

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

Present: Councillors: Roger Noel (Chairman), Ruth Fletcher,  
Richard Landeryou, Gordon Lindsay, Bob Platt, Josh Potts and  
Kate Rowbottom

Apologies: Councillors: Peter Burgess, Billy Greening and Louise Potter  
Absent: Councillors: Alan Britten

7 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 9 August were received.

8 **TOUR OF HORSHAM MUSEUM**

The Museum's Curator took Members on a tour of the exhibition spaces and collections on display at the museum. These had been refreshed and reorganised during closure caused by the pandemic before reopening to the public in October 2021.

The Head of Leisure & Culture confirmed that, whilst footfall had been below pre-pandemic levels after reopening (in line with the national trend) there was a gradual increase in numbers, with higher attendance during school holidays. Craft activities for children had been popular, and the Curator was engaging with schools with a view to encouraging additional school trips.

Marketing initiatives to increase attendance were also being explored. The Group discussed ways in which the museum could be sign-posted from the town centre, including public realm pointers such as footprints embedded in the pavements.

The Cabinet Member agreed that he would explore public realm possibilities with Councillor Christian Mitchell, Cabinet Member for Horsham Town.

9 **CEMETERY UPDATE**

The Parks & Countryside Manager gave an update on cemeteries and churchyards maintained by the Council, in particular Hills Farm Cemetery and Denne Road Cemetery.

The Group were briefed on how the Council maintained Hills Farm Cemetery and the mowing regimes undertaken throughout the year. Early in 2022, there had been some complaints that the clippings from grass-cutting had a detrimental visual impact. Members were advised that this impact was only temporary, with the clippings disappearing within about a week of cutting.

There was a sensitive balance to be struck between the wide range of individual wishes of those visiting family graves, and the responsibility of the Council to upkeep the site. There were currently no restrictions on what could be put or planted on a plot. The Cabinet Member advised that some historic planting of conifer trees and other larger shrubs caused challenges as they outgrew their original plots with the potential to damage neighbouring areas.

The Cabinet Member sought the view of the Group and there was consensus that Officers should look into the possibility of restricting the type of planting to smaller rooted plants and bulbs.

Looking to the future, the Parks & Countryside Manager advised that steps to landscape and prepare an extension to the site would be undertaken next year. The Group were also briefed on measures being taken towards developing a new cemetery to the north of Horsham for beyond 2030.

The Group were advised that Denne Road Cemetery was also a Local Wildlife Site and the maintenance regime reflected this. Tree works would be undertaken this winter to allow some additional light into the site, which had become very overgrown in places.

Councillor Ruth Fletcher, Denne Local Member, suggested that certain areas should be cleared to allow a route around the cemetery that visited graves of historic interest. The Cabinet Member agreed to investigate this further with Councillor Fletcher and the Head of Leisure & Culture.

*The meeting closed at 7.30 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm*

CHAIRMAN