

**Leisure & Culture Policy Development Advisory Group**  
**2 MARCH 2022**

Present: Councillors: Roger Noel (Chairman), Tony Bevis, Martin Boffey, Alan Britten, Billy Greening, Gordon Lindsay, Bob Platt and Josh Potts

Apologies: Councillor: Kate Rowbottom

Also Present: Councillor: Ruth Fletcher

29 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Notes of the meeting held on 5 January 2022 were received and agreed

30 **HIGHWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE**

The Head of Property and Facilities provided an update on the Highwood Community Centre, which is part of the Berkely development east of the A24, which will provide around 1000 homes. Public consultation was undertaken on a 300 m2 building with the option of also building a nursery facility. 50% of respondents were in favour of the community centre and 60% Were in favour of a nursery. The main concerns expressed related to provision of parking, access/congestion within the wider development and noise. Option to build the community Hall and nursery is the favoured one for progression. Total cost will be £1.26m for the hall, £1.36m for the nursery, which will provide a financial return of 6%.

The discussion raised a number of points, including:

- Internal facilities for the Hall will be similar to those provided at St. Peters, including meeting and activity areas, storage, kitchen and toilets.
- Importance of storage provision was widely agreed, and also the high level of need for nursery accommodation.
- Additionally, an identified need for girls' football goal facilities in the area, though changing rooms etc. would be an additional issue to consider.
- Outdoor space could be considered for landscaping, social or outdoor play area.

The meeting agreed the proposals and the Chairman will be taking this to Cabinet on 24 March

31 **QUEEN'S JUBILEE COMMEMORATION UPDATE**

The meeting received an update from the Head of Leisure & Culture regarding to the plans for the Queen's Jubilee. HDC are working extensively with local groups and organisations in planning delivery over the Jubilee weekend. Aspects of the programme of events include:

- The Beacon of Light, illuminating the Capitol.
- Events in Horsham Carfax, including decorations, food and drink performance and community interactive opportunities.
- Market and other business led activities.
- Making it easy for the community to hold street parties and celebrations.
- The Queen's Green Canopy will deliver a programme of tree planting across the District, commencing on 11 March in Horsham Park.

Total budget for the programme is £42k, including financial support to Parishes and Neighbourhood Councils.

Subsequent discussion raised a number of points and clarifications, including:

- HDC will be providing advice on any insurance and other arrangements relating to road closures and traffic management during events. It is not, however expected that the Council will be providing road signage and other street management equipment. Financial support to Parish Councils should enable suitable local arrangements
- Recommended that a record of the tree planting sites is maintained for posterity. Already proposed to have a plaque in Horsham Park as a record, with Parishes to be encouraged to do likewise
- Recommended that the Museum, and perhaps the Park and the Forum, might also host displays / exhibition
- Will explore effective ways to link in with schools and youth organisations such as scouts to ensure memorable and child/family friendly experiences.

## 32 **LEISURE**

As previously advised, Places Leisure had requested help with energy cost increases incurred in delivering the Leisure Contract. However, on review HDC was not clear that the increases were demonstrably the result of Covid19 restrictions, as had been suggested. The Council's view has been accepted by the contractor who has agreed to carry the risk and understands that no additional financial support will be forthcoming for the remainder of this financial year. Performance for most activities is generally good and back to 87% of the pre-covid levels. Gym membership is the most challenging area in terms of regaining customer confidence and attendance levels.

## 33 **THE CAPITOL**

Previously reported investment proposals into The Capitol continue to be worked on and a tour for PDAG Members will be arranged to enable them to consider proposed improvements on site. Key aspects of the proposed improvements include increased seating capacity to attract higher profile events, improved customer experience, reduced carbon footprint. The conversion of stage lighting to LED has been approved as part of the capital programme for 2022/23..

34 **DRILL HALL**

Continuing to work with Royal British Legion towards handover but this is progressing more slowly than anticipated and the meeting was advised that the transfer is now likely to be later than 1 April.

35 **HORSHAM MUSEUM**

The museum has had a successful half term and is responding proactively to strongly positive feedback. A World War II exhibition is in place at present and associated retail is proving very successful. Work is underway on the Barn to ensure it is ready to open for the Easter holidays, and the Museum is planning to extend opening hours to 5 days a week from then. Still planning to trial weekends in the summer and will be recruiting to the Curator post soon.

36 **SHELLEY BI-CENTENNIAL**

HDC is working with the Shelley Memorial Group. The Memorial will be installed in Horsham Park. More general celebrations are planned for the weekend of 8 July. Plans are being developed for a Shelley bike ride route (taking in locations with strong connections to the poet). An event will be hosted at the Capitol to support the Shelley memorial Group, an exhibition is planned for the Museum, and a commemorative tree will be planted at Warnham Nature Reserve.

37 **PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE**

The team and contractor have been working on the Skate Park development, engaging with a user group, and a design is due to go out for public feedback. This is scheduled to go to the July Planning Committee, with the Contractor expected to start work by late summer and the new facility ready for use by next Spring. Ash die-back work is continuing. The new grounds maintenance contract started on 1 February and the Arboriculture contract is scheduled to start on 1 April.

38 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO**

The Forward Plan was noted.

*The meeting closed at 7.18 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm*

CHAIRMAN