

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 9th November, 2023 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr K. Dibble (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Jules Crossley
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr S. Trussler

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Jessica Auton.

Cllr P.J. Cullum attended as Standing Deputy.

16. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 7th September and 21st September, 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

17. CALL-IN - LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION (LTA) INVESTMENT INTO PUBLIC TENNIS COURTS IN PARKS

The Committee was advised of the submission of a request to call-in the resolution made by the Cabinet on 17th October, 2023 in relation to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) Investment into Public Tennis Courts in Parks. The request for call-in had been submitted by Cllrs Becky Williams, Gareth Williams, Halleh Koohestani, Abe Allen and Christine Guinness.

The Committee was advised that should the call-in request be rejected the decision made by the Cabinet on 17th October, 2023 would take effect as of 10th November, 2023. If the call-in request was accepted, a report would be made to Cabinet at its next meeting on 21st November, 2023.

Cllr Becky Williams attended the meeting to present the call-in request and the reasons behind it. The Committee noted the reasons, which included, that:

there had been inadequate evidence that the agreed plan aligned with priorities set out in the Council Plan relating to improved health and wellbeing and access to facilities to promote healthy and active lifestyles;

the consultation survey had not targeted particular user groups or households that the Council wished to encourage participation from;
there was inadequate evidence that the agreed plan was affordable for residents, in particular those of low income;
by delegating the decision on the charging structure and operator selection to officers, the impact on participation across all residents had not clearly been prioritised or targeted;
a clear plan of recommendation for the provider had not been made, and;
no alternative funding options had been considered for the refurbishment of the tennis courts.

Cllr Sheehan, Operational Services Portfolio Holder, addressed the meeting on behalf of the Cabinet. Cllr Sheehan advised that the Department for Culture Media and Sports had provided the LTA with £22million of funding, which would be further topped up with LTA funds to provide circa £33million to invest into the provision of public tennis courts in parks. It was noted that the LTA would prioritise investment to authorities with an existing stock of courts, where some/all were in the poorest of condition. Rushmoor's public tennis courts had been identified as being within this category.

It was advised that the LTA had undertaken technical assessments of Rushmoor's three park tennis sites to fully understand the cost of the works required to ensure they were all fit for purpose. It was noted that an offer had been made of £114,043 from the LTA to fund the improvements. By entering into the agreement with the LTA, the Council would be agreeing to a "book and play" system with a managed and affordable charging model, with aspects of free tennis. The overriding purpose of the proposed charging model had been to create a sinking funding for future maintenance.

Following a discussion on the issues raised, it was proposed by Cllr Porter and seconded by Cllr K. Dibble that:

"consideration be given by the Cabinet to give direction to officers to look at additional funding to provide more free tennis for residents - in addition to the provisions set out within the LTA agreement".

The Committee voted FOR: 4; AGAINST: 6 and the proposal was declared lost.

In summing up, Cllr Becky Williams and Cllr M.L. Sheehan each responded to the discussion. In response to a query regarding the amount of free tennis that would be available, Cllr Sheehan advised that until the procurement process had been carried out and charging levels had been determined, an answer could not be given, however there was a concrete assurance that free tennis would be available.

The Chairman then asked the Committee to vote for or against the decision being referred back to the Cabinet for reconsideration.

There voted FOR: 4; AGAINST: 6 and the call-in request to refer the decision back to the Cabinet was declared lost. Therefore, it was advised that the decision made by

the Cabinet at its meeting on 17th October, 2023 would become effective from 10th November, 2023.

18. **ARTS AND CULTURE (CULTURAL COMPACTS)**

The Committee welcomed Lee McQuade, Economy and Growth Service Manager who was in attendance to give a presentation on the work being undertaken by the Council in collaboration with Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT), Arts Council England (ACE) and other partners, around arts and cultural activity in the Borough.

It was advised that Rushmoor had been identified as one of eleven authorities in the ACE South West Region as a priority place, with a high need and opportunity to increase arts and cultural activity in the place. As a result of this, the Council had commissioned a Cultural Strategy to inform planning and investment over the next ten years and to provide a delivery plan for the next five years. A Cultural Compact (Partnership), had also been established. The aim of these partnerships was to provide help and support to make step changes in strategic governance of culture, which would help more people and more places benefit from engaging with cultural opportunities. The Compact must link the cultural sector to broader aspirations and priorities intersecting with the ambitions of health agencies, business, universities and other sectors.

The Committee noted the key priorities for the work in the short term, which included:

- building capacity through the Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT), Cultural Development Manager
- town centres – by growing and enhancing core events and delivering more activities in our town centres
- town centre regeneration – through the Leisure and Cultural Hub and potentially ACE Place Partnership funding which could see a three year programme of activity in Farnborough
- use of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, to stimulate new events and arts, cultural and heritage activity

In response to a query, it was advised that town centre activities undertaken so far had largely been funded by the Council, however, an expression of interest would be submitted, prior to Christmas, for some Place Partnership funding. If successful, it was anticipated that funds would become available early in the new financial year and would cover a three year period. It was also noted that some funding would be available through project grants for individual organisations.

Following a discussion it was recommended that activities should be available to all residents and consideration should be given to targeting the least culturally engaged communities. It was also felt important to, not just enhance existing events, but to create new events going forward.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	By When
Share the details of the Cultural Strategy Action Plan with the Committee	Lee McQuade, Economy and Growth Service Manager	November 2023
Return to the Committee in 6-12 months' time to provide an update on the work	Lee McQuade, Economy and Growth Service Manager	June - November 2024

The Chairman thanked Mr McQuade for his presentation.

19. CLIMATE CHANGE - SCORECARDS

The Committee welcomed Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive and Sophie Rogers, Climate Change Officer, who were in attendance to provide a presentation on the recently published Climate Change Scorecards. Cllr Martin Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder, was also in attendance.

The Committee were made aware that the first set of Climate Change Scorecards, which had been based on the Climate Change Action Plan in 2021, in which the Council had achieved a score of 46%, compared to a district average of 43%. The current set of scorecards had been based on Climate Change action, between January 2019 and January 2023, and the Council had achieved a score of 20%, compared to a district average of 29%.

The process and methodology was described, which included consultation, questioning with criteria and clarification, and information gained through Freedom of Information requests. It was also noted that each section had been weighted differently. The Committee were advised that the Council had scored highly in biodiversity and, collaboration and engagement, but lower in areas such as transport – due to levels of nitrogen dioxide and PM2.5 levels, governance and finance, and, planning and land use, due to the Council's Local Plan having been published prior to the Climate Emergency being declared.

It was noted that since the scores had been published, councils had been given the opportunity to query the scores. It was advised that a number of queries had been made in response to the achieved scores for Rushmoor.

The Committee received a brief update on the Climate Change Action Plan, which would be presented in full at a future meeting of the Committee.

Following a discussion with regard to the Local Plan, it was noted that the process to produce a new Plan was complex and took considerable time. The existing Plan, which ran until 2032, would be updated and the new Plan would address the Climate Emergency in greater detail.

ACTION:

What	Whom	When
Share the carbon footprint information with the Committee	Sophie Rogers, Climate Change Officer	November, 2023

The Chairman thanked Ms Barker and Rogers for their presentation.

20. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current Work Plan.

The meeting closed at 10.08 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
