

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Remote meeting held on Thursday, 3rd September, 2020 at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr S.J. Masterson

16. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July, 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

17. ALDERSHOT TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB - REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE SHOTS TRUST

The Committee was informed that a request had been received from the Aldershot Town Football Club Supporters' Trust (the Shots Trust) for it to consider representations on issues relating to the Football Club. The representations related in particular to:

- the conclusion of a new lease of the site in line with the principles set by the Cabinet
- the engagement approach between the Football Club and its supporters
- future options for running the Football Club

The Chairman welcomed Alan Hilliar, Laura Smart (Trust Secretary), and Nick Bond (Trustee), to the meeting to make the representations. Mr. Hilliar, explained that they were representing members of the Shots Trust and wanted to raise concerns, on their behalf, for the future of the Club linked to the new long term lease and future potential development of the ground.

Ms. Smart gave an overview of the current financial position of the Club, it was noted that currently creditors stood at £1.2 million, up from £113,000 in 2014, when the Club was taken over by the current owners. These losses had been underwritten by loans, primarily from the Club's directors, who had contributed, to date, over £1 million to the Club. The Shots Trust felt that the Club saw the extension of the lease and potential redevelopment as a lifeline to pay back the loans leading to an

uncertain future for the Club. Ms Smart raised some questions on behalf of the Shots Trust relating to:

- The position of the new lease and the processes being followed
- The assignment of the lease and the conditions to be met by the leaseholder
- The viability of the Club in the long term

Mr. Bond, long term supporter of the Club and Trustee of the Shots Trust, raised concerns about the footballing aspects of supporting the Club, off field activity and the potential redevelopment. He pointed out that over the years the Club had slipped into non-league football, having once played against teams now at a higher level like Bournemouth, Reading, Swindon, Bradford City and Oxford United.

Mr. Bond was of the view that communication with fans was abysmal. He stated that recently the Club had taken the decision to stop free entry for under 11s with a paying adult. The Shots Trust felt that this would lose the Club more adult supporters, reducing gate numbers.

Mr. Bond then expressed the view that the Club needed to create a culture of intention and vibrancy to enable it to survive. The option to redevelop the ground could not be more welcomed by fans, and he felt that a successful team could command gates of 5,000 or more. Attendance was currently at 1,500 and falling due to a lack of success and leadership. He suggested that increased gate numbers would increase footfall in the town centre, generating income for the town. Change was needed, and help required to ensure the ground was redeveloped with a real say from fans on the facilities that could be made available.

Mr. Hilliar shared the Shots Trust's considered options for the future running of the Club, which were:

- Establishing a Community Interest Company (CIC)
- The Council taking on redevelopment responsibilities

The Chairman thanked the Trust for their representations and reminded Members that discussions and negotiations were ongoing between the Council and the Club on the lease and that these were commercially confidential. A record of the representations and discussions would be made from this meeting and would be relayed to the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects and Property.

The Committee then discussed various aspects of the representations and Members raised a number of issues including:

- The number of members of the Shots Trust – it was reported that there were around 200 direct paid up members and more who supported the Trust through different initiatives/fundraising activities.

- In response to a query regarding the Shots Trust’s membership of the Football Supporters Association (FSA), the representatives advised that some complaints had been made against the Trust, which had resulted in a temporary suspension from the FSA. Following agreement with the FSA a number of things had been done to rectify the situation, this included all the trustees being required to attend a diversity awareness course. The face to face course had been delayed due to COVID-19 and would be carried out as soon as restrictions allowed. A statement addressing the accusations had been issued by the FSA and this would be shared with Members after the meeting.
- The Committee considered it important that there was a thorough process to ensure the new lease agreement protected all parties involved.

The Committee **NOTED** the representations made by the Shots Trust and **AGREED** that the information be relayed to Cllr Martin Tennant, the Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder.

NOTE: Cllrs T.D Bridgeman and Sue Carter each declared a personal but non prejudicial interest in this item, Cllr Bridgeman in respect of his ownership of share in Aldershot Town Football Club and Cllr Carter in respect of her status as a Trustee for the Shots foundation. In accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, both remained in the meeting during the discussion.

