

Minutes of Community Services

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 17 October 2023, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor R Newmark (Chair)

Councillors:

J Alcock	M Robinson
S Atkinson	L Jameson
S Brunskill	K Barnsley
S Cowman	J Atherton
S Fletcher	L Street
S O'Rourke	M Peplow
G Scott	

In attendance: Director of Community Services, Head of Engineering Services, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services and Senior Accountant

Also in attendance: Councillors K Spencer and R Walsh

369 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the meeting were received from Councillor R Elms.

370 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 August 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. An update provided was provided on minute 197 regarding a Btec course at Edisford which did not start this academic year due to low numbers of students.

371 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

Councillor S O'Rourke declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Edisford Car Park, and Agenda Item 6 – Healthy Weight Contract, in respect of his appointment to Ribble Valley Sports & Recreation (Roefield Leisure Centre) by the Council as an Outside Body.

372 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman welcomed Mr Paul Yates who spoke in respect of agenda item 8 – Community Orchard Project.

373 EDISFORD CAR PARK

The Director of Community Services submitted a report providing Committee with an update on the parking trial at Edisford car park for users of the leisure facilities nearby and seeking approval to make the arrangements permanent.

Committee had agreed to the trial in March 2023 which had been recommended by the working group following a petition in January 2023. The petition requested a

period of free parking for Roefield users. Instead of free parking, a long stay permit had been trialed from April 2023, which allowed all long stay permit holders to use Edisford car park. The year-on-year comparison of long-term permits sold and income from the car park were included in the report, although Members were advised that it was difficult to attribute any increase to the temporary arrangement.

Members were updated in regards to the 3 elements that were considered when granting the trial, which were in relation to on-street parking on Edisford Road, impact on income from the car park, and the level of usage at the facilities. As the parking order on Edisford designated it as a short-term car park, the parking order would need to be amended to allow the permanent use of the long stay permit on the car park, whilst retaining the car park predominantly as short stay.

Members hoped that once the arrangement became permanent this may increase the uptake of the permits. Concerns were also raised regarding coaches parking on the road outside the leisure facilities, and Officers would raise this directly with the coach company to reiterate that they were able to wait in Edisford Car Park.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the use of the long-term permit for parking on Edisford Car Park on a permanent basis.
2. Authorise the Director of Community Services to take the appropriate steps to amend the Ribble Valley Car Park Order to reflect this.

374

HEALTHY WEIGHT CONTRACT

The Director of Community Services submitted a report seeking Committees approval to enter into a collaboration agreement with Lancashire County Council (LCC) to deliver the Healthy Weight and Play and Skills at Teatime (PASTA) programme.

The Council had for several years delivered a healthy weight programme on behalf of LCC. In 2021 LCC had also entered into an agreement with Roefield Leisure to deliver the Play and Skills at Teatime Activities (PASTA) programme in the Ribble Valley. The programme involved families with children in receipt of free school meals being offered activities alongside sessions to prepare healthy meal options.

LCC were now seeking to deliver these programmes directly through District Councils by way of a collaboration agreement for both services, a copy of which was included in the report along with the indicative finance allocations. It was understood that the agreements would be for a minimum of five years with the option to extend the agreements by a further three years, commencing on 1 April 2024.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve in principle the Council entering into the collaboration agreement with LCC for the provision of the Healthy Weight and PASTA programme, subject to the agreement of appropriate Collaboration Agreements.
2. Authorise the Director of Community Services to negotiate the relevant terms of the Collaboration Agreement in consultation with the Chair of Community Committee.

CHANGING PLACES PROJECT

The Director of Community Services submitted a report seeking Committees approval for the proposed Changing Places toilets in Ribchester to be removed from the Capital Programme for the year 2023/2024 and be replaced with a future bid to the Levelling Up Fund Round 3 when/if this is announced.

On 14 March 2023 Committee had recommended to Policy and Finance Committee that the Changing Places Scheme be included in the capital programme for the year 2023-24. The scheme comprised the provision of three highly specialised disabled toilets in Ribchester, Edisford Bridge, and the Castle Grounds. The scheme was to be financed by the Levelling Up Fund Round 2, subject to a number of conditions, one of which what that the monies should be spent before the end of March 2024.

The report noted that following investigation into the proposed site at Ribchester, it would be necessary to divert a buried low-voltage electricity cable at an estimated cost of £12,000, which at the earliest would be done within 14 weeks after receipt of up-front payment. The delay would take the scheme beyond the deadline of March 2024.

It was proposed that the Council delivered the Edisford Bridge and Castle Grounds toilets within the 2023-24 financial year, and that Officers make a new submission to any Levelling Up Fund Round 3 funding when/if this was announced, for the toilets at Ribchester.

Officers confirmed at the meeting that other sites in Ribchester had been considered, however alternatives were not feasible. Members felt that the provision of the specialised toilet in Ribchester was important and wanted to pursue other funding should Round 3 not proceed. Members also wanted to consider the process when putting schemes forward for grants, to reduce similar issues arising in the future. It was noted that the window for grant applications were often very short, therefore, detailed work was not always possible.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the removal of the Ribchester Changing Places Toilet from the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 submission for delivery in the year 2023-2024.
2. Approve a submission to the Levelling Up Fund Round 3, when/if this is announced, for the monies to deliver a Changing Places Toilet in Ribchester.

