

John Fullbrook

From: Paul Campbell
Sent: 17 August 2023 12:17
To: John Fullbrook
Cc: spc-full
Subject: RE: Long-Missing Swing at MPF a Freedom of Information Request
Attachments: Photo of swing April 2023.jpg

Dear John

For the reasons given in blue below by way of comment on your reply, I am regret I do not accept what you report and so I do wish to have the documentation sought in my Fol request, please.

Thank you.

Kind regards

Paul Campbell

From: John Fullbrook <john.fullbrook@steypingpc.gov.uk>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:10 AM
To: Paul Campbell <
Cc: spc-full <
Subject: RE: Long-Missing Swing at MPF a Freedom of Information Request

Dear Paul

Regarding your email request below.

There is indeed a swing on the MPF that is currently out of action because the framework and connections to the framework, are no longer considered safe.

You say "currently". You have conspicuously not answered my question about for how long this has been the case. It seems to be very many months.

Please see the attached photo provided to me and taken in April 2023. You say the framework is no longer considered safe. If that was indeed the case, then it is hard for me to understand why there is still an active swing suspended from it. So I continue to wish to know who considered it unsafe and why and when. That is covered by my Fol request.

There are three other swings available on the MPF.

Two are located a long way away, over by the tennis courts and are almost never used because of their location, away from any other play equipment. The one removed is one of a pair and so there is only one swing at the main MPF play area

Its not ideal, That is something of an understatement – as explained, children tend to want to use swings together and having only one for such a long time is really unacceptable in my view

but in keeping with the fact that we are liable to revamp the whole site in the short term,

I don't accept this as a valid reason for inactivity. It is precisely because I thought history was probably repeating itself that I set out in my first message how you had given exactly the same reasoning over the basket swing. If we had accepted your reasoning at that time then the basket swing would still be out of action about four years after you took it out of service and still with no end in sight,

A complete revamp has been promised for around seven years and absolutely no progress has been made while we have gone around in circles over funding. It was a year ago that supposedly you were just about to cross the Ts and dot the Is with the Wilson Memorial Trust. The chances of anything happening "in the short term" now seems very low to me.

the Community Committee will have to decide if they want to replace it at great expense. Well there are two issues.

- 1 Does the frame really need replacing given that one of the pair of swings suspended from that frame is still in use; and
- 2 If so, at what cost. Would it really be "at great expense"? And if it would, why would it not be right to incur that expense now but it would be when the revamp takes place?

Both these questions would be answered by my Fol. There would then only remain the question; if replaced now would that in any way prejudice the future "revamp"? One assumes not because if the new unit was in the right place for the new design then we would just have achieved this element early and if not then it could presumably moved at relatively low cost as part of that revamp. At least our residents and visitors could enjoy a pair of swings in the meantime.

I will be presenting this to the committee as a matter of discussion in September, as they have delegated responsibility to deal with it.

Given the very long time I believe the swing has been out of action (see the grass which has grown through the matting beneath in the April photo) then I find it odd that nothing has been reported about the swing and that only now, after I have raised the issue with you, is it going to be discussed. I welcome that this is going to happen, but I am very doubtful if that would have been the case if I had not written to you.

As you are not a member of this committee I do not believe you have a right to know the information requested, as per our policy and as per the Hoey recommendations previously stated many times.

I do not need to be a member of the committee in order to have the legal right to the information I have requested. I am entitled to it as a member of the Council. That is clear from Hoey, from the NALC Legal Topic Note and from our Officer/Councillor Protocol, all of which I have drawn to your attention many times. The fact that it relates to my work as a councillor is clearly illustrated by the important points raised in this correspondence and still remaining unanswered.

Indeed this constant call for information,

It is not a “constant call” for information. It is one of several strands where we should have been provided with the information as a matter of course and is only now coming to light very many months later than should have been the case and only because I am raising it

which doesn’t relate to an immediate need

it is only because the information has not been provided when it should have been but has been withheld from all councillors for a very long time that the information is now needed. “Immediacy” has nothing to do with the common law test.

and in relation to a pending decision of the appropriate committee, if it is “pending”, then I suggest it is already pretty clear that this is only because I have raised the issue in this correspondence, and I believe it will become even more clear once we know when the report leading to the removal was made to you – something my Fol should reveal

remains I would suggest unhelpful at best,

I do not accept that there is anything “unhelpful” in me trying to find out on behalf of a resident who asked me, and indeed on behalf of all residents, why a fundamental piece of play equipment has been missing for so long and what your intentions were. That is one of the most important roles of a councillor – to act as an advocate and a conduit for residents’ concerns.

and as you yourself are keen to point out, an ongoing waste of yours, mine and other councillors time as you insist on continuing to cc them in despite repeated calls for you not to do so.

