other than for the purpose for which it was provided.

The issue that members may wish to address is whether they would wish to limit numbers at each site and also whether they would be happy to have more than one class on a site at any one time. Members will also have to take into account that it is very likely that there could be other activities on the site at the same time and as an example in respect of the clash with the 2 applications below football training is also taking place. Depending on this decision Members may then need to determine how the existing applications would be allocated which could be on a first come first served basis on the supply of all information.

With all of the new applications being at Forstal road Members may wish to consider a policy of encouraging a transfer of usage to Ferryfield. However, with that site closing at 7.30pm in the summer and 4.30 in the winter for vehicular access that could lead to requests to leave the Ferryfield open for longer during light hours such as 8.30pm in the summer.

The 2 applications that have been received have indicated their timings as well as supplying copies of their insurance and risk assessments though the Council would need to clarify the location of class as at least one session clashes at the site and also their acceptance of any rules and conditions applied by the Council. Applicant 1 would wish to use the site on Tuesdays and Wednesdays 7pm to 8pm and on an occasional Sunday 10am to 11am with classes up to a maximum of 10 people. Applicant 2 would wish to use the site on Tuesdays and Thursdays 7pm to 8pm and Saturdays 9am to 10am with classes of 10 to 15 people.

Members instructions are requested on the policy highlighted above and in particular their views on numbers per site and whether they are happy to have more than one class on a site at any one time