

MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 15 JULY 2019 AT 11.30AM

- PRESENT: Councillors Apel, Dignum, K Hughes and Scicluna
- EX OFFICIO: The Mayor (Councillor Plowman)
Deputy Mayor (Councillor J Hughes)
- ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Bowden, Gaskin and Harry
- IN ATTENDANCE: Deputy Town Clerk, Property Manager and Member Services
Support Officer

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that Councillor Scicluna be elected Chairman of the Property Sub-Committee for the remainder of the Council Year. There were no other nominations.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee held on 1 April 2019, having been printed and circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Property Manager's report had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda in connection with the Agenda items.

3 COUNCIL HOUSE

(a) Roof Lantern

The Property Manager reported that Listed Building Consent for the replacement of the existing lantern is still unresolved. The main issue being raised by Chichester District Council is with the spacing of the double glazed panels of the submitted design.

The Property Manager explained that the design allowed for more thermally efficient spacing with panels a total of 24mm thick while Chichester District Council was insisting on panels of a maximum thickness of 16mm which would not allow the design to realise its full potential for energy saving.

An updated quote for the intended work from Medina Joinery had also been received showing an increase from £7,200 to £7444.12 plus VAT. This was as a result of minor design changes requested by the Planning Officer.

After some discussion it was RESOLVED that, as the City Council had declared a climate emergency, the Property Manager should go back to the Planning Officer and press the case for the thicker, more energy efficient panels, reporting back to the next Property Sub-Committee meeting.

(b) Exterior Building Survey

The Property Manager updated Members on the progress on this project of work. Fuller Associates have now prepared a detailed specification and tender document and will very shortly be inviting seven reputable contractors to tender for the project. The contractors that have been invited to tender are: E A Chiverton, Lifetime Construction, Fowler Building Contractors Ltd, Nutbourne Construction, and one other contractor suggested by Fuller Associates.

The Property Manager also advised that Fuller Associates had recommended the creation of a new set of Computer Aided Design (CAD) drawings to aid with the current and future works on the building.

Members discussed the pros and cons of commissioning this kind of work and RESOLVED that the Property Manager should approach Fuller Associates for a quote for the work to produce a full set of CAD files for the Council House. It was further RESOLVED to recommend to Finance Committee that the CAD drawings be commissioned up to a maximum of £5,000.00 to be funded from Council House Reserve.

(c) Minerva Stone – request to copy

The Property Manager informed Members that a Fellow of the Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Warwick has requested access to the Neptune & Minerva stone under the Portico, with the intention of creating a 3D-printed replica of the inscription for research and heritage purposes.

Members discussed the merits of such a project and issues such as location of the final copies, potential for damage to the stone during the project and ownership of the image rights.

The Property Manager advised that no physical contact with the stone would be necessary and the City Council would retain full control over the rights to any images and other items produced during the project.

It was RESOLVED that the Property Manager should reply to the University of Warwick to agree that the project should proceed.

4 ALLOTMENTS

(a) Update

The allotment waiting list currently stood at 63 applicants. There are currently seven tenants on notice to improve their plots or face termination of their tenancy.

(b) Rotovator

The Property Manager reported that, as the Property Team now undertake regular clearance of allotment plots following failed tenancies, they are incurring regular hire charges for a suitable heavy duty rotovator.

The Property Manager advised that he had identified a suitable model for purchase as an addition to the team's equipment which would pay for itself over a relatively short period of time and enable his team to undertake the work on shorter notice. The model identified was the Stiga Silex 103B 60cm, listed for £1000 from Screwfix.

Members RECOMMENDED to the Finance Committee that the specified rotovator should be purchased for the sum of £1000 to be paid for from the Allotment Improvement (Capital) Fund.

5 LITTEN GARDENS

(a) Lighting

The Property Manager updated Members on the progress of this project. Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE) are awaiting confirmation of when the eight decorative lamp columns will be available for delivery, currently estimated as week ending 26th July. Once the lead time is confirmed a date can be agreed for the installation work to commence. The first stage will be to install an electricity feeder pillar just inside the St Pancras gate and then to excavate around the perimeter of the footpath to lay the Low Voltage (LV) cables and to install the lighting columns. The grass will be made good on completion of works.

The Property Manager advised that discussions are ongoing with SSE regarding a feature spot-lighting proposal for the war memorial. A report on the outcome of this discussion will be present at a future meeting Property Sub-Committee meeting.

POST MEETING NOTE: Work to install the lighting columns will commence on 29th July and be completed by 2nd August.

(b) War Memorial

The Property Manager advised that the order to add an additional name to the War Memorial had been placed with Traditional Stone to the value of £343.75.

