



Chichester City Council

Property Sub-Committee

Minutes

Date 26/08/2025
Time 11:00 - 13:00
Location Council Chamber
Present Sarah Quail, Ann Butler, Robert Miall, Clare Apel, Stuart Loxton, Anne Scicluna

In attendance Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Council Services and Support Manager, Property Maintenance Manager

1.25 - ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE SUB COMMITTEE FOR 2025/2026

The meeting commenced with the election of the Chair for the Sub-Committee for the year 2025/2026. Stuart Loxton was proposed by Anne Scicluna and seconded by Ann Butler. Following the proposal, Stuart Loxton was elected as the Chair of the Sub-Committee.

Decision: Stuart Loxton was elected as Chair of the Sub-Committee for 2025/2026.

2.25 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received, and all members were present.

3.25 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were made by Stuart Loxton, Robert Miall, and Sarah Quail, who advised they were allotment holders.

4.25 - SUB COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES FOR 2025/26

The committee resolved that meetings would take place at 11:00 AM for the rest of the 2025/2026 Council Year.

Decision: The committee resolved that meetings would take place at 11:00 AM for the rest of the 2025/2026 Council Year.

5.25 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Sub-Committee approved and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2025.

Decision: The Sub-Committee approved and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2025.

6.25 - UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Sub-Committee noted the progress on the following actions:

- Press release regarding upgraded kitchens was published on 9 June 2025. The committee requested that dishwasher tablets be made available to hirers to clean up after events.
- Press release regarding community orchards was published on 13 June 2025.
- Report on allotment running costs to be discussed under agenda item 8.2.
- Site visit undertaken for historical land usage on the eastern boundary of the Roman Amphitheatre allotments site; report to be presented at the next meeting.
- Contact to be made with the Cathedral regarding possible locations for a drinking water fountain. West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) has been asked if it is possible to incorporate drinking fountains into the public realm improvement project.
- Report on Council House projects and costs incurred and projected works to be discussed under agenda item 9.
- Special Meeting of the Property Sub-Committee to discuss the PMM's Council House report has not been called due to resourcing; date to be arranged if further discussion is needed after agenda items 8 and 9.
- Traffic light colours included on the allotment condition notices have been adjusted due to concerns about the previous formatting being too aggressive.
- Room utilisation report reformatted to include historical information and more detailed statistics about booking times and financial information; to be discussed as part of the Property Maintenance Manager's report under agenda item 8.1.

Task: Make dishwasher tablets available to hirers to clean up after events. @Andrew Watson

7.25 - PROPERTY MAINTENANCE MANAGERS (PMM) REPORT

The Sub-Committee requested that the report format be made easier to read.

The Sub-Committee noted the projects that had been completed and the progress on projects in progress as detailed in the report.

Costs regarding the bus shelters in Market Avenue were noted, as the City Council (CCC) had not previously been aware that these assets were our responsibility. The Sub-Committee expressed concern about the risks to the public if there were future acid attacks.

The new roof blinds in the crush bar are delayed due to supplier issues.

Advice is still needed on LBC requirements for new heating/cooling units in the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk offices.

Travellers have been on site again this summer at the Roman Amphitheatre Park, and a meeting is planned with Chichester District Council (CDC) to discuss security and access via the gates as CDC wishes to look at alternative control measure, while CCC are keen to retain access for allotment holders.

Task: Make the report format easier to read. @Property Maintenance Manager

Task: Seek advice on Listed Building Consent (LBC) requirements for new heating/cooling units in the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk offices. *@Property Maintenance Manager*
Task: Plan a meeting with CDC to discuss security and access via the gates. *@Property Maintenance Manager*

8.25 - INFORMATION TO NOTE

The Sub-Committee noted the information regarding room bookings and allotments.

8.1.25 - ROOM BOOKINGS AND ALLOTMENT OCCUPANCY

The Sub-Committee noted the reports showing performance and utilisation of the rooms. They requested that a report on free use applications be brought to the next meeting.

Task: Bring a report on free use applications to the next meeting. *@Property Maintenance Manager*

8.2.25 - ALLOTMENTS

The Property Maintenance Manager advised that there were 2 vacancies at present, which are expected to be filled soon.

There are no plans at the moment to reinstate the office at St James.