The thing that wastes everyone’s time is your ongoing obstruction of the provision of timely information, not me asking for what we should have been given as a matter of course. I remind you again that it was resolved in May 2021 that you would report the position at each meeting of the Community Committee. Once we know from my Fol when the swing was removed and on what recommendation then the number of subsequent meetings when this should have been reported but was not will be apparent.

I am copying in my colleagues because I think it very important that they should know about issues like this and can judge for themselves whether the public we all represent are being properly served by the council of which we are all members

If you confirm you still want to take this matter up as a formal FOI then please respond in the affirmative, and I will be forced to deal with it as such.

I have confirmed

I would appreciate it however if you might please abide by our policies and other guidance I am doing exactly that. It is your obstruction of the provision of information I am entitled to which breaches both policies and guidance. This is gaslighting.

and not continue to pursue these frivolous, yet disruptive and diversionary matters. I think residents, and I hope most councillors, would be shocked to hear that my enquiry as to why a fundamental piece of play equipment had been out of action for many months and what was intended about bringing it back into action is considered by you to be "frivolous", let alone "disruptive" and "diversionary".. Diversionary from what? And what is "disruptive" about seeking to have the play equipment brought back into use after months of it being out of action. This is classic gaslighting.

I look forward to your response, and hope that reasonableness prevails. Again, gaslighting by you given that I think any reasonable person would consider your behaviour over this request for information about the swing unreasonable in the extreme. I am clearly supported in this view by the Hoey report re the provision of timely information.

Kind regards
John

From: Paul Campbell <
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:05 AM
To: John Fullbrook <
Cc: Full Council
Subject: Long-Missing Swing at MPF a Freedom of Information Request

Dear John
Back on 19 July 2023 I asked for information about the missing swing at the MPF. You have not replied.

The Council's role is to provide services to our residents. The provision of safe and functioning play equipment is one of the key services. There are not many others and so we should be able to do this well. But consistently we do not.

As it seems clear that I am being stonewalled on this, as with other matters, then in the continuing absence of a full answer from you I am formally asking you to provide me, under my common law right to know as a councillor as confirmed by Hoey and the Legal Topic Note and our own Officer/Councillor Protocol, with all documents which will enable me to work out for myself what has (not) been going on. If you are not willing to do this despite all the provisions setting out my right and your obligation then this should be taken as an FoI Request with time running from today, please. Another FoI request which should not have been necessary.

My enquiry, the answer to which seems to me perfectly easy to have answered in a straightforward way, was: -

"Please could you let us know when the swing was taken out of service, what is wrong with it, what steps have been taken to address the issue, and when replacement is anticipated?"

Accordingly, I am now asking, please, for all reports, emails, estimates/quotes and file notes which provide evidenced answers to these four questions relating to the missing swing at the Memorial Playing Field Play Area.

Thank you very much

Kind regards

Paul Campbell

From: Paul Campbell <[redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2023 2:29:38 pm
To: John Fullbrook <[redacted]>
Cc: Full Council <[redacted]>
Subject: Long-Missing Swing at MPF

Dear John

Back in February 2021 I discovered that the very popular basket swing at the MPF had been missing for over a year. In the event it took nearly two years for it to be fixed even though the spare parts were readily available, though you had claimed they were not. It had also been out of action for over two years in 2015 and 2016 merely awaiting readily available shackle bolts.

At the time you then said you did not want to repair this basket swing but rather you wanted to do nothing until after Chandlers Way had got its new playground and then the basket swing could be done along with the rest of the play area at the MPF. I objected that, based on SPC's record of delivery, this was a recipe for a further unacceptably long delay. How right I was because the children would still be waiting with no end in sight, with Chandlers Way currently going backwards as there is to be another consultation for some reason not clear to me even though we have already had one in March 2022 which itself had been long-delayed after you unilaterally decided not to comply with the Council's resolution concerning the sending out of the first consultation back in November 2020. We will still be consulting on Chandlers Way after three years!

Meanwhile, the MPF play equipment replacement has been going on for at least five years with no substantive action throughout that time. If we had taken your advice the basket swing would have been out of action since 2019 with any action still an extremely distant prospect.

Because councillors were not being kept informed of progress on repairs to play equipment it was specifically resolved on 6 May 2021 that the Community Committee would have a running report on every agenda re the regular inspection reports by HDC, Wicksteed, and our own operative and progress in addressing issues identified. This was another resolution you unilaterally ceased complying with.

A member of the public has complained to me that one of the pair of swings has been missing from the MPF play area for a considerable period. I do not think any updating report of this has been made to the Community Committee or to Full Council as would have been the case if the May 2021 resolution was being complied with.