The Property Manager informed Members that, due to staff illness at the contractor, the work had been delayed and would be completed as soon as possible.

(c) Maurice Patten statue

Vincent Gray had offered to donate the resin sculpture of Private Maurice Patten to the City Council for display in Litten Gardens. The Property Manager had agreed in principle a suitable location and obtained a quote from Traditional Stone Ltd for a Caen stone plinth to the same design as the resin plinth the sculpture is currently mounted upon.

The Chichester Rotary Club has provisionally offered to fund the cost of relocating the sculpture to Litten Gardens. A meeting of all interested parties is being arranged to discuss and agree the way forward, with the aim of having the sculpture in place before Remembrance Sunday.

The Mayor acknowledged that there had been some confusion around the sources of funding for the various parts of the project and that this would soon be clarified.

It was RESOLVED that the Mayor and Town Clerk would clarify the funding sources and way forward and report back to the next Sub-Committee meeting with an update.

POST MEETING NOTE: Rotary have confirmed a £2,000 contribution to the project with Chichester City Council funding the remainder of the cost up to a maximum of £3,500. Wording for the plinth and interpretation board is being agreed between Chichester City Council, Vincent Gray, Royal Sussex Regimental Association and Rotary.

(d) Litter Bins

The Property Manager advised that three new litter bins had been ordered at a total cost of £479.25. The bins are Glasdon Topsy Royale with gold bandings and the City coat of arms. They are very durable and have the same keyless locking system used by Chichester District Council so can be emptied by the CDC waste management team as previously.

Members raised concerns that no provision had been made for the public to recycle appropriate materials. It was advised that Chichester District Council had started to replace recycling bins elsewhere in the City due to the failure of the public to separate out general rubbish which resulted in the contamination of the recycling and additional costs to dispose of the contaminated waste.

(e) Fence and Footpath Alteration

The Property Manager reported to Members that, due to issues with vandalism to the new fencing on the Litten Gardens/New Park boundary, the chainlink had suffered significant damage. This was a particular issue by the section adjacent to the new sculpture where members of the public have been climbing the fence or cutting the chainlink.

The Property Manager proposed returning this part of the fence to an open entranceway on to the footpath inside Litten Gardens. An estimate of £1350 had been obtained to open up the fence at this point and undertake works to make good the surface to make it suitable for pedestrian use.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee that the proposed changes to the fence and access to Litten Gardens be undertaken at an estimated cost of £1350 to be funded from the Public Realm budget.

6 BUS STOPS/SHELTERS

(a) RTI Bus Shelters

Members noted the update from the Property Manager regarding issues with the supply of bus shelters following the demise of the sole supplier, Queensbury Shelters.

The Property Manager advised that he is in contact with Clear Channel to obtain up to date quotes. However, Queensbury Shelters were the principal manufacturer of bus shelters in the UK and were a supplier to Clear Channel. Therefore, there is a supply problem until another manufacturer can be found who can supply suitable shelters to Clear Channel at an acceptable price. The only other UK manufacturer is asking for a 300% increase in supply cost over Queensbury, which is unacceptable. Clear Channel are now in advanced negotiations with a Chinese manufacturer and should have a range of shelters available from October 2019 onwards.

(b) Whyke Road Bus Stop

Residents in the Whyke area had, through Councillor Sharp requested a seat at the bus stop in Whyke Road on the southbound carriageway just past the junction with Willowbed Drive. The Property Manager had obtained a quote for a 1.8m Forest-saver Surrey recycled plastic seat to be installed on a tarmac pad at a cost of £1,215.00.

The Deputy Mayor commented that it was felt that East Ward was overlooked for additional facilities such as benches. The Chairman suggested that the Deputy Mayor

should submit proposals for consideration to the Property Manager which could then be brought to future Property Sub-Committees for discussion.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee that an order be placed to install the additional bench in Whyke Road at a cost of £1,215.00 to be funded from the West Sussex County Council Benches Fund.

(c) Lavant Road (southbound) – near The Avenue

The Property Manager reported that residents are again requesting a shelter at this bus stop to protect the previously installed seat. The mainly elderly people using this bus stop would like a proper shelter as they often could not sit on the seat as it is wet. The residents have submitted a petition for a bus shelter, with over fifty names which the Property Manager has passed on to West Sussex County Council with a request that they consider funding a shelter from Section 106 money from the Roussillon Park development. Following a meeting with the Area Highway Manager, the Property Manager confirmed that there is sufficient space and suitable visibility should a cantilever shelter be installed above the existing seat. The estimated cost will be in the region of £7,000 and the Property Manager has requested a supply and installation quotation from Clear Channel. A report will be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee once the supply issues with the shelters have been resolved.

