

A scenic landscape photograph of Newport Pagnell. In the foreground, a gravel path curves from the bottom center towards the right. To the left, a large, leafy tree partially obscures the view. In the middle ground, a long, low wooden bridge with railings spans a grassy area. Two people are standing on the bridge. To the right of the bridge, there are two wooden picnic tables on a grassy field. The background is filled with various trees, including weeping willows, under a cloudy sky.

NEWPORT PAGNELL DEVOLUTION JOURNEY

2012 – Newport Pagnell Town Council took ownership of the Green Park Community Centre from borough council



Lessons Learned

- * Solicitors took nearly a year to arrive at completion
Lesson learned – never leave a lawyer in charge of a project. Talk directly to borough council.
- * Ensure all searches are undertaken, including local authority search, church tithes, land registry and covenants.
Lesson learned – undertake a risk value analysis on what could go wrong, and whether the council is prepared to pay.

In 2014 the Town Council took over Middleton Pool



THE PROBLEM

At the time £200,000 of grant funding for the pool had been withdrawn from the borough council, leaving it totally unsubsidised.

The Town Council was running the facility on a lease, but could surrender. Future of pool uncertain.

The pool was not viable, despite having a steady stream of children for its swimming lessons.

The Town Council needed to do its homework – 70:30 principle for wet and dry side

THE SOLUTION



ISSUES WITH THE TRANSFER AND LESSONS LEARNED

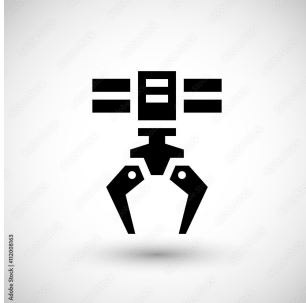
Full title



Pension Deficit



Clawback



Additional Land



TUPE



2014 – TRANSFER OF WILLEN ROAD SPORTS GROUND



Football and football social club

Tennis – 4 courts

Cricket – shared facility issues

Sub-Contractors

Diverse personalities

Run down facility



In 2018 the Council took ownership of Newport Pagnell Youth Club



An established charitable Trust was used as the instrument

VAT issues



Heat exchanger issues.

Boiler issues

Full refurbishment in 2019

Car park issues

IN 2019 THE TOWN COUNCIL TOOK OVER 16 OF THE PARKS AND PLAY AREAS IN NEWPORT PAGNELL



Many in very poor condition – 40 years old

No strategy to parks

Consultation was needed

Decision on internal management or contractors needed

Difficulty in getting information from borough council on dimensions, assets, water courses or anything else.

Ownership remains an issue

RISKS AND INSURANCE



TREES/TREES AND MORE TREES – MANAGING RISK

DOGS

PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS

INSURANCES, PUBLIC LIABILITY, ALL RISKS, PROPERTY

ACTS OF GOD

STAFF WHO DON'T MANAGE THE CONTRACT/INSUFFICIENT TIME TO DO SO/POORLY TRAINED

CONTRACTOR GOES OUT OF BUSINESS

PROBLEMS AND LESSONS LEARNED

OWN STAFF VERSUS CONTRACT
STAFF/DEPOS/MACHINERY/PENSIONS/COVID

PLAY AREA EQUIPMENT CHECKS

LITTER INCREASES IN SUMMER AND DURING PANDEMICS

EVERYONE WANTS TO PLANT MORE TREES OR CUT DOWN TREES –
POLICIES NEEDED



WHAT HAVE/ARE WE ACHIEVING WITH TRANSFERRED PARKS AND PLAY AREAS?

100 English Oak saplings planted by residents



£48,800 grant achieved from Sport England for new cycle track at Hornbeam Park



WHAT HAVE/ARE WE ACHIEVING WITH TRANSFERRED PARKS AND PLAY AREAS?



Chicheley Street play area
now a NEAP



New Buckaneer tower as part
of refurb of Riverside Meadow
play area



Construction of new
remembrance garden at
Milton Drive play area

DO WE BELIEVE IN DEVOLUTION?

Yes, in 2022 Milton Keynes City Council offered the Town Council 74 ha of command land at Bury Field Common



A photograph of a park with a paved path, bare trees, and residential houses in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

PRINCIPLES OF DEVOLUTION IMPORTANT TO TOWN COUNCIL

Full ownership of sites we manage

Non -reliance on Milton Keynes City Council grant funding – consultation with residents on costs

No ongoing monitoring of sites by MKCC

No TUPE – Consider as a change of MKCC modus operandi to their business plan

Non-interference by MKCC regarding end usage of sites