As I am sure you know, and as the member of the public pointed out to me, siblings and friends tend to want to use pairs of swings together and so sorting out the fault should, to my mind, be an urgent priority for the benefit of our residents and visitors.

Please could you let us know when the swing was taken out of service, what is wrong with it, what steps have been taken to address the issue, and when replacement is anticipated?

Thank you very much.

Paul Campbell

From: Paul Campbell
Sent: 11 April 2022 09:39 AM
To: John Fullbrook <
Cc: Community <
Subject: RE: Community Meeting 5 April 2022 Request for Report re Creative Play Sales Order and other issues of non-compliance with resolutions

I am writing concerning three resolutions made by this committee which seem to me to have been improperly disregarded.

Resolution 1

Further to the meeting on 5 April 2022 where Mr Fullbrook reluctantly responded to my request for a report on why the mats beneath the basket swing which we resolved in May 2021 would be re-laid/ replaced had not been.

I was publicly criticised for raising this when it was not on the agenda, though of course if Mr Fullbrook had wanted to deal with this outside the public domain he could always have responded to my email by email before the meeting. Or better still, reported to the Committee long ago without needing to be asked.

Mr Fullbrook informed us that despite the fact that the Committee had resolved in May 2021 that the area beneath the swing be re-laid he had decided not to do so because the grass had been growing through the mats satisfactorily, as designed. Well, yes. The grass had grown through because the area had been completely unused for some twenty months for the unsatisfactory reasons recorded in the email correspondence below.

However as soon as the swing was so belatedly brought back into service the grass was worn away and exactly the same unsatisfactory state of affairs which existed before the swing was taken out of action and which prompted the motion was re-exposed once more. The sinking of the ground and parting of the mats.

See the very recent photos attached. I ask if any councillor would want their child/grandchild/nephew/niece/or indeed any child in our community to be exposed to this. And this is after we have paid the contractor the full sum which we were told included installation.

Of course the point of principle is that even if anyone does think that the condition of the matting is satisfactory, the fact is that this Committee resolved that the Clerk was delegated to arrange the work and so it was improper for him to unilaterally decide not to comply with the resolution. Even worse to put the mats into storage and not to report the situation to the Committee which has been kept in the dark throughout this whole saga as the correspondence below shows.

And to answer Cllr S Alexander's point that if the matting was unsatisfactory then Wicksteed would have said so. The last Wicksteed report specifically states that no risk assessment was undertaken by Wicksteed simply because the swing was missing. And in November 2019 the issue had been formally identified, I believe by Wicksteed, as needing attention as a medium risk.

I ask that this be on the next agenda for a discussion about possible actions to be taken if the surface below the basket swing is not sorted out in the meantime. SO9.

If anyone is any doubt about what the Committee understood was to be done and why we need reports at each meeting the discussion can be heard at <https://archive.org/details/2021-05-06-steyning-parish-council-community-committee-eom-offical-copy> starting at 1 hour 09 minutes and finishing at 1 hour 47 minutes with the particularly pertinent bit being from 1 hour 25 minutes through to 1 hour 47.

Resolution 2

It is noteworthy that the earlier part of the discussion in the period referred to in the timings above related to the need for playground reports (Wicksteed, HDC and PPM as available) to be on the agenda for each meeting so that committee members were kept informed of all play area issues and in particular what was outstanding - all for health and safety reasons. This was unanimously resolved, as is recorded in the minutes. Despite this unanimous resolution we are simply not getting these reports or updates on what repair work referred to in these reports is outstanding. We have not had the matter on the agenda and we have seen no monthly reports from HDC or our own contractor since July 2021, I believe. This appears to be another example of councillors resolving something and then Mr Fullbrook unilaterally deciding that the resolution does not need to be complied with. Perhaps Mr Fullbrook would be kind enough to comment if he thinks I have this wrong.

Resolution 3

Similarly, this recording also picks up the fact that although this committee resolved on 24 November 2020 that the agreed consultation agreement re Chandlers Way should be distributed, and it was initially reported in the agenda of January 2021 that this had been actioned, it then emerged that there had been a "hold up" and then it did not happen simply because Mr Fullbrook and a single councillor took it upon themselves not to comply with the November 2020 resolution. Again, comment is invited if Mr Fullbrook thinks that I have this wrong. The discussion starts at 2 hours 06 minutes and the apparent admission is at 2 hours 11 minutes.

Cllr Campbell

From: Paul Campbell
Sent: 05 April 2022 07:58 AM
To: John Fullbrook <j
Cc: Community <
Subject: Community Meeting 5 April 2022 Request for Report re Creative Play Sales Order

Mr Fullbrook

On 6 May 2021 it was resolved by majority that you were delegated to arrange the replacement of the basket swing AND THE MATS BENEATH at a cost of up to £3000.