Members queried the source of financing for new bus shelters. The Deputy Town Clerk clarified that funding was from West Sussex Council section 106 funds and not from City Council budgets.

The Property Manager advised that the previous City Council administration had agreed to proceed with the bus shelters at Roussillon Park, Wellington Grange and Broyle Road using West Sussex County Council section 106 funds. On completion, subject to the supply issues, negotiations would take place with Chichester District Council about transferring these shelters to the existing Clearchannel maintenance contract. Members were informed that, at this time, the City Council is not proposing to install any further bus shelters.

7 PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

(a) City Boundary Signs

The new boundary signs incorporating a speed safety message has been installed in Whyke Road, as requested by Councillor Sharp and Whyke residents. The cost of this improvement was £258.58 which has been paid for by the Sussex Rail Partnership. The sign that has been removed will be installed by the Partnership at Chichester Railway Station.

POST MEETING NOTE: The new Parish Boundary sign has been completely demolished by a vehicle exiting the roundabout at significant velocity. Efforts are being made to trace the driver to make a claim for costs but, in the meantime, a replacement will be ordered.

(b) Wayfinding (finger posts)

This project is being led by Colin Hicks, Chairman of the Business Improvement District (BID) through the Chichester Vision Look and Feel Group. A detailed proposal will be finalised in due course and the relevant points presented to the Sub-Committee as appropriate.

(c) Cycle Racks

The new stainless-steel cycle racks have been installed and are in constant use.

The Property Manager reported that there has been a deliberate and targeted campaign of vandalism, perhaps as a misguided protest at what some see as an unnecessary expenditure. However, many positive comments have been received from the public about the improved appearance. It was noted that if the campaign of vandalism continues, any damaged racks would be removed and won't be replaced. Members agreed that the new racks were a huge improvement visually and also due to the low maintenance they require. Members also agreed it would be disappointing if the actions of a few individuals were to affect all of Chichester's cycling community.

Councillor Apel left the meeting.

(d) Ward Boards

The Property Manager presented a visual report, previously circulated with the agenda.

The Property Manager advised that the four existing ward boards are now in very poor condition, with misted polycarbonate glazing and corroded header panels. It was also noted that, with the creation of a fifth ward, a new board should be put in place in the South Ward.

The Property Manager proposed, and Members agreed, that the ideal location would be the Whyke estate shopping parade in Hay Road.

A quote has been obtained from Earth Anchors Ltd, also circulated with the agenda, in the sum of £4,228.00, for five similar sized ward boards. The replacement boards would be covered by a five year guarantee and feature gas lift doors for easier access and a header board displaying the coat of arms and CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL.

Members also discussed additional locations be sought, especially in light of the new housing developments in Graylingwell and the forthcoming White House Farm estate.

The Property Manager suggested that ward Councillors consult with their local Residents Associations for further suggestions for potential Ward Board locations. With possible locations being fed back to the Property Manager.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee that an order be placed with Earth Anchors for the initial five new ward boards in the sum of £4,228.00 to be paid from the Public Realm budget.

8 ST JAMES OBELISK

The Property Manager reported that Traditional Stone Restoration had been instructed to undertake a low pressure, high temperature clean (DOFF) of the obelisk, followed by minor mortar repairs at a cost of £437.00.

In common with the delay to the War Memorial work previously noted, a commencement date is awaited for work on the obelisk.

Concerns were raised that the wording on the obelisk would be lost during the cleaning process. Members asked the Property Manager to check for the existence of a record of

the wording and, failing that, to ensure that a proper record was made prior to the work starting.

9 STREET SIGNS

Roussillon Park

A proposal has been received to install interpretation plaques beneath the street name signs that relate to Victoria Cross recipients, giving some historical context. The Property Manager has been liaising with the proposer and obtained a quote from GB Sign Solutions. New die-pressed aluminium signs with City coat of arms on recycled plastic back board for the initial set of nominated roads (Carter Road, Johnson Mews, McNair Way and Qeripel Mews) were costed at £1,507.50

The Chichester Community Development Trust had been approached for funding but, whilst supportive of the idea in principal, they cannot contribute to the cost. If this proposal were to go ahead it will need to be fully funded by Chichester City Council as a Public Realm project.

Members discussed the importance of remembering those decorated for valour from the Chichester area and that the City Council could play a vital role in making sure that happened.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee that an order be placed with GB Sign Solutions for the modified signs in the sum of £1507.50 to be paid from the Public Realm budget.

