

PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Collins (Chairman)

Cllr. Pett (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Cheeseman, Perry Cole, Coleman, P. Darrington, Dyball, Foster, Hudson, Osborne-Jackson and Pett

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Raikes

32. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the People & Places Advisory Committee held on 10 December 2019, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

33. Declarations of interest

With reference to the North West Kent Volunteer Centre in Appendix C of Agenda item 6 (Minute 38), Cllr Cole declared that he was a Partner in a gardening and maintenance business.

For transparency, Cllrs Dyball, Hudson and Pett advised they were appointed Council representatives on the Sevenoaks District Arts Council.

34. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman, with the Committee's agreement, moved agenda item 6 to follow after agenda items 7 and 8, and moved agenda item 4 to follow after agenda items 5, 7, 8 and 6.

35. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

36. 2020-2021 Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan

The Community Safety Manager presented the report which set out Partnership activity aimed at addressing domestic abuse, serious and acquisitive crime, anti-social behaviour, safeguarding, substance misuse, and doorstep crime. The Action plan was a multi-agency document and would be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Community Safety Partnership to ensure that actions would be on target.

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Following queries from Members, the Community Safety Manager advised that they were working with community wardens and local banks to help tackle doorstep crime. Members were advised that reports of domestic violence had increased as a result of law changes determining what counts as domestic violence, and victims more likely to report it. There were proactive campaigns in place to encourage residents to take precautions to prevent residential burglary.

The Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager.

Resolved: That the report be noted

37. Economic Development Strategy Delivery Plan Monitoring

The Economic Development Officer presented the report updating Members on the delivery of the 2018-2021 Economic Development Strategy. Work on the strategy began in January 2019. The strategy was designed to have the flexibility to adapt to economic changes and needs of business customers. The performance targets were 86% green, 14% amber and 0% red.

In response to questions from Members, it was clarified that the Council did not provide financial support towards the business hubs, but assisted in networking and providing advice.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted the success of the Visitor Economy Forum (Appendix A, 3.1b) as a good network which allows many to share feedback on the Sevenoaks Visitor Economy.

The Chairman thanked the Economic Development Officer.

Resolved: That the progress of the Economic Development Strategy delivery plan to date, be noted.

38. Community Grant Scheme Draft Allocations 2020/21

The Community Projects & Funding Officers presented a report which set out information about the Community Grant Scheme and summarised applications received by the Council from voluntary organisations for funding during 2020/21, together with recommended grants. The amount of funding available for grants was £54,800. In addition, funding was given to Citizens Advice for 2020/21 under the terms of the three-year Service Level Agreement.

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Community Projects & Funding Officers for thoroughly setting out the process of allocating grants to her and the Deputy Portfolio Holder.

In response to questions from Members, the Community Projects & Funding Officers advised that the Eden Christian Trust were running a community based youth club which did not require the members to have Christian faith and therefore were eligible to receive a grant. It was advised that the recommended grant had the attached condition that the Youth Worker aligned with the KCC Youth Service.

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The Chairman thanked the Community Project & Funding Officers.

Resolved: That the report be noted

39. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that the first Portfolio Holder briefing with the new Chief Officer People & Places took place. They discussed projects related to youth, older people, carers and mental health. Following its success the previous year, there were plans to repeat Silver Sunday.

Further discussions included encouraging organisations to provide mental health first aid and plans for the Council to provide support to local youth groups.

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder.

40. Work Plan

The work plan was noted

41. White Oak Leisure Centre: New build and operator contract awards

The Chief Officer People & Places presented the report which set out the proposed construction of the new leisure centre, the demolition of the existing White Oak Leisure centre, and the appointment of an operator for the new centre. The report set out the facility mix and detailed costings and funding sources. Planning permission had been granted on 13 February 2020. The construction of the new leisure centre and demolition of existing leisure centre cost, together with fees and charges, was due to be £20m.

The Chief Officer People & Places advised Members of the proposed design of the new leisure centre, which included a Tag Active zone, multi-purpose rooms, a pool, a café, soft play area, and parking provision for 144 vehicles and two coach spaces. There was focus on making the building as flexible as possible in its use. The new leisure centre was due to open in November 2021.

The preferred operator was Sport and Leisure Management (SLM). If approved the contract award net payment to the Council would be £508,248 a year on average. The preferred operator had shown interest in embedding themselves in the local community early on in the process. The Chief Officer People & Places advised that there would be 38 full time equivalent members of staff working for SLM which would provide good operator resilience.

Members were advised that there were risks related to construction with Alliance Leisure Services Ltd (ALS) as well as risks outside their responsibility. These included utilities issues, prolonged extreme weather conditions, planning conditions imposed, changes to national building regulation, and unexpected ground conditions.

In response to Members' queries on the changing facilities at the Orchards Academy sports hall, the Community Projects & Funding Officer advised that the

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changing rooms and sanitary ware would be refurbished. Shower facilities were already provided on site. Following health and safety concerns from Members, the Head of Finance advised that an insurance policy set up for the new sports hall would consider health and safety risks. Members expressed an interest in a site visit to the sports hall.

In response to queries on the use of Orchards Academy sports hall, Members were advised that it would be used for sports such as roller hockey and netball taking place in the evenings and weekends. The school would be managing the use of the hall itself and may need to consider a community use agreement, which had not been discussed at this stage. It was advised that an agreement will be drawn up between SDC and Orchards Academy regarding the improvements, to give confidence in the future use of the facility.

Members questioned if the new leisure centre would meet the needs of older people and the 4 to 11 year old age group. The Chief Officer People & Places advised that the new operator wanted to engage and support the local community at the centre and beyond it, appealing to all ages and those harder to engage, hence the offer of activities such as Tag Active, the support for GP referrals and Shapemaster (supporting those recovering from illness and those who would need extra help to become fitter). In response to concerns over accessibility for those with a lower income, the Community Projects & Funding Officer advised that there would be concessionary memberships including junior, disabled and senior memberships. Members were advised that the new operator was a large company with experience of how to make an income without charging a high amount for its use. The flexibility of the leisure centre design would allow the operator to optimise the number of people using it.

In response to questions, Members were advised that a logistics plan had been drawn up to allow for parking provision in the run up to the new car park being completed in May 2022. The new contractor would have responsibility for a schedule of programmed maintenance at the new leisure centre, which the Council would be entitled to review. The Community Projects & Funding Officer advised that the Council would have access to all maintenance information online. Members queried what the lifespan of the new leisure centre was likely to be.

Action 1: That the Community Projects & Funding Officer circulate the predicted lifespan of the new leisure centre to Members

Following environmental concerns expressed by Members, it was pointed out that the new building was being designed to enable the new leisure centre to meet the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'very good' standard as stated in paragraph 14 of the report.

It was noted that c) in the recommendation to Council, as set out in the report, incorrectly referred to paragraph 46 when it should have referred to paragraph 53.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Officer People & Places.

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Resolved: That the following comment on recommendations a) to e) as set out within the report, be passed to Cabinet:

- a) That the security and safeguarding of the Council's investment in the Orchards Academy site, be ensured

The Chairman thanked all the Officers for attending the meeting and their support

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.01 PM

CHAIRMAN