Leisure and Recreational Facilities Tender

Thurston Parish Council

Paper: Agenda Item 10f
Reason: To receive an update from the consultant contracted to carry out the evaluation of land for new recreational and leisure facilities in Thurston
Period covered: October 2026 to January 2027
Presented to Council: Full Council Meeting 4 November 2026
Date: 02.11.26
Author: Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Summary

At the meeting of 7 October 2026, Council appointed Bridgewell Civil Limited to carry out the assessment and development potential of land for recreation and leisure use in Thurston. The tender documents issued provided clarity on the expectation for the assessment of land, considering technical and practical constraints and provide clear, evidence-based advice that will support effective decision making in terms of future provision.

Consultant Brief

The purpose of the commission is to assess the suitability, constraints and development potential of land for recreational and leisure use. The evaluation should, inform decision-making regarding potential acquisitions, planning permission and future site development.

Timescales

Work expected to take 12 weeks.

Work undertaken to date:

13 October 2026, a pre-contract discussion with Senior Officers to confirm the project scope and ensure there was a shared understanding of the tasks and avoid any gaps in the remit.

14 October 2026, email issued introducing Rob McCaig of Bridgewell Civil with an explanation of the work that had been commissioned.

In mid-October, the RFO provided the consultant with background information to enable the impartial assessment of candidate land within Thurston.

Late October, order issued which, in the interest of maintaining impartiality, included a clause to ensure that all decisions, actions, and evaluations related to the contract are conducted without bias, and that any potential conflicts of interest are appropriately managed.

Update from Consultant

The project is underway and progressing well.

Questionnaires have gone out to around 25 sports clubs, community groups and facility providers across the village, with some responses received.

Alongside this is a review of background material.

For reference, the work is running in four broad stages:

- Stage 1 (now): gathering responses and reviewing background information to establish the picture of current use and future need
- Stage 2: assessing candidate sites and options against consistent criteria
- Stage 3: draft findings and recommendations, with an interim check-in
- Stage 4: funding-options review, final report and presentation to the Council

Work is regarded as being on track against the overall 12-week programme, with the final report and presentation anticipated early in the new year, to be confirmed as the work develops and responses continue to be received.