You subsequently obtained a quote to do BOTH for £1,780 plus VAT.

Although the terms of the delegation did not require it, on 6 July 2021 (below) you asked Committee to reaffirm that you should go ahead and this was duly agreed.

The basket was then replaced, but NOT the mats. I thought that perhaps the mats would be done at a later date but so far as I can tell they have not been replaced despite the resolutions.

Please could you report this evening, including confirming how much Creative Play was paid.

Thank you very much.

Cllr Campbell

From: Paul Campbell
Sent: 13 October 2021 05:08 PM
To: John Fullbrook <
Cc: Chris Young <

>
eborah Hanson < ; Gary

<|
<|

Subject: RE: Health and Safety re Adult Gym Equipment Fol Request

Mr Fullbrook

Three matters, including an Fol

1 According to the spreadsheet you distributed, the spinner at Fletchers Croft play area was to be repaired on 7 October. It is still taped up. May we know what the problem is and the revised timescale for repair/replacement, please?

2 Please see below: -

"Our contractor who checks the Play grounds each month for us has also been checking and where appropriate lubricating machines or touching up paint work for well over a year now, as I asked him to do this at the same time as we initially discussed PPM – because it is after all a play park and he said he would include this as part of his checks for the same amount of money.

You have ignored my point that one of the machines is squeaking and that there are other clear signs of a lack of PPM"

I happened to walk past today, 13 October 2021. Two adult gym machines were being used by school children. They were both squeaking very loudly. I expect you can hear them in your office as they can be heard well beyond the church. One was the cross-trainer I reported to you on 21 September 2021 and the other is the exercise bike next to it.

You said you would be arranging a site visit by the installer. Is that in hand, please? Is there a date?

3 On 21 September I also asked you for the four maintenance logs covering the last year because it is a condition of the guarantee that these are available. I do not wish to deal with these things under the Fol regime as we should get them without hassle as councillors but as this is yet another issue where you are withholding information, you will be aware that a request for info should be treated as an Fol if that is what in reality it amounts to. **In the circumstances please treat the 20 working day time limit for providing these simple documents as having been running and so compliance is due by 20 October 2021.** I hope you will wish to respond voluntarily before that.

Cllr Campbell

From: John Fullbrook <john.fullbrook@steypingpc.gov.uk>

Sent: 06 July 2021 03:30 PM

To: Tim Lloyd <tim.lloyd@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Joanna Norcross <joanna.norcross@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Chris Young <Chris.Young@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Richard Bell <richard.bell@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Ian Alexander <ian.alexander@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rodney.goldsmith@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Simon Alexander <simon.alexander@steypingpc.gov.uk>; Paul Campbell <Paul.Campbell@steypingpc.gov.uk>

Cc: Hazel Roxby <
Subject: Creative Play Sales Order Acknowledgement

Dear All

Please see the draft Sales order for the Basket Swing replacement plus replacement floor matting for beneath this piece of equipment

I was tasked with running this past you before finally agreeing the sales order.

Our holdup has been to ensure they were willing and able to use and adapt the current fittings on the existing frame – The pictures we sent through have confirmed this is possible
If you recall the agreement in committee in May was as follows

Cllr Campbell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr G Sullivan that the Clerk be delegated up to a cost of £3000.00 to

proceed forthwith to have the basket swing brought back into action at the earliest opportunity using Creative Play as the contractor and to include replacement of the grass

mats beneath subject to the proviso that Creative Play are happy that the existing framework

is up to the job . **Agreed. 5 for (PC, RG, SS, GS, TL) 1 against (JN) 1 abstention (DH).**

Therefore please let me know tonight or earlier that you agree for me to proceed.

To also confirm the cost includes their engineers installing replacement

Thank you in anticipation

John

From: Paul Campbell

Sent: 07 May 2021 09:42 AM

To: John Fullbrook <[j](#)

eborah Hanson

>; Tim Lloyd <[t](#)

; Joanna

Norcross <

[@tameside.gov.uk](#)>; Chris Young

<

an Sullivan <[s](#)

[uk](#)>;

Gary Sullivan <

edney Goldsmith

Cc: Hazel Roxby <

Subject: Basket swing estimates - agenda item 5.3 on 6 May 2021

Dear John and Councillors – including Cllr Young who has been put on the distribution list for some reason. Perhaps John thinks this is an example of me harassing him with long and critical emails. So be it. There are very strong grounds for severe criticism in my opinion. Please see in blue below.

