

Meeting	Full Council
Date	24 th March 2026
Report Title	Cloverlands
Agenda Reference	14
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Officers Recommendations:

- 1. To receive an update on Cloverlands Open Space Football Goals**
- 2. To note the next steps**

Background

Members received an update at January's Full Council advising of complaints and representations received in relation to football activity and the presence of football goals on Cloverlands Open Space.

It was agreed that the Council would continue to monitor the situation as if the goal posts stay out this will cause operational issues for the grass cutting season, as the goals obstruct the safe use of ride-on mowing equipment and cannot reasonably be removed and replaced during each visit. The fragile condition of the goals also increases the risk of damage during routine maintenance, which may lead to disputes or potential liability concerns.

Consultation Letter (#3)

The goal posts had been put back on the open space, so a third letter was sent to surrounding houses, with a further reach, to ensure the message was received – welcome to use the public open space but please be considerate to neighbours and remove the goal posts when not in use.

The letter stated that the Council has continued monitoring Cloverlands Open Space and notes that unattended goal posts remain, which may now be treated as fly-tipped items and removed without notice. Residents are being informed more widely and asked to promptly remove any privately owned equipment to help maintain safety and upkeep of the area.

Responses to Letter (#3)

- Residents generally view children playing football on the green positively, describing them as polite and well-behaved, and do not consider the goalposts to be a problem or eyesore.
- There is frustration that the council is prioritising minor issues like goalposts over more serious concerns, particularly ongoing drug dealing and unsafe conditions in the nearby underpass.
- Some residents feel the situation has been driven by complaints from a single individual rather than reflecting the wider community's views.
- Concerns are raised about other local safety hazards (e.g. overgrown shrubbery, obstructed pathways) that residents believe should be addressed instead.

- There is dissatisfaction with how council resources and taxpayer money are being used, with calls for more practical and community-focused action.



Next Steps

- Respond to the residents who have commented on the consultation letter with the update from Full Council 24th March
- Continue to monitor during the mowing season and cut around the goal posts
- If complaints about the long grass in the goal mouths continue, a reminder will be issued that the Parks & Open Spaces Team cannot access to maintain the area if the goal posts and a schedule of future cuts for the goal posts to be temporarily removed.

Officer Consideration

Officers acknowledge the points raised in the further representation and recognise the importance of outdoor play for children and the positive use of communal open spaces.

However, the Council must also consider:

- Its responsibility to maintain land safely and efficiently
- The operational limitations of the Parks & Open Spaces Team
- The condition, appearance, and non-authorised placement of privately owned equipment on communal land
- The need to manage shared spaces in a way that is fair and consistent for all residents

The concerns raised are not related to discouraging children's play, but to the practical and operational implications of the football goals remaining in their current condition and location.

Current Position

No immediate enforcement action has been taken. The Council has sought to engage residents through consultation and to encourage a cooperative resolution.

Officers will continue to monitor the situation and assess whether the goals are removed voluntarily. Should they remain in place and continue to pose an operational issue, removal may be required ahead of the spring maintenance season.

The Chairman was willing to meet with the residents to be in an informed position at the time of the meeting in which neighbours are welcome to attend.