

Title: Elms Park License

Date 20 April 2021

Contact Officer: Karen Slater, Office Administration Manager

Purpose of the Report:

1. To consider the request from John Hampden School to revise the Licence between Oxfordshire County Council and Thame Town Council for use of Elms Park.

Background

2. There has been a fifteen-year licence in place between Oxfordshire County Council and Thame Town Council relating to the use of Elms Park Recreational Ground, Park Street. The licence allows John Hampden Primary School permitted use to undertake physical education, the playing of games and sports activities by the children who attend the school as well as any visiting sporting teams. The licence commenced on 1 April 1998 with an agreed annual fee of £500 payable to the Town Council.
3. Oxfordshire County Council renewed the existing Licence for a further fifteen years back dating the commencement date to 1 April 2013 with a new annual fee of £800. This has been calculated as an appropriate increase in line with RPI (Retail Price Index) linked rental increase over the fifteen-year period. The new Licence stipulates that there will be a review of the fee in accordance with the RPI on the fifth and tenth anniversaries of commencement i.e. 1 April 2018 and 1 April 2023.
4. John Hampden School have recently contacted TTC advising that they have not used the field for a number of years (prior to lockdown) and they cannot justify an expenditure of £800 in their school budget imposed by OCC for a field they currently only use for 2 hours per year. TTC explained that the previous headteacher had made the arrangement based on using field at Elms Park all year round. The new headteacher has advised they no longer use field except for 2-hour sports day once a year and have asked if TTC would consider JHS using the field on a one-off basis as a gesture of goodwill to support a local school.

Risk Assessment

5. An up-to-date license is in place between Oxfordshire County Council and the Town Council as it specifies the legal and financial arrangements which allow permitted use of Elms Park by John Hampden Primary School up to year 2028.

Resource Appraisal

6. The cost for additional grass cutting by maintenance team for one off yearly event. Maintenance team to be available to unlock/lock gate on day of use to prevent unauthorized use on other days.

Note St Joseph's School currently use TTC field for their sports day and are currently charged a nominal fee of £15.

Legal Powers:

Local Government Act 1972 s 101

Recommendation that:

- i) The license between Oxfordshire County Council and Thame Town Council be revised / cancelled if possible and a new arrangement be agreed with JHS.*