Kind regards

Cllr Paul Campbell

From: John Fullbrook <

Sent: 06 May 2021 12:46 PM

To: Paul Campbell <[p](#)

Cc: Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@igpc.gov.uk>; Tim Lloyd <tir@igpc.gov.uk>; Joanna Norcross <joanna.norcross@igpc.gov.uk>; Chris Young <chris.young@igpc.gov.uk>; Sarah Sullivan <sarah.sullivan@igpc.gov.uk>; Gary Sullivan <gary.sullivan@igpc.gov.uk>; Hazel Roxby <hazel.roxby@igpc.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rodney.goldsmith@igpc.gov.uk>; Hazel Roxby <hazel.roxby@igpc.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Agenda item 5.3 tonight

Importance: High

Dear Paul

The Basket swing was held up by steel cables covered in a plastic sheath.

When the tree trunks were being 'attacked' in the park this was one of many items that was also 'attacked' with a sharp knife or similar.

The cable being made of many strands of steel wire frayed where it was attacked.

We dealt with this issue by finding appropriate PVC tape – I recall helping our Caretaker complete the repairs myself at the time.

This seems a very odd use of your time when you are always so busy, including too busy to find replacement kit. Not only do we have caretakers but we also have the maintenance operative.

It was subsequently attacked and another repair completed, then attacked and repaired once more.

By this time the steel cables that were fraying having been cut began to reduce the strength of the cable itself and they appeared to be breaking without 'assistance'.

This was making use dangerous as frayed metal cables can easily cause cuts and we could not keep up with the issues caused, and it appeared that soon the whole cable could fail.

I find it quite extraordinary that none of this over a prolonged period was reported to committee members even when we were specifically discussing the damage done to trees throughout the MPF by Machete-Man. What possible justification could there be for not telling us and thus leading to a 17 month delay?

In discussion on site with our contractor (in charge of maintenance) we decided it was best to remove the basket swing before there was a catastrophic failure – possibly causing injury, and begin the process of looking for a replacement.

In the first instance and because I was busy I asked our contractor to source a possible replacement.

Again, why were we not told? You have both Hazel and Tessa supporting you and the Centre has been closed for much of the 17 month delay. We don't even have the neighbourhood plan work-load. The search for a replacement could have been completed in about five minutes as my own Google search proved. And why was it the right thing to spend ages ("he came back some time later") looking for a replacement then but now you say it is not and you want to look to replace everything rather than anything?

He came back some time later and said though there were plenty on the market - for a like for like replacement they would need the appropriate brackets in place or would not install themselves – therefore suggesting replacing entire piece of equipment rather than just the basket swing and chains.

This is absolutely not what you said on 19 February. You said then that “there are no like for like replacements easily available”. As I pointed out, on 22 February it took me just seconds to find that both Wicksteed and Creative Play do like for like basket swing replacements. And as it took me just minutes to establish this afternoon in response to your message finally telling us what the problem had been, that Creative Play have all the necessary replacement kit and are perfectly willing to install it onto the existing frame.

(Our contractor was not prepared to install a new basket swing and chains if the brackets were not the ones specified and I was not about to ask him to nor anyone else if it was not the appropriate bracket as Health and Safety was compromised).

Creative Play clearly do not think health and safety will be compromised. In seventeen months would it not have been possible for anyone in the Office to ask them?

I do not have a record of who originally installed this particular piece of equipment and when.

Creative play produce the most similar frame but even then it is not precisely the same, and they will not fit a basket onto a dissimilar bracket.

Turns out that this is not true or is true but misleading in suggesting that there is no solution when in fact there is a very simple one. Creative Play have no issue with the frame, and the brackets are £60 each. Odd that you have written this given that when I spoke to Claire Garrett of Creative Play she told me you had rung her earlier in the morning. You could have been offering us the same solution I offered the Committee, instead you offered an indefinite delay.

So the question becomes

Do we modify the existing frame so that we can purchase a basket swing?

No need. Creative Play have appropriate brackets.

In doing this do we weaken the frame?

It seems Creative Play are satisfied not

Is it not better therefore to purchase an entirely new frame and basket combo?

If we are to spend £3000 plus installation on one piece of equipment should we not deal with the other issue at the same time – that is to augment the safety surface below and surrounding the basket swing as it constantly deteriorates into a muddy dip (it being just dirt and grass) – this will cost a great deal – but why not therefore deal with the other safety surface issues at the same time in this play area as there are now constant issues

with holes appearing in the surface itself as it degrades and as it shrinks causing trip hazards (we are filling these holes now constantly).

If we need to completely renew the safety surface then surely we deal with an upgrade of the entire park otherwise when the individual equipment pieces fail and have to be replaced then surely we'll have to dig up the safety surface each time when replacing and renew and at great additional cost – therefore surely its best to renew the entire park or at least most of it.

There was an old lady who swallowed a fly.....you know the rest.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApmEM9-xA2c> This is just another ever-expanding whirlpool of procrastination guaranteed to mean that this popular swing would not be replaced for many months and probably not for years, if ever

We were having these very discussions three years ago and decided on a scheme to replace as was my advice at the time.

A perfect illustration of the glacial pace at which this council operates as we have meeting after meeting coming back to the same thing time and again and hardly anything reaches a conclusion within a reasonable time.

We collected many quotes.

We went to public consultation

We agreed on a scheme.

We could not garner sufficient financial support from the Wilson Memorial Trust at the time to help us with four schemes {Fletchers Play, Adult exercise, Basketball court, MPF Play} so we completed three – leaving the MPF until a later date.

This is why in my supporting paper (Item 4.4) I am saying and have been saying that perhaps we are best to return to the complete renewal / installation idea.

Seventeen months too late. If the incident had been reported to us at the time and you had come forward then with this idea we could have budgeted etc. and it might have made sense. To expect the youngsters to wait after all this time has been wasted is unacceptable. Our role is to provide services and facilities to the public, not feed an endless series of delays and meetings which achieve so little.

The problem is also this

For very many years we have not been sufficiently maintaining / renewing play areas.

Precisely one of the reasons why some of us fought successfully for a significant increase in the precept last year

We are doing so now – with our new PPM regime and recent three renewals.

We are in effect playing catch up.

I would suggest we continue this good work

Yes. But we need to keep our existing repairable facilities working until we are in a position to replace

First with Chandlers Way being dealt with by being part of the proposed pocket park scheme – and getting joint funding to help us with that.

We have not even managed the consultation we agreed on many months ago, so if the basket swing was to come after that we are already looking into some hazy horizon

By considering additional installation at South Ash

And by returning to the MPF scheme sooner rather than later.

Well it is clearly going to be later rather than sooner if the allotment water supply project is anything to go by. Over two years and counting..... We have had endless rounds of discussions re budget-setting and prioritising of projects and now you come up with this.

The Committee had had reports from me about the MPF attacks on trees and play equipment, and that repairs were taking place as per usual upkeep of our assets.

I have no recollection of having been informed that the swing or any other play equipment had been damaged or that the attack was related to the presumed machete attack on our trees. Nor that it had been removed. Cllrs Goldsmith and Sarah and Gary Sullivan have no recollection either.

I asked for and received support in committee for a PPM scheme.

I think you will find that it was actually committee members who pressed for this because we were so concerned that works recommended by Wicksteed were not being done within a reasonable time and because we had no preventative maintenance regime which led to complaints from the public about squeaky machinery and my observation that sending out the caretakers with a can of oil only in response to complaints when the equipment had grease nipples was not a satisfactory way of running a regime responsible for keeping the equipment sound and safe.

And previously asked for and received support for renewals from committee/ council and Wilson memorial trust.

So why has it not been progressed in the last three years I ask myself?

I hope this gives you and other members further understanding of the situation.

I hope my comments do likewise

I was going to report this tonight anyway

Why would you make a report of this nature at the very last minute and intended to be in oral fashion when the problem arose 17 months ago, I raised it on 18 February, I sought to have it on the March agenda but it was put on the April agenda and then adjourned to the May agenda? Three months of preparation time with two support staff and yet we find you phoning Creative Play on the day of the meeting and providing this report just before the meeting which is neither accurate nor particularly helpful as no figures have been provided. I was able to obtain the information in the two attached emails within about half an hour of seeing your email.

NB Creative Play stated on the phone that the prices in their estimate all include the installation charges. NNB If we were to replace rather than repair there is a minimum charge of £4,000. Seems very odd, but there it is.

Kind regards

John

From: Paul Campbell

Sent: 06 May 2021 09:45 AM

To: John Fullbrook <jfullbrook@nbn.gov.uk>; Hazel Roxby <hazel.roxby@nbn.gov.uk>; Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@nbn.gov.uk>; Joanna Norcross <joanna.norcross@nbn.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rodney.goldsmith@nbn.gov.uk>; Sarah Sullivan <sarah.sullivan@nbn.gov.uk>; Tim Lloyd <tim.lloyd@nbn.gov.uk>; Gary Sullivan <gary.sullivan@nbn.gov.uk>

Subject: Agenda item 5.3 tonight

Dear all

The basket swing is on tonight's agenda. Please see below for a reminder of why. Please see the hyperlinks for price – looks to be in the order of £3000 if it has to be replaced. Obviously considerably less if the so far unspecified fault can be fixed

Kind regards

Cllr Paul Campbell

From: John Fullbrook <jfullbrook@nbn.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 February 2021 02:19 PM

To: Paul Campbell <paul.campbell@nbn.gov.uk>

Cc: Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@nbn.gov.uk>; Joanna Norcross <joanna.norcross@nbn.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rodney.goldsmith@nbn.gov.uk>; Sarah Sullivan <sarah.sullivan@nbn.gov.uk>; Simon Alexander <simon.alexander@nbn.gov.uk>; Tim Lloyd <tim.lloyd@nbn.gov.uk>; Chris Young <chris.young@nbn.gov.uk>; Hazel Roxby <hazel.roxby@nbn.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Missing Basket Swing on MPF - agenda item request for Community Committee

Dear Paul

Thank you for these observances.

Myself and Deborah have considered your request under SO9 for a motion to be placed on next Tuesday's agenda, but believe due to the number of items on this agenda, we are better suited to discuss it at the following meeting on the 6th April instead, when there would be more time available and when we would be in a position to talk about a number of playground topics which rather tie in with some of the content discussed below.

Kind regards

John

From: Paul Campbell <paul.campbell@nbn.gov.uk>

Sent: 22 February 2021 10:13

To: John Fullbrook <jfullbrook@nbn.gov.uk>

Cc: Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@nbn.gov.uk>; Joanna Norcross <joanna.norcross@nbn.gov.uk>; Paul Campbell <paul.campbell@nbn.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rodney.goldsmith@nbn.gov.uk>; Sarah Sullivan <sarah.sullivan@nbn.gov.uk>; Simon Alexander <simon.alexander@nbn.gov.uk>; Tim Lloyd <tim.lloyd@nbn.gov.uk>; Chris Young <chris.young@nbn.gov.uk>; Hazel Roxby <hazel.roxby@nbn.gov.uk>

Subject: Missing Basket Swing on MPF - agenda item request for Community Committee

Dear John

Your reply puts the serious malaise in your office in a nutshell. Around a year for an important asset much enjoyed by Steyning's youngsters to be out of action, nothing effective done to address it, and councillors kept in the dark. Even when a report is requested the response is opaque and therefore unhelpful in providing usable information. No mention by you of this issue during our several budget/project discussions. Please see the SO9 agenda request at the foot.

In order to help members' understanding of the concerns raised by me, please could you assist us with the following information based on your response?

1 *"This was removed in the spring/summer of last year"*

I think it was not the Summer of 2020 or even the Spring, but was around December 2019. Over a year ago. Please would you provide the date of removal?

2 *"due to safety concerns"*

What was the exact nature of the concerns, please?

Why was the Amenities Committee/Community Committee seemingly not informed/kept informed, please?

What is so fundamental about these safety concerns that over a year later they have not been addressed, please?

3 *"we have since sought a replacement but there are no like for like replacements easily available"*

This is extraordinary. In about a year or more you, Hazel and Tessa have not managed to find a suitable replacement even with the Steyning Centre closed for much of the time.

Yet in the time it took me to type into Google "Wicksteed basket swing", I sourced this <https://wicksteed.co.uk/playground-equipment/traditional/swings/single-bay-basket-viking-swing/>

And in the time it took me to type in "Creative Play basket swing", I sourced this <https://creativeplayuk.com/swings/basket-swing-round/> You will recall that Creative Play installed the Fletchers Croft kit.

If I can find what appear to be two suitable replacements within half a minute, why can three employees of SPC not achieve this in around a year?

Also, we have had meeting after meeting in recent months concerning budgets and project priorities. Not once have you said we should consider budgeting several thousand pounds for this.

4 *" , nor do manufacturers endorse using their equipment aligned or 'piggy-backed' with the attachments from other companies equipment"*

I have no idea what you are referring to here, and I am sure no other councillor does.

I assume it is some reference to the shackle bolts not being replaced for around two years. Perhaps it is a reference to the current unspecified issue which has run on for more than another year.

I had understood the original kit was provided by Wicksteed whose website made plain the bolts were available in 72 hours.

If not Wicksteed, then the original manufacturer should have been able to provide a similar service. Looking at the photos, it looks very similar to the Creative Play product.

If the original manufacturer was/is no longer in business, bolts come in standard diameters M10, M12, M14, M16, M20 etc and certainly in a length to suit. The material varies, but a bolt supplied by Wicksteed would certainly be of the correct high tensile specification. If there is some unique feature of the shackle bolt then SME have the facilities to manufacture what was/is required at a fraction of the price of a replacement swing set and in a fraction of the first two year period and a fraction of the second one year period if the current concern is the bolts; and/or

The unit comprises four discrete components. The timber frame, the shackle units, the chains, and the seat. If the issue is the shackle units as a whole there would appear to be absolutely no reason why appropriately rated shackle units should not be sourced from a different manufacturer and fitted by our maintenance contractor if necessary. This is like saying that because the manufacturer of the make of tyres on the car you bought new has gone into liquidation then you will no longer use your car. Or you cannot replace a toilet seat with another maker's product. The same argument applies to each of the other three discrete components, I suggest.

