

RE: Hart District Council - Consultation on a Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule

Enquiries | Blackwater and Hawley [REDACTED]

Fri 17/12/2021 11:39

To: Planning Policy <planningpolicy@hart.gov.uk>

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Dear Planning Policy Team

Update to the Blackwater and Hawley section of the Proposed Infrastructure by Parish (Open Space, Leisure and Community Facilities) to replace OLC13 and OLC45,

Please find below the major projects which Blackwater & Hawley Town Council are hoping to get under way to help increase the capacity, accessibility and energy efficiency of the Council facilities for the increasing number of local residents. The Council's strategy for the future was severely impacted when the S106 infrastructure contributions originally agreed from the Hawley Park Farm development were withheld following the planning appeal process. As you are aware, Blackwater & Hawley Town Council precept only covers half of the income required to run the Leisure Centre facilities and covid restrictions have had a severe impact on existing and future potential income to cover the shortfall. The Town Council have no option but to raise the funds required from alternative sources.

Gym Upgrade

Pre-covid the gym at Blackwater & Hawley Leisure Centre was well used by local residents but has remained closed since the first lock down. The gym is located in an enclosed small upstairs room, with the usual equipment - running machine, rowing machine, cycles, cross trainer and various aging metal multi-gym weights machines.

The gym has not re-opened as the area is not easily ventilated having only small high windows, there is inadequate spacing between items of equipment for the current covid physical and social distancing regulations of 2m and is, therefore, only suitable for use by one person/family at a time. The gym is unsupervised and current covid cleaning regulations suggesting that cleaning should take place regularly are not possible with limited staffing.

The Town Council has received many requests to use the gym facilities since gyms were able to re-open (following relaxing of covid restrictions) from both previous customers and new customers hoping to use a smaller and less crowded gym. With the increase in the number of households in Blackwater & Hawley Town Council from the housing developments at Sun Park and Hawley Park Farm, there will continue to be an increased need for gym facilities at the Leisure Centre.

The Town Council has proposed that the obsolete sauna/solarium/steam room facilities (not used for the last 7 or so years), be reconfigured and replaced with light, spacious accessible ground floor open plan, modern gym facilities. Included in this project would be the reconfiguration of the toilets and open plan shower/changing room facilities to incorporate upgraded toilet facilities and individual changing/shower rooms rendering them accessible, user friendly and energy efficient.

This project would provide increased accessible gym facilities in the local area and gives the Town Council the opportunity to offer gym facilities to harder to reach groups such as disabled, young people or elderly groups. The importance of sport to an individual's mental health particularly under the current Covid climate cannot be understated.

Timing: it is hoped that this project can be completed within the next 2 years
Cost: Major building work will need to take place at the Leisure Centre with a re-configuration of part of the ground floor, the cost for this has not been thoroughly investigated but may be in the region of £150 to £200,000.

Sports Field Changing Rooms Upgrade

Blackwater & Hawley Leisure Centre has two sets of changing rooms, one associated with the squash courts and proposed new gym area and one used by the sports groups using the sports field including our home football and cricket clubs.

The changing rooms and toilets used by these groups are located downstairs and accessed by a set of stairs. The communal unisex showers/changing rooms are not suitable for current privacy expectations, are very old and inaccessible particularly by our local Visually Impaired Cricket Team who use the Town Council sports field as their home ground during the cricket season. The cricket team held a very successful inaugural year during 2021 and their membership continues to grow with the expectation that they will be hosting three additional women's cricket teams for 2022 this adds to the existing three men's teams, junior girls team, a colts side and the visually impaired cricket team.

The existing changing/showering/toilet facilities are inadequate for current increasing requirements, have limited accessibility and are environmentally unfriendly. The Town Council has proposed that these be upgraded and replaced to include accessible upgraded toilet facilities and individual showering facilities but retain some larger changing facilities for use by sports teams. As part of this upgrade, it would be ideal to widen non-compliant doorways and include a small wheelchair accessible lift to allow wheelchair users to access the toilet and changing facilities.

This project would provide increased accessible toilet and changing/showering facilities for those local groups using the Town Council's facilities and provide quality sports opportunities for the local community, engaging and empowering all stakeholders (including local residents) to build an inclusive community.

Timing: it is hoped that this project can be completed within the next 2 years
Cost: Some building/internal reconfiguration work will need to take place at the Leisure Centre, the cost for this has not been thoroughly investigated.

Sports Field Accessibility Project

Access to the sports field behind Blackwater & Hawley Leisure Centre is either from the main Leisure Centre car park via a set of narrow concrete steps (wide enough for one person only) adjacent a muddy bank or from the Coffee Shop car park via a fairly steep concrete path. Neither of these options provide easy access for those with mobility issues, visual impairment or wheelchair users.

The Town Council has proposed the installation of a compliant accessible pathway joining the main Leisure Centre car park with the sports field. This would replace the existing narrow concrete steps and muddy bank, include handrails and with adjacent parking spaces marked as disabled spaces. Existing trees would require extensive trimming to allow the ramp to be installed.

