



Chichester City Council

PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes

Date 14 May 2024
Time 10.00am to 11.01am
Location The Council Chamber, The Council House, North Street, Chichester. PO19 1LQ
PRESENT: Councillors Miall (Chairman), Butler, C Gershater, McHale and Quail
ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Council Services and Support Manager, Property Maintenance Manager (PMM)

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence from Councillor Scicluna.

Councillor Squire was absent.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING

Councillor Miall declared an interest as City Council allotment holders.

54. MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 APRIL 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 April 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

55. UPDATES ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a) Completed projects

Members noted the projects listed as completed on the Property Maintenance Manager's (PMM) report.

b) Updates

The Council House

i) *Assembly Room – Lighting System*

Members were advised that the upgraded lighting system had been installed and commissioned and that final tweaks and programming would be completed by Friday 17 May 2024.

They were also advised that the planned led strip lighting for the picture rail in the Assembly Room had not been installed as the supplied system was too bulky and not fit for purpose.

ii) *Assembly Room – sash windows*

Members noted that the refurbishment and repainting of the sash windows had been completed in preparation for the installation of the secondary glazing.

iii) *Solar Power array and battery storage* – Members noted the update.

iv) *Old Courtroom Replacement Roof Light* – the PMM advised that he was still awaiting a quote from Meynell-Hayes Architects for the drawings needed for the Listed Building application and that he would chase this up before the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

v) *Damp issues* – Members noted the update.

vi) *South stairwell – first floor cupboard* – the PMM reported that the water ingress issue had been resolved and the cupboard was drying out very well. He advised that, once it was dry, the cupboard would be replastered and the pipework boxing reinstated.

vii) *Hanging baskets* – Members noted the update.

viii) *Rear yard gate replacement* – Members noted the update.

viii) *Roof space insulation* – Members were informed that, due to lack of onsite storage, the materials for this project would be ordered immediately prior to work commencing and that this would happen once Property Team resources allowed.

ix) *Lift* – Members noted that the lift floor carpet had been replaced with heavy duty vinyl flooring. They were advised that, following a recent service of the lift, replacement lights and lift emergency phone batteries were also on order.

Litten Gardens

i) *Correction of misspelt name on Memorial* – the PMM advised that work had commenced on the correction and that the whole tablet would be cleaned once the lettering had been reinstated to help the new stone match in with the existing stone.

Public Realm

i) *Cathedral Beds* – Members noted the update. In response to a question about the former tree sites adjacent to the flowerbeds, and following a discussion about the effect on the attractiveness of the area and concerns about pedestrian safety; it was AGREED that the Property Team would remove the remaining tree stumps and concrete over the squares.

It was further AGREED that there would be an additional discussion regarding the squares and whether the City Council should arrange for further improvements in the future.

- ii) *Brewery Field* – Members noted the update.

The PMM reported that, further to one of the newly planted trees being poisoned, he had written to all the residents of the properties backing on to the field informing them of the incident and advising them that any future incidents of sabotage on Brewery Field would be taken very seriously.

He further reported that one of the residents had responded with concerns highlighting the overgrown *Leylandii* hedging on the field which was overshadowing neighbouring gardens. AGREED that the Property Team would review the hedging and discuss ways forward with the local Tree Warden.

It was also noted that rough sleepers were still camping on the field and that Chichester District Council's Homeless Outreach Team were aware and engaging with them.

- iii) *Cycle racks* – Members noted the update.

- iv) *Benches* – Members noted the update.

- v) *Stonepillow* - Members noted the update.

Allotments

- i) *Blackberry Lane – Vehicle Access Issues* – Members noted the update. AGREED that the PMM should pass on the request for parking restrictions to West Sussex County Councillor Donna Johnson, who was standing in for Councillor Sharp, for a decision on whether to support an approach by the allotment tenants for action from the County Council.

- ii) *Retesting of plots previously designated as contaminated* – the PMM advised that the soil retesting on the plots had now been completed and that 16 out of the 17 plots that had been retested still showed significant levels of contamination, with the remaining plot needing additional tests.

He raised concerns that the tenants who had installed raised beds on these plots may not have built them to a sufficient standard to be safe and that the City Council may have to rebuild the raised beds to an acceptable standard at a financial cost to the Council.

The Sub-Committee asked the PMM to prepare costings for bringing all 17 plots up to a safe standard through installing raised beds and to bring the report to a future meeting.

Market Cross

- i) *Replacement of stolen pennants* – Members noted that the work had not yet been completed by the sign writer.

c) **No updates**

- i) *The Council House* - Members noted the update in the PMM's report. The PMM also advised that the refurbishment of the Mayor's Parlour facilities had been delayed due to insufficient resource being available in the Property Team.

- ii) *Litten Gardens* – Members noted the update and were advised that the tendering process for the replacement paths would also consider alternative surfaces in any proposed solutions.

- iii) *Public Realm* – Members noted the update. The Council Services and Support Manager reported that no response had been received from the supplier of the RTPI displays and that he would be chasing them for an update after the meeting.

56. **ADDITIONAL UPDATES**

a) **Litten Gardens**

Members noted the updates.

The PMM and Council Services and Support Manager updated the Sub-Committee on what had happened to the individuals caught in two previous vandalism incidents.

Members were advised that the school pupil involved in the graffiti incident was no longer at the school they had previously attended but that a note had been included on their pupil record.

It was also reported that the individual who had pleaded guilty to vandalising the chainsaw sculpture had been ordered to pay £200 in compensation towards the costs of the repair.

57. **NEW PROJECTS AND PROPOSALS**

a) **St Pauls Allotments – replacement of fence**

Members noted the report and that the PMM was awaiting additional quotes for the replacement of the fencing on the west side of the site.

The Sub-Committee asked that the PMM report back to the next meeting with the additional quotes and a recommendation, as well as indicative costs of the additional fencing and the District Council's contribution to the repair of fencing damaged by one of their trees.

b) **Signs for fascia of the Council House**

Members were advised that this was being deferred to the planned Foyer Working Group.

c) **Administration**

The PMM summarised the information in his report and outlined the capabilities of the "Safety Culture" inspection software that he had put in place.

He also advised that he would be adding additional functionality to the system to allow closer, more regular monitoring of the City Council's statutory duties regarding its property and also better incident communication between members of staff.

Members were informed that Officers were in the process of implementing the "Hallmaster" room and resource booking system for the management of room bookings, hirers and invoicing. Members were further informed that this would be an online system that would have an online calendar and allow members of the public to provisionally reserve spaces.

As part of the project, the Sub-Committee were advised that the relevant terms and conditions of hire were being significantly updated and tightened and that it was hoped that the new system would go fully live on 1 July 2024.

d) **Vehicle replacement**

The PMM summarised his report.

AGREED that the PMM should bring a report to a future meeting outlining the options and costs for replacing the older diesel vehicle and whether or not to retain the smaller electric van.

e) **Market Cross**

Members noted the PMM's report and the additional inspections that needed to be commissioned at the Market Cross.

f) **Fire alarm system risks**

The PMM summarised his report and reminded Members about the discussion that had taken place at the previous meeting of the Sub-Committee.

Members were advised that there were no immediate problems regarding catering facilities and the currently booked weddings.

The Sub-Committee discussed the issues and AGREED that the PMM should bring a formal proposal for changes to the catering facilities at the Council House, including costs, to a future meeting.

The Chairman suggested that research be undertaken to gauge whether improved catering facilities at the Council House would result in an uplift in bookings or generate interest from a broader pool of possible hirers.

58. **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

Members noted the update given in the PMM's report.

The Sub-Committee was advised that the City Council had been approached by Sanctuary Chichester regarding the possibility of providing an allotment plot for their refugees they to work on.

AGREED that a plot that was currently available on the Florence Road site be offered with a condition that no more than ten people could be on site at any one time.

59. **ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Crush Bar kitchen facilities proposals and costings for interim works
- Council House catering facilities – broader review of catering provision – to include the Crush Bar and the Old Court Room kitchen
- Old Courtroom Replacement Roof Light architect costings
- Allotments - upgrade of tenant's raised beds on contaminated plots and costs for installing raised beds on the remaining contaminated plots.
- Allotments – fencing at St Pauls

60. **DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 11.01am

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Minute ref.	Agreed action	Assigned for action to
55b Council House (iv)	Chase up costs for architect drawings for the Old Courtroom skylight replacement project	Property Maintenance Manager
55b Public Realm (i)	Grind out tree stumps and lay concrete to the disused tree squares adjacent to the Cathedral beds	Property Maintenance Manager
55b Public Realm (ii)	Liaise with Tree Wardens regarding the options for the overgrown Leylandii hedge at Brewery Field	Property Maintenance Manager
55b Allotments (i)	Contact West Sussex County Councillor Donna Johnson regarding request for parking restrictions in Blackberry Lane	Property Maintenance Manager
55b Allotments (ii)	Assess currently installed raised beds on contaminated plots	Property Maintenance Manager
55b Allotments (ii)	Obtain costs for installing raised beds on the remaining contaminated plots at the Blackberry Lane and Florence Road allotment sites	Property Maintenance Manager
55c(iii)	Chase up RTPi display supplier for an installation date at the Bognor Road and Swanfield Drive bus shelters	Council Services and Support Manager
57a	Report back on costs of replacing fence on west side of St Pauls allotments site and costs for additional damaged fencing on the east side of the site	Property Maintenance Manager
57d	Provide options and costs for replacement and/or disposal of current City Council vehicles	Property Maintenance Manager
57f	Provide proposals for changes to the catering facilities at the Council House	Property Maintenance Manager
58	Contact Sanctuary Chichester to offer an allotment plot at Florence Road	Town Clerk