The Sub-Committee considered the PMM's report on allotment running costs and fees. CCC currently charges above average or average rates for most plot sizes and services. Income has not increased in the last 3 years as allotment fees have been held since 2022, with a 2.5% increase applied in 2025/26.

The largest areas of expenditure increase have been tree works, fencing, waste clearance fees, labour costs, water supply, and one-off soil testing.

The Sub-Committee discussed the extent to which CCC should subsidise the provision of allotments across the City and considered if any other savings could be made. They requested that vehicle utilisation be looked at to see if there were potential savings if the CCC property portfolio increased.

The Sub-Committee queried the write-down period for capital items, with the PMM explaining it is currently assumed over a 7-year write-off period, with an anticipated lifetime of 10-12 years.

Significant increases in per rod fees would be needed over the next five years to achieve break-even. The Sub-Committee noted that if break-even was attempted, there could be a significant reduction in allotment demand, leading to over-supply and the challenges of maintaining empty plots. They discussed reasonable income targets and whether break-even would be desirable in the future.

Cllr Apel left the meeting at 11.51am.

The Sub-Committee felt that a larger number of smaller plots may be more popular.

They recommended that the charging structure be amended to include an annual membership fee plus an additional per rod charge, with fees increased by 10% per annum plus inflation and reviewed annually. They also recommended that the Key Fee

be increased to £10 and requested that water charges be looked at, with a proposal brought back to the November meeting on how these should be levied.

Decision: The Sub-Committee recommended that the charging structure be amended to include an annual membership fee plus an additional per rod charge, with fees increased by 10% per annum plus inflation and reviewed annually.

Decision: The Sub-Committee recommended that the Key Fee be increased to £10.

Task: Bring a proposal on how water charges could be levied to the November meeting.
@Property Maintenance Manager

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm and resumed at 12:13 pm.

8.3.25 - FLOODING AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE

The Sub-Committee discussed the report on flooding at the Council House. The Sub-Committee noted the prompt actions of the staff had averted a much more serious issue. It was recommended that the proposed works be completed as soon as practicable due to the substantial risks to the fabric of the building and the risks to the operation of the Council House and business continuity. The anticipated costs for all works are £180K, with £30K for the replacement roof lantern to be funded via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the remaining funds to be taken from the Council House reserve.

Decision: The Sub-Committee recommended that the proposed works be completed as soon as practicable due to the substantial risks to the fabric of the building and the risks to the operation of the Council House and business continuity.

Task: Complete the proposed works to address flooding at the Council House. *@Sam Tate, Andrew Watson*

9.25 - PROPERTY SUB COMMITTEE BUDGET 2026/2027

The Sub-Committee considered the reports from the Property Maintenance Manager (PMM) and the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and requested that the reports be updated to highlight areas that are essential spending and items that are discretionary. This would help them better understand where cuts and savings can be made if needed.

Due to time constraints, the Sub-Committee resolved to establish a budget working group to review the budget requirements and report back to the September Finance Committee meeting.

The working group is scheduled to meet on 9th September 2025 at 9:30 am in the OCR.

All members of the Sub-Committee will be members of the working group. The Sub-Committee also requested that allotment costs, income, and essential cyclical maintenance requirements be reported to the working group.

Decision: The Sub-Committee resolved to establish a budget working group to review budget requirements and report back to the Finance Committee.

Task: Update the reports to highlight essential spending and discretionary items. *@Property Maintenance Manager, Responsible Financial Officer*

Task: Establish a budget working group to review budget requirements and report back to the Finance Committee. *@All members of the Sub-Committee 09/09/2025*

Task: Report allotment costs, income, and essential cyclical maintenance requirements to the working group. @*Property Maintenance Manager*

9.1.25 - PROPERTY MAINTENANCE MANAGERS REPORT

Deferred for consideration by the budget working group on 9th September 2025 at 9.30am.

9.2.25 - DEPUTY TOWN CLERKS REPORT

Deferred for consideration by the budget working group on 9th September 2025 at 9.30am.

10.25 - ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- Meeting notes of the Statuary and Public Art Working Group
- The Charles 1st Bust Loan Agreement.

11.25 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting is scheduled for 25th November 2025 at 11:00 am.