10 STREET FURNITURE

(a) Cast Iron Bins/Flowerpots

The Property Manager reported that the cast iron flowerpots in North and East Streets had been removed on safety grounds. Due to their age the joint between the base and the fixing post was corroded and had become unstable. Given the significant weight, this would cause serious injury if it fell over and struck a pedestrian. The flowerpots are in storage and will be available for sale, proceeds to go to the Mayor's charity. Offers invited.

Members agreed that this was the correct course of action and several statements of interest were made for the purchase of the flowerpots.

(b) Seat Outside the Library in Tower Street and Woolstaplers

The wooden seat outside the library is in a poor state of repair and needed replacing, as does the one in Woolstaplers near the junction with Chapel Street. These seats are not City Council owned. The Property Manager reported that enquiries made with Chichester District Council and West Sussex County Council had failed to identify the owner. Therefore, the City Council will use the General Power of Competence to replace these seats at a cost of £615.00 each.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee to place an order for two replacement benches at a cost of £615.00 each to be funded from the West Sussex County Council Benches Fund.

POST MEETING NOTE: The Town Clerk advises that it is not appropriate to use the General Power of Competence for this work as a provision to provide seats adjacent to a road exists under the Parish Councils Act 1957.

11 ST MARTINS GARDEN

An order to the value of £2,642.00 had been placed with Traditional Stone Restoration Ltd for the repairs to the brick and flint wall which has been seriously damaged by plant roots and a self-seeded holly bush growing into the top of the wall. The work commenced on 8th July and is scheduled to be completed by the end of week ending 19th July, weather permitting.

12 MAINTENANCE TEAM UPDATE

(a) New Property Maintenance Officer – Peter Carter

The Property Manager reported that Peter Carter had now started in post and had settled in quickly, proving himself to be an enthusiastic and capable worker. The Property Manager noted that Peter's skill set in maintenance and roofing would complement his colleague Stephen Holman's background in horticulture and grounds maintenance.

Members commented on what a good job the Property Maintenance team were doing in maintaining the look of the City and caring for the City Council's public assets.

(b) Maintenance Compound (St James Road)

As the Property Maintenance Team has grown in size and area of responsibility, additional valuable equipment has been purchased to assist with the work being undertaken.

The Property Manager recommends that a secure fence is placed around the container and compound area at St James Road allotment site, to replace the temporary Heras fencing compound and increase the security of the site.

Three quotes have been obtained for 8' high anti-climb fencing and matching double gates on a supply only basis:

Knight Fencing	£3,250.63
IGS Fencing	£3,372.18
Safe Fence	£3,161.45

It is intended that the new fencing be erected by the Property Team as it falls within their skill set and would save money.

The Property Manager recommended accepting the quote from Safe Fence at the cost of £3,161.45, which would be funded as capital expenditure from the Allotment Improvement Fund.

The Deputy Mayor asked whether this would mean that the City Council van would be parked at the compound from now on. The Property Manager thought that this would be possible subject to insurance and convenience.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee that an order for the supply of the fencing be placed with Safe Fence to the value of £3,161.45 to be funded from the Allotment Improvement Fund.

(c) Mobile Phones

Due to the out of office nature of the Property Manager's and Property Maintenance Officer's roles it is felt appropriate to provide all three with a mobile phone with a modest data allowance for email. There is a strong health and safety consideration as all three members of staff are regularly in a lone working situation. The cost for this financial year can be met by the Health & Safety budget. There will be an initial outlay of approximately £250 for suitable handsets and then around £30 per month to cover calls and data usage.

Members discussed this and thought that, in the spirit of the Green agenda, it may be possible to source secondhand phones for the purpose.

The Member Services Support Officer highlighted the fact that the nature of the work meant that a standard phone is not generally suitable due to the dust and potential for rough treatment. It was noted that a special "Tuff" phone would cost approximately £100 per handset whereas a second hand phone would cost a similar amount but would need replacing more regularly.

However, the Property Manager has indicated he is happy to use one of his old handsets for the purpose.

It is expected that the monthly line rental costs for three SIM card deals would be of the order of £33 in total.

It was RECOMMENDED to Finance Committee to go ahead with the purchase of two "Tuff" phones for the Property Maintenance Officers at a cost of approximately £200-250 and three SIM only plans with a total monthly cost of £33.

13 ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- (a) Pavement and precinct repair/replacement in the City Centre
- (b) Roof Lantern
- (c) Exterior Building Survey
- (d) Neptune and Minerva Stone
- (e) Allotments
- (f) Litten Gardens updates
- (g) Maurice Patten Statue
- (h) Bus shelters
- (i) Ward boards

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING
To be confirmed

The meeting closed at 1.00pm