

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE
10 MAY 2023**

Officer: Councillor Rob Wilson (Cophorne Ward)

FIELDS IN TRUST

Purpose of Report

To consider the registration of Recreational Assets under the Fields in Trust Scheme

INTRODUCTION

Fields in Trust is a Charitable organisation set up in 1925 as originally the National Playing Fields Association. Its aims are to protect playing fields and has done much to improve the standard of play through the Six Acre Standards which the Town Council continues to operate all of its play areas under.

The charity has developed a legal means of protecting playing fields and there have been various iterations recognising past monarch's involvement.

To protect playing fields under this organisation requires a Deed of Dedication signing; this is in turn registered against the title of the land and remains in perpetuity.

Nowadays the Deed is far more flexible than previous schemes and allows for flexibility of control for day to day management of the site including erection of fencing and structures to meet the recreational purposes of the ground. The only difficulty would be where sports clubs require security of tenure for lease grounds.

SITES

This request has been promoted by the Greenfields Community Group recognising their wish to retain the Greenfields Recreation Ground as a recreational facility in perpetuity, but there is no reason why other facilities could not be registered in this vane given the Town Council's continued wish to support and enhance recreational land. Telford & Wrekin Council went through a similar process recent. In determining sites however, members would need to be mindful of the sporting use of these sites and consider any future proposition for the need for sporting clubs to seek security of tender to support sporting aims within sites.

The Town Clerk has a meeting with officers of Fields In Trust later in the month to look at the possibilities in more detail. A FAQ sheet is appended to this report to give further details of the scheme.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the Report be noted
- (ii) That the Committee supports the principle of exploring the Registration of Recreation Grounds with Fields In Trust
- (iii) That the Committee considers this further once officers have had the opportunity to digest the process and consider suitable locations