The project would provide improved access to the increasing number of wheelchair users to the site, together with other users suffering reduced mobility and those with visual impairment. The sports field is the home ground for our local Visually Impaired Cricket Team who play county matches during the summer and visually impaired teams from other counties also visit on a regular basis.

Timing: it is hoped that this project can be completed as soon as possible
Cost: Major grounds work is required and one quotation of c. £19,000 has been received for a compliant ramp installation.

3G Floodlit Pitch Project

Since Covid restrictions have been eased there has been a significant increase in the number of groups (particularly netball) who have requested use of the outside Multi-Purpose Area at Blackwater & Hawley Leisure Centre. This is in part due to the requirement for sport to take place outside to reduce the likelihood of the spread of covid. There are now approximately 18 netball teams using the site. There have also been a high number of requests for tennis courts.

The current concrete area is marked with two netball courts, three tennis courts and one 5-a-side football pitch. The halogen lighting in the courts is nearing the end of its life, is expensive to replace and also inefficient and costly to run. The adjacent car park regularly floods and the drains block, the surface is uneven and requires replacing and marking with parking spaces for efficient, and sensible parking to take place.

The Town Council has proposed replacing the hard courts with a 3G Floodlit Pitch with upgraded low energy lighting together with an improvement to the parking facilities.

The project would provide increased opportunities for use of floodlit outside sports facilities during the hours of darkness regardless of the weather conditions.

Timing: it is hoped that this project can be completed within the next 5 years
Cost: No costings for this project have been investigated to date but anticipated to be between £300 to £500,000.

Play Equipment Project

The current well-used play park at Blackwater & Hawley Leisure Centre is approximately 14 years old and suitable for children up to 7 years of age. Some of the equipment is no longer compliant with current regulations and the safety flooring consists of old and worn grass matting making the area extremely muddy and slippery in wet weather.

The Town Council has proposed upgrading the existing park with play equipment developmentally suitable for school age children (5 – 12 years) to including a range of equipment for rope or chain climbers on angles; climbing pieces; horizontal bars; cooperative pieces such as tire swings, slides and sliding poles. In addition, the installation of a play area near to the Coffee Shop suitable for children aged 2-5 offering smaller steps, crawl spaces, low platforms with multiple access such as ramps and ladders, flexible spring rockers and shorter slides (no taller than 4 feet).

This project would add a purpose-built play area for older children, which is not currently available, and offer a wider range of play opportunities for all local children. The benefits of outside play and sport facilities are wide ranging, offering a variety of sports opportunities improves mood and concentration, boosts self-confidence and reduces stress and anxiety for children and adults alike. There are particular benefits to children participating in outside play and sport, building leaders of the future and developing healthy lifestyles especially during the current covid pandemic.

Timing: it is hoped that this project can be completed within the next 18 months
Cost: No costings for this project have been investigated to date but anticipated to be £70,000.

Kind regards

Jo Shaw

TOWN CLERK on behalf of BLACKWATER AND HAWLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Blackwater and Hawley Town Council
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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From: Planning Policy <planningpolicy@hart.gov.uk>

Sent: 05 November 2021 10:22

To: Planning Policy <planningpolicy@hart.gov.uk>

Subject: Hart District Council - Consultation on a Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule

Dear Sir/Madam,

Consultation on a Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule

Hart District Council is proposing to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). A CIL is a charge on new development used to help fund infrastructure to support development in the area.

The Council is the Charging Authority under CIL legislation and is seeking your views on a **Preliminary CIL Draft Charging Schedule** which sets out the proposed rates per square metre for different types of development.

Comments are also invited on the evidence base that supports the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule:

- A CIL Viability Assessment, September 2021, which informed the CIL rates to ensure development remains viable.
- An Infrastructure Funding Gap Assessment, October 2021, demonstrates that a CIL is justified to help fund the infrastructure needed to support new development.
- An Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update, October 2021 sets out the various infrastructure projects within the district to support development and informs the funding gap assessment.

The consultation documents can be viewed at <https://www.hart.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy>

The consultation period runs for 6 weeks from **Friday 5th November 2021 to 5pm Friday 17th December 2021.**

Please use the response form available at <https://www.hart.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy>

Please send any comments on these documents to:

By email: planningpolicy@hart.gov.uk

By Post: Hart District Council, Civic Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet, GU51 4AE

By responding to this consultation, you are providing consent for your personal data to be collected by Hart District Council in line with terms set out in the [CIL Privacy Notice](#). Please also read the [Confidentiality Statement](#) available at the same webpage.

The consultation responses will be published on the Council's website, but only the name, and where relevant, the organisation name, will be published with the comments. No personal contact details will be published.

The Council will consider all comments received and then in Spring 2022 will consult on a **Draft Charging Schedule** under Regulation 16 of The Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended by The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019).

The expected timeline is:

- Consider consultation responses in the new year
- Consult on Draft Charging Schedule April – June 2022
- Examination Summer/Autumn 2022
- Adoption/Implementation Winter 2022/Spring 2023
-

Kind regards,

Planning Policy Team
Hart District Council

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