

Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 16 November 2021 at 8:00 pm

Present: *Councillors D. Bragg (Chairman); N. Al-Sanjari; K. Gilder; A. Heap; R. Horskins; D. Smith; A. Swaddle*

Officers present: *K. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk; M. Filmore, Committee Officer E. Whitesmith, Leisure Services Manager*

Also present: *Cllr K. Baker; M. Doyle; M. Green
5 members of the public*

16. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Rowland.

17. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

18. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 AUGUST 2021**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 31 August 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

19. **MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2021**

The Committee Officer confirmed that the agenda incorrectly stated these minutes related to the Strategy and Resources Committee when they actually related to the Leisure Services Committee.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting of 7 October 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

20. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

In response to queries the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that expenditure relating to the Bowling Green was up on the equivalent amount at this stage last year due to price increases and more work taking place earlier in the financial year, and expenditure relating to Allotments was down as there were costs relating to water supply issues and fencing repairs last year.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 18/21.

21. **WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE, SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 19/21.

22. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**

Members noted their frustration at vandalism of the fencing which took place in Malone Park over the weekend of the 23/24 October. It was noted the vandalism had been reported to the Police but the Council had heard nothing further.

Members expressed their thanks to Council staff for organising the Remembrance Day event which took place at the War Memorial in Woodford Park on 11 November. It was noted that a member of the public had expressed a desire for the Union flag to be flown in the park and had offered to purchase the flag on behalf of the Council. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that it was the intention to develop a flag protocol and a request had been made to convene a meeting of the PR and Marketing Committee to discuss the wider requirement for flying a variety of appropriate flags in Woodford Park for certain events.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 20/21.

23. **WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL YOUTH STRATEGY**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented the draft Strategy for Youth Services set out in Report No. LS 21/22.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that Council staff had produced the draft Strategy for Youth Services document set out as Appendix B in Report No. LS 21/22 (pages 24 to 30 in the agenda), which was based on the larger youth strategy document produced independently by ACL Consultancy Solutions Ltd and included in the draft Strategy for Youth Services as Appendix A (pages 31 to 89 in the agenda). The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the draft Strategy for Youth Services was created because the larger document produced by ACL Consultancy Solutions Ltd was less workable due to its size, and the draft Strategy for Youth Services itself needs to contain Council specific sections, such as Governance and Equality, which were not included in the ACL document.

Following a query as to whether the Council had been contacted by any potential service providers the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that he was not aware of any approaches.

Councillor Doyle stated he was disappointed that the document did not mention his proposal to convert vacant space at the Leisure Centre for use as a Youth Centre / Café by utilising the £87k which the Council had received when they sold their interest in the Woodley Airfield Youth and Community Centre.

Councillor Al-Sanjari highlighted concerns that the document lacked evidence and was too vague regarding the monitoring of the Service Level Agreement (SLA). She also noted that the document did not make reference to the £87k, as detailed earlier by Councillor Doyle.

Members noted a concern that the draft strategy proposed an SLA period of 5 years, with the option to extend up to further 3 years, and that this may be too long. It was highlighted that this period was recommended in the ACL document but, as a draft, this is for Leisure Services to consider, prior to being put forward to the Strategy and Resources Committee and, ultimately, Full Council for consideration.

Councillor Smith stated he thought the strategy document was well thought out, clear and concise, although he understood the concern regarding evidence and that having industry led evidence would've been helpful.

Councillor Bragg highlighted that the document had used matrices to break down the various approaches into potential benefits seen by the youth of Woodley. Whilst information from the Berkshire Youth Survey had been taken into account when producing the draft strategy, Councillor Bragg noted that the survey covered a wide variety of

children across Berkshire and may not necessarily reflect the demographic in Woodley. Councillor Al-Sanjari pointed out that the survey had indicated 47% of children wanted a safe place to go.

Following a discussion regarding monitoring and auditing of the SLA, Members noted that the previous service provider provided feedback at every meeting of the Leisure Services Committee which would have also been reported to Full Council. Councillor Al-Sanjari stated she would like monitoring to include the number of young people contacted, the number of referrals, and a breakdown of how the £27k had been spent.

Councillor Heap commented that sticking to the existing £27k budget may be restricting. He noted that, in relation to potential place based services, investment was not included for consideration and it would've been helpful to have costings and revenue estimates for the Youth Hub proposal.

Councillor Heap also highlighted that the document does not identify a specific age group for which services will be targeted. He also felt the Council should undertake a survey of young people in Woodley as soon as possible to find out what they want.

Councillor Doyle again asked the Deputy Town Clerk whether the Council had been approached by other parties to provide this service and the Deputy Town Clerk reiterated that he was not aware of any approaches.

It was noted that, if approved, the document would go to the next meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee and this would be another opportunity for Councillors to consider and discuss the document.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 21/22.

RECOMMENDED:

- ◆ To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee that the draft Strategy for Youth Services 2022-2027 be adopted.

Voting: For: 5 Against: 1 Abstentions: 1

24. **ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT**

Following queries a member of the Allotment Committee attending the meeting confirmed that the Committee discourages the use of bonfires in favour of composting. However it was noted that there can be issues with composting, for example when dealing with diseased tissue, and compost heaps can also cause increased number of rats. Similarly, the Allotment Committee encourage the use of organic pesticides, but sometimes, for example in the case of pernicious weeds, other pesticides may need to be used.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 22/22.
- ◆ To approve the amended Allotment Tenancy Agreement for 2022 onwards.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

25. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to contractual matters, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press were temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw for the following agenda item.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

26. **WOODFORD PARK DESTINATION PLAY AREA**

The Deputy Town Clerk presented Report No LS 23/22. Following a query the Deputy Town Clerk advised that a specific order would be needed if the Council were to introduce and enforce the requirement for dogs to be kept on leads in areas of the park. The Deputy Town Clerk agreed to find out the cost of this order.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the removal of the old play equipment would be undertaken by the Council's Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Team once the new scheme has been approved.

Members agreed that it would be beneficial to have a Project Manager to oversee the project. The Deputy Town Clerk did not have a quote for the provision of a Project Manager at this time but hoped this would be available shortly and would be taken as a separate item to Full Council for approval.

Councillor Baker spoke to advise members that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money may also be available to provide the additional funding needed for this project.

Councillor Bragg proposed, seconded by Councillor Swaddle, and following a vote it was:

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To amend the recommendation being considered to state that the additional £57,117 funding be allocated from either the General Reserve and / or CIL money.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note Report No. LS 23/22.

RECOMMENDED:

- ◆ That Proludic be appointed to deliver the tendered design, including the subsequent revisions / additional items as per the revised costings and footprint.
- ◆ That £57,117 be allocated from either the General Reserve and / or CIL money to deliver the project.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

27. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

28. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

There were no suggestions for items to be publicised.

The meeting closed at 9:37 pm