



Chichester City Council

PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes

Date 24 September 2024
Time 11.30am to 1.20pm
Location The Council Chamber, The Council House, North Street, Chichester. PO19 1LQ
PRESENT: Councillors Butler, Loxton, Miall, Quail and Scicluna
ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Council Services and Support Manager, Property Maintenance Manager (PMM), City Council Project Manager

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Apel was absent.

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

No declarations were made.

18. MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 11 July 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

19. UPDATES ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Town Clerk gave Members an update on the actions that had been identified at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee. These were as follows:

- **Minute 6b** – Members were advised that the City Council’s insurers had confirmed that any accidents resulting from individuals making unauthorised climbs up the Market Cross would not incur liability for the City Council.
- **Minute 6c** – Confirmed that the new SID/SAM brackets had been installed and the new device was active.
- **Minute 7b** – Confirmed that the Whyke residents had been consulted and that the new benches were due to be installed during the week beginning 30 September 2024.
- **Minute 7c** – Members were informed that the report had not been completed and that it would be brought to the next meeting.
- **Minute 8c** – The Sub-Committee was informed that this would be discussed later in the meeting.
- **Minute 8d** - The Sub-Committee was informed that this would be discussed later in the meeting.
- **Minute 10** – The Town Clerk confirmed that the email had been sent and she was awaiting responses.

- **Minute 15** – Councillors were reminded that this had been discussed at the Community Affairs Committee on 2 September 2024 (minute 24 refers) and further confirmed at the Finance Committee on 4 September 2024 (minute 30d refers) with the decision being that the criteria would be in line with the eligibility criteria for the grants and free hire schemes. Further, that the decision on qualifying organisations would be delegated to the Town Clerk and Chair/Vice-Chair of the Community Affairs Committee.

The Property Maintenance Manager (PMM) then summarised the updates and reports that had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting.

a) **Completed projects**

The Council House

i) *Lift*

Members noted that some of the works on the lift had been completed and the lift was now operational.

The PMM advised Members that other essential works had not yet been completed due to lack of availability of parts and difficulties with communications with the contractor.

ii) *Crush Bar flooring*

Members noted that additional works had been required due to the condition of the floor once the old carpet had been removed, but that this project had now been completed.

iii) *Roof barriers and eye restraints*

The PMM summarised the information in his report and explained the proposed works to make the barriers and restraints safe following their failure during a recent inspection.

He also advised that the required annual safety tests had not been taking place but that he was rectifying this situation going forward.

Members were informed that confirmation of the suitability of the proposed solution was being awaited from a structural engineer, after which the necessary work would be commissioned.

iv) *Mayor's car park*

The Sub-Committee noted that the work had been completed and that the old gravel chippings had been reused elsewhere.

Members noted the significant underspend on the project.

v) *CAB Office*

Members noted the updated given in the PMM's report,

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that a London based auction house had expressed no interest in the William Muller painting that had been removed from the office. Members were further advised that Bellman's Fine Art Auctioneers had placed an initial valuation of £1,500 to £2,000 on the work.

AGREED to place the painting with Stride and Sons for auction locally with a reserve price of £1,500.

The Sub-Committee also AGREED that the carpet should be replaced at a cost of £1,300+VAT

Market Cross

- i) Members noted that the electrical upgrades had been completed on budget and that the next inspection would take place in 2026 and regularly after that.
- ii) Noted that the penants had been reinstated.

Gardens

- i) Noted that the plaques had been refurbished in house and reinstated.

The Sub-Committee requested that any additional City Council tree plaques at non-City Council owned sites in Chichester be looked at and refurbished as necessary.

Public Realm

- i) Members noted the update given in the PMM's report.

Allotments

- i) No updates

Other

- i) No updates

b) **Updates**

The Council House

- i) *Secondary glazing*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

- ii) *Solar array*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

The PMM advised that the necessary paperwork needed to register the solar panels for selling electricity back to the National Grid had been received and that he would be doing so shortly.

The Sub-Committee was further advised that the discussion about the PMM's more detailed report on the solar array would be discussed later in the meeting. (minute 25 refers)

- iii) *Old Courtroom Replacement Roof Light*

The PMM reported that he was awaiting contact from the architect regarding the proposals.

iv) *Damp issues in the Town Clerk's office.*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

The PMM advised that the vents did not appear to have had an effect and that the next stage would be to strip the interior walls of the office back and properly treat and line them.

v) *Rear yard gate replacement*

Members noted the update and that the fire exit compliant gates would be installed shortly.

vi) *Roof space insulation*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

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

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

It was noted that, while the works were not due to be completed until early October, the facilities would be operational in time for an informal evening event being hosted by the Mayor on 25 September 2024.

viii) *Wi-Fi public and private*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

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

Members were informed that this would be discussed later in the meeting (minute 24 refers).

x) *Upgrade to Council House networks and WiFi*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

Market Cross

i) No update

Gardens

i) *St Martins*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

ii) *West Street*

Members discussed the update about the location and suitability of the proposed plaque.

In response to concerns expressed about the proposed design of the plaque, the Chairman advised Members that she had seen the most recent version of the design and that she felt this was more suitable.

Public Realm

i) *Cycle racks*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

ii) *Benches*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

iii) *Bus Shelters*

Members were informed that West Sussex County Council Highways had declined to accept applications for the necessary licences to install additional bus shelters at existing stops, north and south bound on Lavant Road due to visibility concerns.

The Council Services and Support Manager reported that the issue had now been passed to the relevant West Sussex County Councillor and that the original enquirer and home owners closest to the proposed locations had been advised.

iv) *Brewery Field*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

v) *Bognor Road and Whyke Road SID/SAMs*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

Allotments

i) *St Pauls*

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

Other

i) *Replacement vehicle (tipper)*

Members were informed that this would be discussed later in the meeting (minute 26 refers).

c) No updates

The Council House

i) *Kitchen upgrades*

Members were informed that this would be discussed later in the meeting (minute 24 refers).

ii) *Council Chamber*

Members noted that this project was expected to commence in Spring 2025.

The PMM informed the Sub-Committee that research about the history of the Chamber that would advise the project had been commenced.

Market Cross

- i) No update

Gardens

- i) *Litten*

- A) **RNA tree** - Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.
- B) **Path surface replacement** - Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.
- C) **CCTV** - Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

Public Realm

- i) No updates

Allotments

- i) No updates

Other

- i) No updates

20. **ADDITIONAL UPDATES**

a) **Florence Park**

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

b) **Whyke Oval**

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

21. **NEW PROJECTS AND PROPOSALS**

a) **Accessibility to CAB office and stairs in the event of lift failure**

The PMM summarised the information given in his report that had been circulated with the agenda as well as the reasons for the proposal.

Members discussed at length the issues surrounding the proposals including costs and the City Council's responsibilities.

Concerns were expressed about how often the equipment would be used.

The Sub-Committee REQUESTED that Officers investigate the availability of grant funding to help offset the accessibility costs.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND to the Finance Committee meeting being held on 6 November 2024 that an order be placed for the accessibility equipment as outlined in the PMM's report. Further that a revised report outlining the business case for the investment be circulated with the agenda for that meeting.

b) **Replacement phone system**

Members noted the update that had been included in the PMM's report.

c) **Repairs to roof barriers**

Noted that this had already been discussed (minute 19(a)iii refers)

d) **Allotment and gardens equipment**

Members noted the contents of the PMM's report.

The Sub-Committee discussed the issues and Members commented on the improvements that had been seen as part of the Brewery Field re-wilding project.

AGREED to place an order in the amount of £1570.00+VAT for a new scythe attachment for the electric mower be placed with Chichester Farm Machinery, paid from the Allotment Reserve.

22. **ALLOTMENTS**

Members noted the updated statistics included with the PMM's report.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the PMM confirmed that new tenants on the waiting list took precedence over existing tenants seeking additional plots.

The PMM outlined changes that had been made to the internal processes with allotment management with the Allotments and Maintenance Officer stepping back from general administration of the allotment tenancies.

23. **ROOM BOOKINGS**

The PMM summarised the statistics that had been included in his report and highlighted the main points.

The Sub-Committee noted the report and commented on the apparent under-utilisation of the Old Court Room. It was AGREED that investigations needed to be undertaken in to how this could be improved.

REQUESTED that a report be produced showing the percentage of free use against the paid use for presentation to the next meeting.

24. **KITCHEN UPGRADES**

The City Council's Project Manager summarised his research on local competitor venues and their facilities.

He advised that there are very few venues in the city that have commercial grade cooking facilities and that this indicated there was a gap in the market.

He also advised that there were very few venues in the city that had the level of facilities needed to properly service the wedding ceremony and reception market.

After a lengthy discussion it was AGREED that the Town Clerk, PMM and City Council Project Manager should produce a full business case for presentation to the Finance Committee alongside a recommendation from the Sub-Committee to proceed with the project.

25. SOLAR POWER INCOME GENERATION

The PMM summarised the draft report, circulated with the agenda, regarding the income earned and projected income from the Council House solar installations.

He explained that, due to our current electricity supplier contract, we would be unable to maximise additional income as that supplier would not recognise the solar system for payment for surplus generation.

The PMM advised that he was currently working on analysis of the amount of energy we are expected to generate and use at the Council House compared to the installation costs and our over all electricity use, both historically and post solar array installation.

The Sub-Committee REQUESTED that a final report be presented to the Finance Committee at their next meeting.

26. TIPPER TRUCK REPLACEMENT

Members discussed the content of the PMM’s report at length.

They also noted the operational requirements for the Property Maintenance Team highlighted in the report.

The PMM reported that he could not recommend the purchase of a new electric tipper for the City Council based on the models available, the current costs and other reasons outlined in the report.

Following further discussion, it was AGREED that the best option currently available was to purchase a second hand lower emissions tipper with a view to purchasing an electric version in two to three years time once the market had developed and more options were available.

RECOMMENDED to the Finance Committee that a second hand diesel tipper truck be sourced as a replacement vehicle for the Property Maintenance Team with a budget of £25,000 .

27. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

- Update on the roof barriers and eye restraints
- Options for cleaning of the Litten War Memorial and alternatives to providing interpretation for the names on the memorial.

28. DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

26 November 2024 at 11.30am

The meeting closed at 1.20pm

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Minute ref.	Agreed action	Assigned for action to
19 Council House (a)v	Place Muller painting for sale with Strides Auctions	Finance Assistant
19 Gardens i	Inspect and refurbish as necessary City Council tree plaques installed on non Cit Council ground	Property Maintenance Manager
23	Investigate how improvements to the level of usage of the Old Court Room can be achieved and report back to the Sub-Committee	Property Maintenance Manager and Front of House Manager

23	Provide additional reporting on room usage, including showing the percentage of free use against paid use	Property Maintenance Manager and Front of House Manager
24	Revise the business case report supporting the kitchen upgrades project for presentation to the Finance Committee	Town Clerk, Property Maintenance Manager, Project Manager
25	Produce a report for the Finance Committee showing solar energy generation, installation costs and energy use at the Council House, including historic use against post-solar-array installation	Property Maintenance Manager