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17th April 2010

Mendip District Council
Cannards Grave Road
Shepton Mallet
Somerset BA4 5BT

Dear Members and Officers,

Please find attached PROPOSAL, TOR PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION.

Tor Leisure Centre provides a uniquely versatile fully inclusive community asset firmly supported by a large cross section of the local and district population. It attracts visitors on a regular, year round basis and provides benefit, well being and enjoyment through a wide range of social and sporting activities.

For the past ten years serious consideration has been given to the methods of improvement of delivery of services available to us as a private business for the whole of the complex. Reasonable expectations of provision, varying needs for the standards required, available support and funding access to successfully improve and sustain the Centre have also been considered and extensively researched.

The main building is in serious need of modernization and an approved planning application is currently the subject of legal scrutiny which we are satisfied will provide appropriate responses to allow the building scheme to progress. Funding through traditional sources will be made available for the scheme at no cost to the local taxpayers and we look forward to a conclusion on this issue.

The playing surfaces including the grassed areas provide extremely limited income, certainly insufficient to attract investment for much needed drainage, tree planting, new tennis courts, new fencing all round, new benches, dog bins, machinery store and so on. We engaged in discussion with MDC Leisure some time ago with a view to consider revisiting the lease and introduce charitable status. The discussions however, were unfortunately never concluded. Now with key professionals showing dedicated interest in the site, we believe the Proposal to form a Tor Playing Field Association will provide the necessary partnership building that needs to be adopted to prevent further demise and lack of investment in the playing surfaces. It is proposed that the main building remains in private business use with existing lease clauses largely unchanged. This would also ensure that the Centre can adapt quickly to changing trends in sport and recreation.

The Proposal is designed to satisfy the requirements of the sports playing surfaces only, the main building would be fully excluded from the Association, although it would continue to provide the necessary facilities such as Changing Rooms as required in the current lease and as may be required by the existing sports club users. Individual Club representatives will be elected to the Association Board and therefore there is no further need for individual club consultation which has already been implemented over the past few years.

We therefore formally ask for support for this initiative and also Landlords Consent to sublet the fields to the Association at a peppercorn rent of £1.00 per annum. We envisage the Association will formally come into being in September/October 2010. Our solicitors in this matter remain J.Maitland-Walker.

Yours sincerely,

D.R.Cook