

Clerks Report

SEPTEMBER 2017

1. LOCKABLE STORAGE.

With forthcoming changes to Data Protection legislation, Broadclyst Parish Council needs to be certain that its working practices are robust, with personal and sensitive data protected.

Three quotes were obtained for a tall lockable cabinet.

- Office Furniture £132 (£158.40 inc VAT)
- Viking. £249.00 (£298.80 inc VAT)
- Greenham £229.99 (£275.99 inc VAT)

When the specifications for each cabinet were considered, it was concluded that the cupboard from Greenham's offered the best protection value for money due to its locking mechanism. The cupboard has been ordered as it falls within Clerk delegated spend.

2. FIRE RESISTANT FIRE SAFE

Officers are researching and obtaining 3 quotes for safes which offer fire protection. Although most records are backed up electronically the originals of specific papers i.e. property deeds need to be protected.

3. STRATEGIC CYCLE ROUTES

Devon County Council's cabinet has had the green light for a new 2 way strategic £1.73 million cycle route. The money coming from:

- The Devon County Councils Local Transport Plan Budget
- Developer contributions
- Government's National Productivity Investment Fund

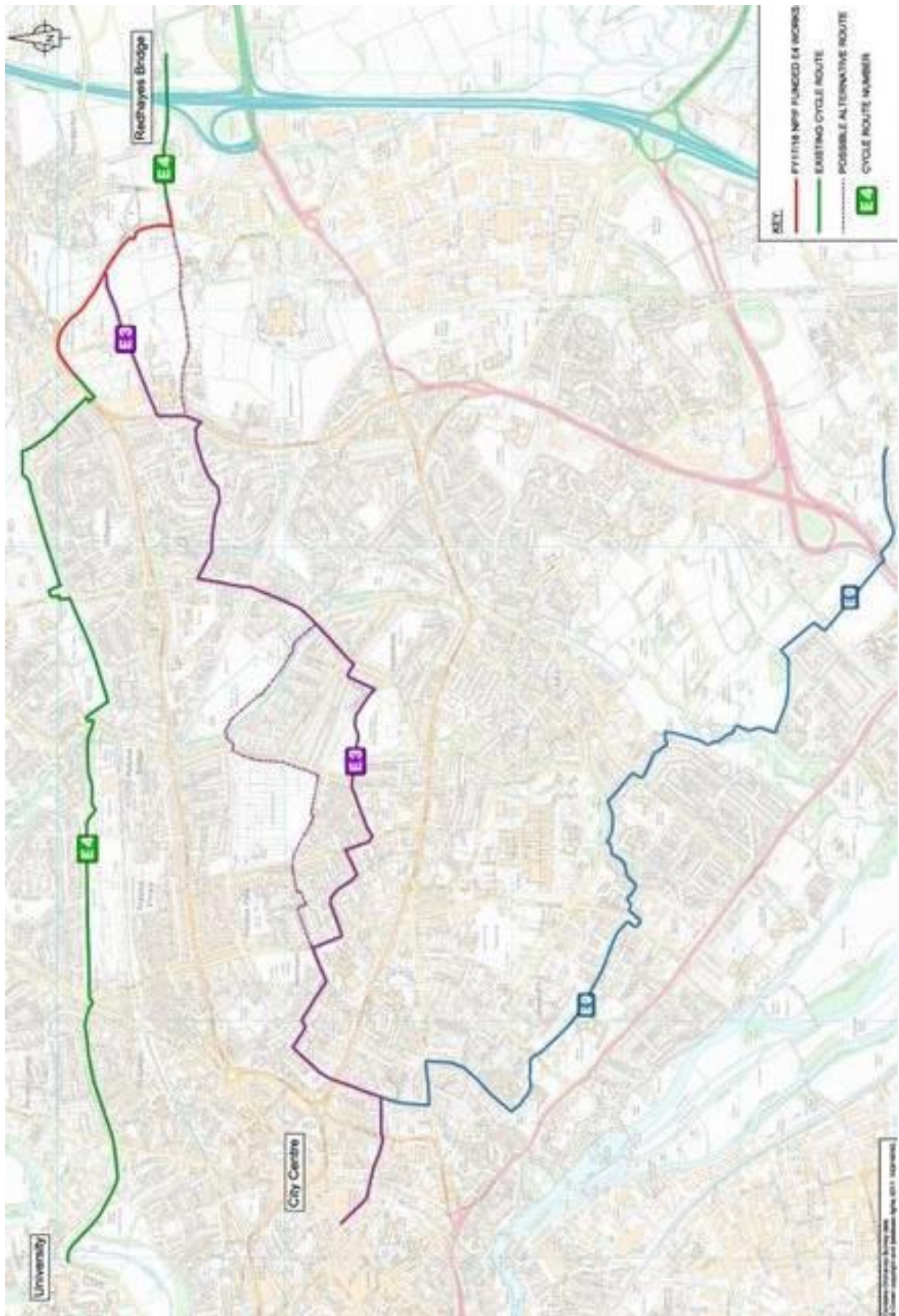
This is the first step to a city network of dedicated commuter routes.

A two-way (E4) route along Tithebarn link road/ Cumberland Way roundabout to the southwest of the Pinhoe trading estate. A 900m cycle track will be separated from the traffic by a 0.5m wide kerbed buffer to protect cyclists from passing vehicles.

Part of the plan is to increase the number of cycle journeys from 6% to 12% by 2021. This first section is scheduled for completion by next summer.

The overall aim is to provide a series of high quality, fast and direct cycle routes providing links to key growth and development areas to workplaces, education, leisure and the city Centre.

For an overview of the cycle routes, please see map on page 2.



4. OLD PARK FARM PLAY AREA

The play area opened on Thursday 14th September however there were 4 incidents within the first day, one of which resulted in a child being taken to hospital, and so the decision was taken on Friday 15th to close it for the weekend so an investigation could be carried out on Monday.

The parish council notified residents by the following statement on social media: "Following reports of accidents in the play area, the decision has been taken to close it over the weekend so an assessment / investigation can be carried out on Monday.

The equipment installed meets BS EN1177 and 1178, which is the recognised and required standard for play equipment and surfacing. It was installed by the manufacturer and passed an independent post-installation inspection.

Whilst the closure will be frustrating your patience and understanding is very much appreciated; BDW has acted promptly and responsibly to reports from users; we will be working with them on Monday and will report back to you in due course."

Assessment: a site visit reaffirmed that there is no problem with the equipment, the independent Inspector reiterated the findings of his report that it is fit for use from a play safety point of view, and the play area was reopened on Tuesday 19th September.

EDDC Complaint: on Tuesday 19th September, the District Council received a complaint regarding the suitability of equipment; our response to the District Council was as follows:

"The LEAP meets all requirements under current legislation and that the developer has more than met its obligation but it seems there is a level of expectation (mainly generated by the sales teams) which has not been met. The other current problem is that the LEAP looks tiny; it's in one corner of a large area of open space (the school site). Of course, once the site is built out the LEAP will be in context with its setting, but it's really difficult to visualise the Masterplan when looking at an empty field.

There is a misconception around expectation: "when is a LEAP not a 'proper' play area". The likes of nearby parks such as King William (specialist play park for less able-bodied users), Kings Heath (NEAP), and Broadclyst (long established and extended) play areas - which each cost over £100,000 - cannot be compared to a LEAP.

Had we not gone out to consultation the prescribed play area would have been completely "bog-standard" and residents would have felt their views had not been sought. LEAP's are designed primarily for children who are old enough to start to venture out to play on their own, but some pieces (i.e. the basket swing, log trail, and trampoline) are suitable for a wider age range and enable interaction between sibling groups and groups of differing ages.

Our decision to work with Barretts and go out to consultation was based on community involvement and aimed to generate community engagement with the Parish Council. I remain certain that a 'better' play area has been provided as a result. We were lucky that Barrett's were happy to work with us, and we should take steps to reiterate to Barretts that we would still like to work with them and future communities to choose play area design and equipment in their developments.

