

Leisure & Culture Policy Development Advisory Group
5 JANUARY 2022

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

22 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 24 November were received.

23 **PROCUREMENT OF HORSHAM PARK SKATE PARK**

Members received a presentation from the Head of Leisure & Culture detailing the Procurement of Horsham Skate Park.

Proposals and bids for the contract had been received to incorporate the needs of riders of skateboards, BMX, scooters and skates. Consideration was given to; appealing to all ages and abilities, a focus on quality, carbon reduction and social benefits. Emphasis was placed on users feeling comfortable in the new space, reducing anti-social behaviour and building on the Skate parks current legacy.

The successful bidder would work with user groups to ensure the new design met the brief and engagement was to take place with local schools and colleges.

The current beyond repair wooden park would be replaced and constructed with free-form concrete due to its longevity and local suppliers would be sought to provide materials to reduce carbon footprint. A lighting survey had been undertaken and LED lights were to be reinstated.

Proposals were going to Cabinet on 27 January for approval before Planning consent was sought. Subject to Planning permission, intentions were for construction in the Spring/Summer with potential opening in September 2022.

There was positive support for the proposals. Some concern was raised over park access during the works and parking facilities. It was agreed that once constructed an official opening would be planned.

24 **ASH DIEBACK**

Members received an update from the Head of Leisure & Culture on Ash dieback.

The council has a Statutory responsibility to deal with this issue as it is a fungal disease that infects trees making them fragile and unstable.

Work had started near the A264 Lemmington Way and Bartholomew Way North Horsham and a phased approach would be taken District wide. Trees would be naturally regenerated.

Local residents had been advised of works in consultation with Ward Members.

25 **SOUTHWATER COUNTRY PARK**

Members received a presentation from the Head of Leisure & Culture on plans for Southwater Country Park.

Engagement and consultation will take place this summer with local Residents, Parish Council Members and other stakeholders on the future plans for the park.

Consideration will be given to long term investment options, balancing wildlife and leisure, peak and low seasons and replacing buildings.

Members were supportive of the proposals and planned consultations. It was agreed that a balance was required for wildlife and park users with a growing population.

26 **MUSEUM**

Members received an update from the Associate Curator and Museum's Business Manager since the Museum re-opened in October 2021.

Positive numbers had visited the Museum, ongoing feedback was being gained from visitors and suggestions were being considered and responded to.

Ongoing links were being made with heritage institutions including the British Museum and Shipley Reliquary. Members were informed of a new exhibition to open on 20 January showing the Art work of Robin Alexander Elliott.

The Museum was focusing on recruiting and training volunteers, increasing exhibitions and re-stocking and opening the retail shop with a focus on clear links between the exhibits, collections and items to buy as keepsakes.

Currently open 3 days a week the intention was to open 5 days a week from the beginning of April. The longer term focus would be to open at weekends in the summer and Bank Holiday weekends.

Members were complimentary about the work being done at the museum. It was suggested that during the summer months the museum garden was a popular place to visit and this could be utilised further with future events and improved access.

27 **THE CAPITOL**

The Head of Leisure and Culture updated the group on plans for the Capitol.

Last Investment had taken place in 2003 and following the Covid pandemic clarity had been gained on the future of the venue.

Since Covid 19 the cinema industry had changed and live theatre had become the main focus. Successful trials had taken place with new audiences, events and bar offers.

Work will be carried out with specialists to consider upgrading and increasing theatre seating to accommodate high quality touring productions, reviewing the cinemas, re-visiting the customer experience including better use of space as well as expanding food and drink.

A planned Audit to reduce the carbon reduction of the Capitol was also planned for the future.

The group was very positive about the future proposals.

Details would be considered at Cabinet on 27 January and full Council in February.

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

The Chairman advised that the procurement of Horsham Skate Park would be taken to Cabinet on 27 January.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN