



Chichester City Council

## PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

### Minutes

**Date** 11 July 2024

**Time** 10.30am to 12.27pm

**Location** The Council Chamber, The Council House, North Street, Chichester. PO19 1LQ

**PRESENT:** Councillors Butler, Miall, Quail and Scicluna

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk, Council Services and Support Manager, Property Maintenance Manager (PMM)

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR 2024-2025**

Councillor Miall proposed, Councillor Butler seconded and it was RESOLVED that Councillor Scicluna be elected Chair of the Property Sub-Committee for 2024-2025.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Noted apologies were received from Councillor Loxton.

Councillor Apel was absent.

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

No declarations were made.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 14 May 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

5. **SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Sub-Committee was given an update on Councillors who had asked to be on the Sub-Committee.

As only one additional Councillor had requested to be on the Sub-Committee, Members were advised that the agenda item regarding changing the Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference would no longer be required as the total membership was within the limits set in that document.

RESOLVED to co-opt Councillor Quail on to the Property Sub-Committee.

## 6. 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.

The PMM advised the Sub-Committee that allotment tenants had been informed about the test results on the plots designated as contaminated. He further advised that the allotment tenants had installed raised beds themselves to a satisfactory standard and that the membranes under the raised beds had been replaced/upgraded as necessary.

Members were informed that tenants on the Florence Road site had been advised not to eat the fruit produced by the trees that had been planted on the contaminated land and that the south section adjacent to the footpath would be left fallow while consideration was given to alternative uses for this land.

### b) Updates

#### The Council House

#### i) *Secondary glazing*

Members were informed that Listed Building Consent for the secondary glazing had been granted.

The PMM advised that a program to refurbish the windows prior to secondary glazing installation was well under way and that the installation would be completed in three phases, starting with the Assembly Room and finishing in 2025 with the Council Chamber as part of the wider project to refurbish that room.

#### ii) *Solar Power array and battery storage*

Members were informed that Listed Building Consent had now been received for the solar array upgrades.

The PMM reported that the original plans had been reconfigured to make best use of the roof space available and to allow the second array to be incorporated with the new system to maximise the output.

He also reported that the new array would be fully registered and would qualify for a Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) to allow for payment for energy produced beyond that needed for the Council House.

**ACTION:** AGREED that a summary of costs and income relating to the solar arrays be taken to the Finance Committee for Members' awareness.

#### iii) *Old Courtroom Replacement Roof Light*

The PMM explained the background to the project and the reasons for the need to commission architects to produce drawings and plans in support of the Listed Building Consent application.

**RESOLVED** to commission Meynell-Hayes Architects to produce the necessary designs at a cost of £3,250 (no VAT), for submission with the planning application.

iv) *Damp issues*

Members were advised that this was an ongoing issue in the Town Clerk's office and that investigations were continuing.

v) *Rear yard gate replacement*

Members were informed that Listed Building Consent for the replacement of the rear gate had been granted and that the new, correctly specified, gate was on order and would be installed shortly.

vi) *Roof space insulation*

Members noted that there was no further update on this matter and were advised that this had been delayed due to the need to undertake the window refurbishments.

vii) *Mayor's Parlour/Bathroom/Kitchen*

The Mayor confirmed she was happy for work to be completed in stages and Members were advised that it was hoped that the work would be completed by the end of August 2024.

viii) *Roof safety barriers and restraint eyes*

The PMM confirmed that testing of these safety features would be taking place on 25 July 2024.

He advised Members that this would be happening annually as part of the maintenance regime for the Council House.

ix) *Lift*

Members noted the update and the brief verbal summary given by the PMM.

Litten Gardens

i) *Black metalwork*

Members noted the report and the PMM advised that he had written to Seaford College to thank the students for their hard work.

Public Realm

i) *Brewery Field*

A) Signage/noticeboard

Members noted the report and were advised that the installation would take place once the new gate had arrived.

B) Planning permissions for tree works

Members noted the report. The PMM advised that work would proceed once permission had been granted by Chichester District Council's Tree Officer.

C) Flytipping by neighbouring resident

Members noted the report.

D) Transition Chichester event

Members noted the report and also the community event that would be taking place, arranged by Transition Chichester in conjunction with Westgate Residents Association.

iii) *Cycle racks*

Members noted the report. They were also advised that, since the report had been written, further vandalised racks had been identified.

The PMM informed Members that when the racks were reinstated they would be root fixed in to the ground rather than surface mounted.

iv) *Benches*

Members noted the update.

Allotments

i) *Blackberry Lane – Vehicle Access Issues*

Members noted the update and RESOLVED to close the request and inform allotment holders.

Market Cross

i) *Replacement of stolen pennants*

Members were informed that the replacement pennants were due back from the sign writer by 12 July 2024.

**ACTION:** The Town Clerk agreed to contact the City Council's insurers regarding liability and cover in the event of someone falling from the Market Cross after unauthorised scaling of the structure.

c) **No updates**

Members noted the items in the PMM's report marked as no update available.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that, following the adoption of the revised Chichester City Council Financial Regulations, the PMM would need to seek three quotes for the replacement of the Litten Gardens footpaths rather than publishing a full tender as had previously been the case.

Members were informed that the quotes would be sought during August 2024.

The Town Clerk reported that she would be meeting West Sussex County Highways on 1 August 2024 to discuss the matter of the SID posts in Whyke Road as well as the safety concerns for pedestrians in Bognor Road.

**ACTION:** Town Clerk to report back to the next meeting regarding proposed ways forward.

The Council Services and Support Manager updated Members on a meeting he had had with West Sussex County Council regarding the RTPI displays. He advised that a way forward had been agreed and it was hoped that installation would take place shortly.

## 7. **ADDITIONAL UPDATES**

### a) **Florence Park**

Members were informed that the installation licence for the plinths for the cube sculpture seats had been received on 10 July 2024. They were reminded that the project was being funded from S106 monies from the St Bartholomew's development.

### b) **Whyke Oval**

The Town Clerk advised that Chichester District Council had asked for evidence of further consultation with residents in the area before a licence could be granted for the installation of the plinths for the additional benches.

ACTION: Councillor Miall and the Town Clerk to co-ordinate the sending of letters to local residents asking for comments on the proposal.

### c) **Litten Gardens**

Members discussed the PMM's report and also the wider issues around the maintenance of the war memorial and understanding of what it represented.

The PMM advised that he had yet to receive a response from the stonemason for a quote to add the missing name so it was RESOLVED to authorise up to £800 for the work so it could proceed once the quote was accepted.

ACTION: PMM and Town Clerk to submit options for cleaning/refurbishing the names on the recumbent stones around the monument. Further to put forward proposals for the installation of interpretation boards listing the names on the monument for greater accessibility for visitors.

## 8. **NEW PROJECTS AND PROPOSALS**

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

The PMM summarised the information in his report and gave Members recommendations about the companies that had quoted for the work.

After a short discussion, it was RESOLVED to appoint contractor C to undertake the work, subject to satisfactory references being received, with contractor B being appointed if the references were not acceptable.

Further RESOLVED to authorise £270.00 for stump grinding on the west side fence line.

### b) **IT and phone system**

Members noted the project and advised that it would be discussed under agenda item 9.

c) **Vehicle replacement**

The PMM summarised his report and clarified that, because the van requirements needed a bespoke build, it would not be possible to lease a suitable van.

He also advised Members that he had found a possible alternative model for comparison with the Ford model included in the report.

Members were reminded about the problems with the existing van, especially in relation to the works that would be needed to get it through its next MOT in January 2025.

After a short further discussion it was agreed that the PMM should seek further quotes for the replacement van and bring an update to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee with a recommendation from that meeting to go to the Finance Committee.

The PMM informed the Sub-Committee that the Allotments and Maintenance Officer would require additional driver training to upgrade his driving licence due to the weight of the new vehicle being in excess of the 3.5tonne limit on his current licence.

RESOLVED to approve £2,100 for training to upgrade the Allotments and Maintenance Officer's driving licence to class C1 (vehicles between 3.5tonnes and 7.5tonnes).

**Post meeting note:** The Deputy Town Clerk has confirmed that there is currently no vehicle replacement reserve and has suggested that the full purchase price could be met from the City Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocation.

d) **Crush Bar and kitchen upgrades for venue hires**

The PMM summarised the first part of his report and explained the options for the new Crush Bar flooring. He explained that the work would be scheduled to take place during the "quiet" period in August that had been booked out for the lift works.

RESOLVED to place an order with MOR Flooring in the sum of £5,325.23 + VAT for the replacement of the flooring in the Crush Bar area.

AGREED to defer the final decision regarding the colour of the flooring to the PMM.

The PMM then summarised the proposals for fitting out the two public kitchens (Crush Bar and Old Courtroom) and upgrading the installed equipment.

Members discussed the costs and the facilities that were being proposed and also the business case behind the project.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Finance Committee on 4 September 2024 that the project as outlined proceed on the basis of using in house resources for the installation at a total cost of £17,434.38+VAT (including a 10% contingency).

ACTION: Business case supporting the expenditure to be presented to the Finance Committee meeting on 4 September 2024.

e) **CAB Office**

Members noted the update.

The Town Clerk reported that she had received one valuation for the remaining oil painting in the CAB Office and was awaiting further valuations before making a recommendation on its sale.

f) **Market Cross electrical upgrades**

RESOLVED that the necessary works to make the electrical safety upgrades proceed at a cost of £917.65+VAT

9. **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

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

He explained that the waiting list had recently been tidied up and that the figure given was more representative of the actual number of people waiting for a plot.

10. **COUNCIL HOUSE FOYER WORKING GROUP**

The Town Clerk reminded Members about the background to the proposed working group.

Members discussed the proposal and Councillor Miall asked that the wording of the purpose of the group in the Terms of Reference be modified to say "making the Council House more open and welcoming to the community and attractive to hirers".

AGREED that the Terms of Reference, as modified, be adopted.

Further AGREED that members of the working group from the Property Sub-Committee would be Councillors Miall, Quail and Scicluna.

ACTION: Town Clerk to ask for one additional Councillor to volunteer to join the Working Group.

11. **UPGRADING NETWORKS AND WIFI AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE**

The Council Services and Support Manager outlined his proposal and summarised the reasons for the project as well as the benefits that would be realised.

He also summarised the cost and explained the amount being requested.

AGREED to authorise Officers to proceed with the project as outlined at a total cost of no more than £3,000. Any additional sums to be requested from and explained to the Sub-Committee as required.

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

None.

13. **DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

24 September 2024 at 11.30am

14. **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for agenda item 13 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely commercial arrangements with third parties.

## 15. SPECIAL ROOM HIRE RATES AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE

Members discussed the report and the confidential list of organisations that had been circulated with the agenda.

Members were reminded that organisations could also apply for the new Free Use grants through the Community Affairs Committee.

AGREED to the Town Clerk's proposal that an over-arching policy be developed to give clarity to room hirers and Officers about who should qualify for special room hire rates.

ACTION: Town Clerk to circulate a proposed special room rate policy to Sub-Committee members in advance of the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.27pm

### **ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

<b>Minute ref.</b>	<b>Agreed action</b>	<b>Assigned for action to</b>
6b – Market Cross (i)	City Council's insurers to be contacted regarding liability and cover in the event of someone falling from the Market Cross after unauthorised scaling of the structure.	Town Clerk
6c	Update to next Sub-Committee on meeting with West Sussex County Highways regarding Whyke Road SID posts and Bognor Road pedestrian safety concerns.	Town Clerk
7b	Letters to be sent to local residents asking for comments on the proposal for additional benches in Whyke Oval.	Councillor Miall and Town Clerk
7c	Report to next meeting regarding options for cleaning/refurbishing the names on the recumbent stones around the Litten monument. Also, proposals for consideration for the installation of interpretation boards listing the names on the monument for greater accessibility for visitors.	Town Clerk and Property Maintenance Manager.
8c	Further quotes for a replacement van to be obtained and brought to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.	Property Maintenance Manager.
8d	Business case supporting the expenditure on the upgraded kitchen/catering facilities to be submitted to the Finance Committee on 4 September 2024.	Town Clerk and Property Maintenance Manager.
10	Email to be sent asking for an additional Councillor to join the Council House Foyer Working Group.	Town Clerk
15	Special room hire rate policy to be drafted for consideration at the next Property Sub-Committee meeting.	Town Clerk