

Leisure and Culture Policy Development Advisory Group
3 MARCH 2021

Present: Councillors: Jonathan Chowen (Chairman), Chris Brown, Christine Costin, Ruth Fletcher, Billy Greening, Lynn Lambert, John Milne, Roger Noel, Bob Platt, Josh Potts and Kate Rowbottom

Also Present: Councillors: Matt Allen, Frances Haigh and Louise Potter

16 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes from the previous meeting held on the 20 January were received.

17 **ATHLETICS TRACK**

The Head of Leisure & Culture and the Leisure Strategy & Client Manager briefed the Group on the development of the Athletics Track. The update included background information and the current status of the track. The track is currently managed by Places Leisure within the Leisure contract, with the primary users being clubs, schools and athletic events. The existing life span of the track meant that it is likely to need to be resurfaced in the next year.

A range of options for potential re-development and re-provision of the track were presented by the Head of Leisure & Culture. Details on each option were outlined, including the capital costs, potential capital receipt and ongoing revenue income as well as social and community benefits. Further work will be undertaken developing the various options, to be presented to Cabinet in the summer/autumn. A further update will also be brought to the PDAG in the summer.

18 **DRILL HALL AND HIGHWOOD UPDATE**

The Director of Community Services updated the group on the two active bids and assessment process for the Drill Hall. Officers were in the process of drafting the assessment criteria for the end of April. A decision on the Drill Hall would then be brought to the PDAG again and to Cabinet in the summer.

The Council had completed a Community Assets Study, which would feed into the Local Plan, in order to understand the available venues and provision in the town. The Director of Community Services updated the Group on the progress of the study, which was almost complete.

The Director of Community Services also briefed the Group on Highwood Community Centre. An architect would be appointed to support the development of the facility. A report on Highwood Community Centre development would be brought to the PDAG again and to Cabinet in summer.

19 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The Head of Leisure & Culture briefed the Group on the re-tender of the Ground Maintenance and Arboriculture Contracts. Work is underway and the specification and tender pack will be put out to the market at the beginning of May. The focus of the contracts will be to ensure that they align with the Wilder Horsham District and carbon reduction ambitions as well as providing a financially sound outcome.

A market engagement process has been undertaken and the insight is being incorporated into the tender documents. The Head of Leisure & Culture outlined how the aim of the contract will be to enable flexibility, a partnership approach and encourage innovation. Engagement with the neighbourhood and parish councils, Friends groups and volunteers would continue through regular meetings with the Parks & Countryside Team and via the work on the Management Plans for the key sites.

Procurement decision on the award of the contract is on the Forward Plan and will be brought to Cabinet in September.

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

The Forward Plan extract was noted.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN