

**Leisure & Culture Policy Development Advisory Group**  
**8 MARCH 2023**

Present: Councillors: Roger Noel (Chairman), Martin Boffey, Ruth Fletcher, Billy Greening, Gordon Lindsay, Bob Platt, Louise Potter, Josh Potts and Kate Rowbottom

Apologies: Councillors: Peter Burgess and Richard Landeryou

Also Present: Christine Costin, Tony Hogben, Jon Olson, Ian Stannard, Christian Mitchell and Stuart Ritchie

10 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 2 November were received.

The Cabinet Member also advised the Group that Southern Water were due to carry out work at Chesworth Farm and signage had been requested. The disruption this would cause was noted, and the Parks & Countryside Manager was due to meet with contractors on this. Communication on the matter would be important, and information would be emailed to all Members, Neighbourhood Councils, as well as Friends of Chesworth. Information would also be shared on social media.

11 **LEECHPOOL & OWLBEECH WOODS**

The Cabinet Member confirmed to the Group that he had made the decision to close the enclosure at Owlbeech Woods until September. The decision was made due to a concern in relation to the breeding period for endangered ground nesting birds, and the closure would allow breeding to be monitored by experts. Feedback from residents would also be sought following this period.

Members discussed the closure, and noted the challenge in balancing the need to protect wildlife, as well as meeting the amenity needs of residents. It was highlighted that many local residents in the town may not have access to gardens, and the woods were heavily used. It was further suggested that the management plan should be reviewed.

Members welcomed the review following the enclosure, to analyse whether the closure had a positive impact on wildlife.

The Cabinet Member advised the Group that a dead tree in Leechpool was due to be felled as it was a health and safety risk. The risk had been assessed and, due to location, the felling was required urgently. It was suggested that as much of the root structure should be retained.

12 **THE KING'S CORONATION CELEBRATIONS**

The Head of Leisure & Culture, and the Events Officer, provided an update on the plans for the King's Coronation. The focus of the events was to mark the Coronation and to provide entertainment for all residents, with a family focus. Parish and Neighbourhood Councils could request a £200 grant to host events that would benefit the whole community.

Members requested that Officers investigate the possibility of providing additional transport into the town on the Sunday, to ensure that residents can access and enjoy the event. It was agreed that this would be explored, however it was hoped that there would be many events taking place across the District due to the availability of the grants.

13 **LED LIGHTS AT THE CAPITOL**

New LED stage lights were due for installation later in the year. These lights would be more cost efficient and reduce carbon emissions, which Members supported.

14 **HILLS FARM CEMETERY EXTENSION**

The Parks & Countryside Manager provided an update in relation to the Hills Farm Cemetery Extension. The planning application had been submitted, and the extension would involve the creation of a central avenue and would provide easy access. The extension would ensure the supply of plots until 2030, by which point it was anticipated that the cemetery in the north of Horsham would be functional.

Members queried whether drainage had been considered. It was confirmed that Officers were working with Southern Water to determine the best way to reduce surface water. It was also requested the signage at the entrance to the cemetery was improved, to include who to contact and how.

Members discussed the possibility of providing an area for those who do not wish to have a headstone. The Head of Leisure & Culture advised that the priority was to ensure provision of places to meet obligations, then the team would investigate additional provision for commemoration.

The Group discussed the previous Burials Committee, and it was confirmed that the remit of that committee was now contained within the Leisure & Culture portfolio, and therefore was for the consideration of this Policy Development Advisory Group.

The Cabinet Member thanked Members for attending, and for their support whilst he has been the Cabinet Member for Leisure & Culture.

*The meeting closed at 7.07 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm*

CHAIRMAN