

Minutes of Community Services

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 24 August 2021, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor R Newmark (Chair)

Councillors:

J Alcock	S O'Rourke
D Birtwhistle	S Rainford
S Brunskill	M Robinson
R Elms	J Schumann
G Mirfin	

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

Also in attendance: Councillors T Austin, D Berryman, K Fletcher, S Fletcher, G Hibbert, J Hill and R Sherras

196 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the meeting were received from Councillors S Atkinson, S Carefoot, A Humphreys and G Scott.

197 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

198 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor G Mirfin declared that he is a Lancashire County Councillor. Councillors S O'Rourke, J Schumann and M Robinson declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Lighting of the Castle and Councillor S Rainford declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 – Grants.

199 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

200 LIGHTING OF CLITHEROE CASTLE

The Director of Community Services submitted a report asking committee to determine a response to the numerous requests received for the lights at the Castle to be coloured to commemorate/celebrate events or causes.

Committee were informed that at present, the decision to agree or not to requests are made by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) based on the following criteria, at least one of which the request would meet:

- The request must come from a public body
- No political affiliation
- It should be a commemorative anniversary
- It is a national campaign involving other public buildings

Committee were also reminded that the Council project a poppy for Remembrance and festive images at Christmas time.

Council staff are used to attach colour sheets to the lights to enable the Castle to be lit in anything different to white light, and these costs are absorbed by the Council.

Committee were given three options to consider, including maintaining the current arrangements, limiting the lighting of the Castle to just national events of significance directed by the Government plus the Remembrance poppy and Christmas images or allowing any individual or group for a fee to ask for the lighting to be changed to celebrate/commemorate a date or cause.

Committee considered the options and agreed that the current system works well.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Agree to continue with the current arrangement whereby CMT decide on the request based on the criteria that have worked well to date.

201

FOOD FESTIVAL

The Director of Community Services submitted a report updating committee on the Food Festival event and seeking approval in principle for the 2022 event.

The event had been unable to be staged in either 2020 or 2021 due to the impact of Covid.

Committee were informed that the planning of the event takes many months and is undertaken by council officers. Council staff also work on the day of the Festival in various roles. The Festival itself contributes to the promotion of the area as a tourist destination and in an economic development role, although there was only anecdotal evidence to support the economic and tourism impact of the event on the town.

Issues surrounding sponsorship of the event, free access to the event, using council staff or an event company, the number of event days, food demonstrations and tasting sessions and crowd control were outlined to committee for their information.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Grant approval in principle for the 2022 Clitheroe Food Festival event to proceed.

202

USE OF GREEN SPACES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report regarding a small piece of public open space at Woodcrest, Wilpshire where a survey of residents had taken place to ascertain whether a 'No ball games' sign should be removed.

Committee were informed that of the 17 out of 24 residents that had responded to the survey there was a split of 10 for removal and 7 for the sign remaining. Members were, therefore asked for their views.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Agree that the sign be removed and any form of recreation including ball games be allowed on the green space.

HEALTH FUNDING

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing committee of a decision taken by the Corporate Management Team to undertake a three-year project for improving the health of workers in local businesses.

Active Lancashire are leads in facilitating effective partnerships across the county aimed at encouraging residents to engage in sport and physical activity. Funding had been secured through Innovate UK, as part of the Industrial Strategy Fund (ISCF) to help to improve health in the workplace; and also from the European Social Fund (ESIF) for a scheme that aligns with the ISCF one. Potential funding available to Ribble Valley could be £100k and £155k respectively over 3 years.

Committee were informed that for the ISCF project the Borough Council would have to apply and if successful, sign a funding agreement which commits the Council to delivering the outcomes sought by the funder. The ESIF project had a tighter timetable, and as such the Corporate Management Team had taken the decision to enter into an agreement with Active Lancashire as it fit with RVBC policies. The appointment of staff would be subject to a further report to CMT.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Ratify the decision of CMT to proceed with the ESIF project,
2. Agree that the Council apply to enter into agreement with the funding bodies for the ISCF subject to satisfactory legal agreements being reached,
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Community Services to sign the ISCF agreement, and
4. Agree to the Council providing officer time to manage the projects and appoint the necessary temporary staff for delivery.

PLAY AREAS

The Director of Community Services submitted a detailed report providing information about the state and range of equipment in the Council run play areas and asking committee to approve additional S106 funding for new equipment on specific play areas.

The inventory in the report was for the existing 18 play areas under the responsibility of the Council. It was acknowledged that there were many more play areas under the responsibility of Parish Councils, Trusts or on private residential estates where a management company had been appointed by the developers.

The report outlined the descriptions given to different play areas in the terms described by Fields in Trust. It also highlighted issues around play value, risk, obesity in children and the need for public open space.

Committee were informed that the allocated budget for play areas, to include maintenance from normal wear and tear as well as vandalism related repairs/replacements was £40,000pa, so having a plan to renovate one play area per year was not feasible. The Council complies with various pieces of legislation in providing and operating play areas and has an inspection regime in operation.