This also flags up another problem for the future: management companies. Where communities want change they can work with the parish council to make changes. The management company does not have a capital budget, nor any way of raising any. If however the play area was a public

owned/operated facility we (or even the District Council) could do something about it. We have requested the ownership of the play area be transferred to the parish, but this has not been finally agreed by the landowner. Until such time as it is, there is very little the parish council can actually do, and so residents really are stuck with what has been installed.”

RECOMMENDATION:

- i. to impress on developers the need for openness and scale when describing future community facilities on strategic sites
- ii. to encourage developers to offer opportunities that engender community engagement such as consultation exercises
- iii. to negotiate transfer of future community facilities to the parish council (as the local public body) prior to the first completion, so the management company’s areas of responsibility and subsequent management fee can be adjusted to exclude assets transferred to the public purse

5. CHRISTMAS OFFICE HOURS AND JANUARY MEETING

Council usually meets on the first Monday of the month, however the first Monday in January is New Year’s Day. Where a council meeting falls on a Bank Holiday it is traditional to meet the following day (which in this case would be Tuesday 2nd January).

The Council Office will close at 4pm on Wednesday 20th December and re-open at 9am on Thursday 4th January 2018.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council resolves to reschedule the January full council meeting for Monday 8th January 2018.

6. GOOGLE REVIEWS

Broadclyst Sports Pavilions has received another 5* rating. The Administrator is encouraging hirers to make feedback in order to make improvements to the facilities and service we are offering.

7. CHRISTMAS BROADSHEET

The Comms team have discussed content for the next edition which will include an article on the new Harry Patch Peace Garden at Clyst Vale Community College, the formal opening of which I was invited to attend on Friday 22nd September. The project was initiated by students following a trip to Belgium to mark the 100th anniversary of Harry Patch being injured in WW1.

8. STAFF TRAINING

The following training will be delivered in house as part of Council’s insurance requirements. There is sufficient in the training budget allocation for this.

7 Nov 17 – 1 Day Emergency First Aid at Work

21 Nov 17 – Half Day Fire Marshal and Half Day Manual Handling

9. OUR DAY 2017

#OurDay will take place on 21st November and is the Local Government Association's annual tweetathon that gives anyone working or volunteering in local public services the chance to share their stories of how they improve quality of life for residents. Last years campaign reached over 20 million people and NALC are keen for more councils to get involved this year.

10. COUNCIL TAX 2018/19

East Devon District Council has made a Council Tax Support Grant payment annually since 2013/14 to help mitigate changes relating to Council Tax Support, which effectively lowered the Taxbase.

The practice has been for this grant to be reduced each year, since its introduction, by the same percentage reduction this Council has seen in its own central government formula grant payment.

EDDC has advised that it is predicting a 24% reduction in the formula grant for 2018/19 and although the actual grant payment to made to Towns and Parishes will be agreed during their budget process they suggest using a **24% reduction** in Council Tax Support Grant income for budget preparation.

As from 2019/20 EDDC is anticipating no central government formula grant payment. Therefore, it is envisaged the Council Tax Support Grant will also reduce to £0.

Tax Base calculations

The base data for the Tax Base calculation is legislatively set at 30th November, therefore EDDC has to use its council tax records at this date in order to make calculations of our individual tax bases for 2018/19. WEDDC has confirmed that it aims to notify us of 2018/19 taxbase details by the 8th December.

Council Tax bills 2018/19 - Town and Parish precept % increases

There is still a risk of Government putting restrictions on Town and Parish Council Tax increases. The final decision on this for 2018/19 budgets is not known as yet, but will be announced as part of the local finance settlement the end of November/early December

Parish Precept 2018/19 Form

This will be sent out in early December for return by **Tuesday 24th January 2018**.

11. PAVILIONS PARKING FOR DISABLED MINIBUS

A request was received from a village resident to park a wheelchair minibus in the Pavilions car park during the day. The vehicle is used to transport disabled children to school so will only be there between the hours of 9.30am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday. The minibus parks overnight in the main car park; by parking at the Pavilions during the day it frees up a space in the main car park. Given the scarcity of these spaces I have agreed to this; it should not impact on daytime bookings at the pavilions.

This concludes my report to Council.

Angie Hurren, MILCM.

30 September 2017