COMMUNITY ORCHARD PROJECT

The Director of Community Services submitted a report seeking Committees approval to licence/lease a parcel of council owned land to Ribchester Parish Council, allowing a local group to establish a community orchard.

The Council had received a request from Ribchester Ecology and Flood Group to plant a community orchard on Council land alongside the allotments in Ribchester, as attached to the report. As the group were not a constituted body, it had been indicated that Ribchester Parish Council would be willing to take on responsibility for the licence/lease, therefore allowing the group to establish the orchard. The maintenance responsibilities would also fall to the Parish Council.

Members supported the application, and the suggestion of a licence as opposed to a lease, with a proposed peppercorn rent. Instruction of the valuation office would

therefore not be required. Members also supported a licence term of 5 to 10 years given the time required to establish the orchard, which would also allow the Council to conduct review of a licence at end of the agreed term.

The Director of Community Services noted the absence of a policy to guide the Council in dealing with proposals such as this, and recommended a policy be developed for approval by Committee that the Ribchester and Longridge orchards must comply with. An additional recommendation was agreed by Committee in respect of this.

The Parish Council had raised some confusion on the exact location of the land due to conflicting information however this was clarified after the meeting.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the proposal to licence the land to Ribchester Parish Council to allow a local group to create an orchard, for a period of 5-10 years at a peppercorn rent.
2. Delegate the drawing up of the agreement with Ribchester Parish Council to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Chair of Community Committee.
3. That a policy for future transfers of land for community use be developed for approval by this Committee and that the Ribchester and Longridge Community Orchards must comply fully with this policy.

377

FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report seeking member approval on proposals to increase this Committee's fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2024. The proposals were the first stage in the review of this Committee's budget for the forthcoming 2024/25 financial year.

Policy and Finance Committee had guided Committees to consider a 4% inflationary increase in the level of income raised from fees and charges, and the review aimed to increase the budgeted income for 2024/25 by that amount as a minimum. After applying this percentage increase, proposed charges had generally been rounded up or down to minimise any problems with small change.

Following discussions, the proposed set of fees and charges for implementation from 1 April 2024 were produced for this Committee for members to consider and were set out in Annex 1 to the report. The proposed fees and charges for this Committee would produce on average a 4.89% increase.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Considered and approved the level of fees and charges to be levied for this committee for 2024/25 as outlined in the report with the exception of the adult (age 65 years plus) swim admission charge which was agreed to remain at £3.60.

378

TOGETHER AN ACTIVE FUTURE (TAAF) - GENERAL UPDATE

The Director of Community Services submitted a report providing Committee with a summary update on the Sport England funded TaAF project.

The TaAF project was part of Sport England's National Delivery Pilot programme which had 12 areas across the Country trying different approaches to increase physical activity, appropriate to the issues that were relevant to their residents. The summary for the TaAF project in the Ribbe Valley was included in the report, which included the successes and plans for the latter stage of the project until 2025.

The Active Villages theme was of particular importance to Sport England, as the Ribble Valley provided the perfect test bed for a new approach to getting people active in rural settings. It was hoped this could provide a model for other rural areas.

379

CAPITAL MONITORING 2023/24

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report for information on the progress of this committee's capital programme for the period to the end of September 2023.

£526,956 had been spent or committed which equated to 35.8% of the full year approved capital programme budget for this committee.

Of the twenty-two schemes in the capital programme six schemes were complete, fourteen schemes were currently expected to be completed in-year, and two schemes were unlikely to be completed in-year.

380

REVENUE MONITORING 2023/24

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report for information on the position for the period April to August 2023 on this year's revenue budget for this committee.

The comparison between actual and budgeted expenditure showed an underspend of £753,357 for the first five months of the financial year 2023/24. After allowing for transfers to/from earmarked reserves the underspend was £755,733. The vast majority of the underspend position resulted from the refund of business rates in respect of the Castle Museum and also the delayed pay award settlement. This would be moved to reserves at year end.

The Chairman thanked Officers for their hard work, particularly in respect of the work undertaken in relation to the business rates refund.

381

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report for information giving an update on the Castle Keep, Ribblesdale Pool, Sport England Support Fund Phase 1, Play Areas, Climate Change, and Waste Collection.

Concerns were raised at the meeting regarding the inability to fly a flag on Remembrance Sunday due to the closure of the Castle Keep. Officers confirmed that this was unavoidable, however, other options were being explored including projecting an appropriate image on the castle.

The plan to install solar panels on Council buildings was also raised, and it was asked that integrated panels be considered. Waste was also discussed at length including littering, household waste, and dog fouling.

382 MINUTES OF WORKING GROUPS

There were no minutes of Working Groups.

383 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

384 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There was no exclusion of press and public.

The meeting closed at 8.06 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, 01200 414408 rebecca.tait@ribblevalley.gov.uk.