The Director of Community Services informed members that the Council had received Section 106 monies of £17,940 in respect of Oakmere Homes development on

Chatburn Road, Clitheroe, and that under this agreement could be used for play area improvements. Subject to the approval of Policy & Finance committee to add this to the capital programme it was proposed to use the monies to carry out the installation of new equipment at the Highmoor Park and Highfield Road sites.

Councillor Sherras was given permission to speak on this item and expressed his disappointment that the report only addressed the play areas under the responsibility of the Council and not all play areas in the Borough.

Councillor Berryman was also given permission to speak on this item and asked for clarification on the history of play areas under the responsibility of the Council.

Members discussed the issues surrounding the state of the play equipment and the annual maintenance regime and budget available. They expressed concern at the age of much of the equipment, and that the annual budget available was not adequate to replace equipment on the play areas as necessary. More financial information was required so that the issues could be progressed.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the additional capital bid of £17,940 for use at Highfield Road and Highmoor Park, to be funded from S106 contributions by Oakmere Homes, for the 2021/22 Capital Programme and refer this to Policy and Finance committee for final approval.
2. Ask for a further report to the next meeting with financial information that will form a starting point to take the matter forward.

205

BRUNGERLEY PARK

The Director of Community Services submitted a report asking committee for approval to rectify a significant issue with a main access route through Brungerley Park, Clitheroe.

He informed committee that the steps link between the two main paths through the park were in a poor state of repair with the necessity for it to be closed. The sum to repair the steps would be substantial and require a request to Policy & Finance committee for funding to carry out the works if the steps were not to be permanently closed to the public. An estimate had been received for the repairs to the steps, and it was proposed to add the installation of a handrail as part of the work making a budget request of £25,000. Once approval was obtained, the contract would be awarded in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Committee considered the options available including closing the steps permanently, supporting a capital bid in 2022/23 or requesting the capital funding from Policy & Finance to carry out the work as soon as possible.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the proposed rebuilding of the steps at Brungerley Park, Clitheroe, and
2. Agree to the rebuilding work being carried out in the current financial year and refer the capital budget request for £25,000 to Policy & Finance committee.

RECREATIONAL/CULTURAL/ARTS DEVELOPMENT AND EXCELLENCE GRANTS

The Director of Community Services submitted a report presenting the recommendations of the working group in relation to a second tranche allocation of grants under recreational/culture/arts development and individual arts excellence grants.

The working group had met with officers to consider the applications received and made recommendations. Additional information was awaited from Longridge Hockey Club, so the Director of Community Services suggested delegating their grant award to him in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of committee to consider in due course.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Endorse the recommendations of the working group as outlined in the appendices attached.
2. Delegate a decision on the grant to Longridge Hockey Club to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of committee once further information has been received.

UPDATE ON PARKING ISSUES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report regarding the upgrading of the remaining 'cash-only' pay and display parking machines to accept cashless payments and to consider LCC relinquishing the park and ride section of the Chester Avenue car park.

Committee were reminded that 7 of the 22 parking machines had been upgraded to take cashless payments in December 2018 and a significant increase in the usage of card payments had taken place since then.

The report outlined the costs associated with upgrading the remainder of the machines including back-office management software and card processing fees.

With regards to the park and ride spaces used by train users on Chester Avenue car park, committee were informed that although they had always been covered by the Council's Car Park Order they had never been policed by either this Council or LCC as the LCC free system did not require any ticket to be displayed. This had resulted in the spaces being used by residents and traders who weren't travelling by rail, but were taking advantage of free parking spaces. The LCC were in the process of relinquishing both the ticket office and the spaces back to the Council to manage and discussions were taking place to find a suitable solution.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Ask officers to submit a capital bid for the upgrading of the existing cash machines together with the replacement of the machine not suitable for the upgrade with IPS machines, and
2. Support officers in finding a solution to the Park and Ride spaces on Chester Avenue, Clitheroe that is able to be enforced.

208 REVENUE OUTTURN 2020/21

The Director of Resources submitted a report for information on the outturn for the financial year 2020/21 in respect of the revenue budget for this committee.

There had been a considerable number of variations in both income and expenditure during the year, and this had given rise to an overall overspend of £2,550 on the net cost of services. After transfers to and from earmarked reserves there was an overall overspend of £65,620. The most concerning area of overspend in 2020/21 was in relation to refuse collection vehicle repairs and maintenance. This would continue to be monitored in the 2021/22 financial year.

209 REVENUE MONITORING 2021/22

The Director of Resources submitted a report for information on the position on the revenue budget for the period April to July 2021.

The report gave a comparison between actual expenditure and the original estimate by cost centre and highlighted the main variations.

210 CAPITAL MONITORING 2021/22

The Director of Resources submitted a report for information on the progress of the 2021/22 capital programme for this committee for the period to the end of July 2021.

A total of £354,385 had been spent or committed which equated to 20.3% of the annual capital programme budget for this committee. Of the ten schemes in the capital programme at the end of July 2021, one scheme had been completed, eight schemes were currently expected to be completed in-year and it was unclear whether expenditure would take place in-year on one scheme.

211 GENERAL REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report for information on a number of issues relating to parking and climate change.

212 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Tony Austin submitted a report for information as the Council's representative on the Waste Partnership meeting.

213 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Olwen Heap 01200 414408 olwen.heap@ribblevalley.gov.uk.