5 "nor could I suggest we do it anyway as I attempt to follow the health and safety advice given and not what councillors or others suggest I must do."

Again, I am sure none of us know what you are referring to here. If you have had health and safety advice which says the kit cannot be repaired then fair enough. Councillors should have seen this and the issue of replacement should have been on an agenda many, many, months ago. Please provide copies of the relevant health and safety advice/reports from experts/complaints from the public or other third parties re the swing to us now. As before, I certainly do not wish to invoke the FoI procedure and hope that you will provide the documentation to us very shortly in the ordinary course of council affairs and in order to inform the motion below - but if you are not so willing then please treat this as an FoI request.

Agenda request under SO9

Please could we have the following on the next Community Committee meeting

“ To discuss the circumstances of the removal from service of the basket swing on the MPF and its ongoing suspension from service and to agree appropriate steps to achieve its return to service, or to achieve its replacement or otherwise”?

Thank you very much.

Kind regards
Paul

From: John Fullbrook <j.fullbrook@stevenage.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 February 2021 10:26 AM
To: Sarah Sullivan <ssullivan@stevenage.gov.uk>; Paul Campbell <paucampbell@stevenage.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rgoldsmith@stevenage.gov.uk>
Cc: Tim Lloyd <tim.lloyd@stevenage.gov.uk>; Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@stevenage.gov.uk>; Gary Norcross <gnorcross@stevenage.gov.uk>; Simon Alexander <salexander@stevenage.gov.uk>; Hazel Roxby <hazeroxby@stevenage.gov.uk>
Subject: Health and Safety on MPF - Statutory Duties and HSE Advice

Dear Sarah, Paul and Rodney.

redacted.

On your second point – The missing swing at the MPF – This was removed in the spring/summer of last year due to safety concerns – we have since sought a replacement but there are no like for like replacements easily available, nor do manufacturers endorse using their equipment aligned or ‘piggy-backed’ with the attachments from other companies equipment, nor could I suggest we do it anyway as I attempt to follow the health and safety advice given and not what councillors or others suggest I must do.

redacted

Kind regards
John

From: Paul Campbell
Sent: 18 February 2021 08:59 AM
To: John Fullbrook <j.fullbrook@stevenage.gov.uk>
Cc: Deborah Hanson <deborah.hanson@stevenage.gov.uk>; Joanna Norcross <jnorcross@stevenage.gov.uk>; Rodney Goldsmith <rgoldsmith@stevenage.gov.uk>; Sarah Sullivan <ssullivan@stevenage.gov.uk>; Simon Alexander <salexander@stevenage.gov.uk>; Tim Lloyd <tim.lloyd@stevenage.gov.uk>
Subject: Missing basket swing at MPF Play Area

Dear John
Please see photo below of the frame of the most popular swing in Steyning.

I well-remember how on the old council for two years or so from May 2015 Cllrs Sullivan and Goldsmith would periodically ask when the missing basket swing was to be replaced. It merely needed new shackle bolts. There was never a satisfactory answer even though it appeared from the manufacturer's website that the bolts were available within seventy two hours. I think it is the case that in the end Danny got so fed up because his children could not use the facility that he sorted it out on his own initiative.

Now this really popular basket swing has been missing again for over a year and so far as I can recall there has been no report to the Community Committee, or to the Amenities Committee before that, advising that it had been removed, why it had been removed or what was holding up its reinstatement. Please could we be informed? It seems to me completely unacceptable that this facility should have been out of action for over four years out of less than six.

This seems to me a good example of the sort of public service which suffers while SPC moves the deck-chairs on the Titanic with all the unproductive and counterproductive changes in process which have taken up so much time over the last six months - like messing about with committees and calling the terms of reference a "scheme of delegation" as though we never previously had committees with properly delegated powers and terms of reference/scheme of delegation.

Trevor Cree is perfectly correct to observe that it is unacceptable that even though the Steyning Centre is closed, no one has been furloughed, and there is no additional work such as on the neighbourhood plan, your office is still failing to deliver in good time on almost everything. The feedback I am getting from members of the public who have dealings with your Office is increasingly critical.



From: Hazel Roxby <hazel.roxb@nhs.uk>

Sent: 28 July 2021 02:56 PM

To: Chris Young <chris.young@nhs.uk>

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Subject: Swing at MPF

Dear All

I have authorised for a swing to be removed from the MPF fenced play area today, as I received a report from TC Maintenance that it has become too loose to remain in situ and is a safety issue. The screws that required to be tightened have become corroded, the thread has worn out and the nuts will not move to enable them to be tightened.

I will contact Wicksteed to try to get replacement bolts and screws and if this is possible TC Maintenance will refix the swing in place.

Regards
Hazel

Deputy Clerk
01903
Email hazel.roxb

01903 4470