18. **COMMUNITY SAFETY AND POLICING - UPDATE**

The Committee welcomed Police Inspector Kirsten Troman and Police Sergeant Phil Mayne (Hampshire Police) and James Knight, Community Safety Team Leader, Safer North Hampshire, who were in attendance to give a general update on community safety in the Borough and to provide information on a number of issues raised by Members. These were:

- (1) **Crime clear up rates** – Members were advised that the integrity of the crime data was subject to high levels of scrutiny to ensure that the force correctly reported crime data and to instill the trust and confidence of the public. It was reported that the data for Rushmoor had been compared with data from the Hampshire and Isle Of Wight (HIOW) force area average. Some specific categories were as follows:

Type	HIOW	RBC
Outcomes attached to crimes where formal action was taken	-1.6% on previous year	-4% on previous year
Most serious violence where formal action was taken	+18% on formal action taken outcomes	stayed the same – key focus to achieve more
Violence with injury where formal action was taken	-8.7% compare to last year	dropped further – recruitment of Inspector Troman would free up PS Mayne to focus on

		this area and improve outcomes going forward
Burglary residential	+14%	up three times on previous year

(2) **Racial Issues** – Police use of stop and search was considered an essential tactic for the force and would help considerably with the work PS Mayne would be carrying out relating to high harm crime. An independent scrutiny structure was in place. It was also noted that each quarter Chief Inspector John Halfacre posted a stop and search scrutiny overview report on the Hampshire Police website, alongside the other forces across the region.

In the first 6 months of 2020 it was noted that 245 stop and searches took place, of which 24% resulted in positive action being taken. Of the 245 stop and searches that took place, 185 were white, 20 were Asian and 29 were black.

The Black Lives Matter movement was raised. In Rushmoor only one event had taken place and no real issues had occurred. Hampshire Constabulary had a very structured and staged approach to managing protests to enable the right to protest and community life to continue around it. It was noted that some scrutiny would take place over the coming months around engagement with different ethnic groups and cultures within the community. There was already a strong relationship with the Nepali Community Leaders but it was felt this needed to be built on with other groups within the community.

(3) **Speeding/Speedwatch** – it was noted that there was a three tier approach to speeding:

- Community Speed Watch – Volunteer led approach, halted due to COVID-19. It was hoped to reinstated this in late September, 2020. There was reliance on volunteers to highlight the dangers of excess speed and the implications should offenders continue
- Neighbourhood Policing enforcement teams
- Safer roads - road policing division

A request was made that the Road Safety Week that had taken place in the past could be reinstated. This would be looked at.

(4) **General** - PS Mayne reported on the serious violence and drug related violent crimes across the Borough. The county lines drug operation was highlighted and it was noted that recently some disruption had occurred to three of the known networks, with some key members receiving custodial sentences. Despite the successes, the police continued to target networks and in the past three months, 23 arrests for possession with intent to supply had taken place.

Knife crime, which was linked with drug crime, was also an issue across the Borough. Rushmoor was the only district in the County to have permanent knife bins, one on the Totland estate and the other located at the Aldershot Police Station. In

the previous six months, over 100 knives had been surrendered. It was hoped that the number of knife bins could be increased across the force area.

The Committee was advised that disruption had been caused by the spread of Covid-19. A district plan had been established, with emphasis to look at open spaces where Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was considered an issue. Visits were being made and dispersal orders were enforced in some places. Across the force, 243 penalty notices had been issued, 11 of which were in Rushmoor. Work was continuing with shops and the community to support the safety guidelines and the use of the three E's – educate, engagement, explain.

James Knight, Community Safety Team Leader, then reported on street lighting. Contact had been made with Hampshire County Council (HCC) who had monitored the impacts and had concluded that there had been no measurable impact, either negative or positive, on crime as a result of the lights being out. It was noted that a small spike had occurred in June when COVID-19 restrictions had been relaxed.

It was advised that incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had increased since the easing of lockdown. A significant number of complaints relating to late night noise, littering, vandalism and more recently vehicle meets/cruising had been reported by residents. Residents were encouraged, with support from the police, to report incidents via the 101 reporting system at the time of the incident to help build a picture. If individuals could be identified, the Community Safety Team could intervene to try and prevent further incidents.

The activities of the street attached in Aldershot Town Centre had been raised as a concern and Mr. Knight reported that ASB was considered a priority area for the Community Safety Team and gathering evidence to allow the issuing of community protection warning was also key. The situation had improved during COVID-19. However, with the relaxing of restrictions the group was larger than ever. A uniformed presence from the Community Patrol Officers had been used to gather statements from store owners to build an evidence base; Civil Enforcement Officers had also been utilised in the town centre as an additional uniformed presence. It was noted that CCTV logs had been reviewed, and a number of the individuals had been identified and Community Protection Warnings issued. This action could be followed up with a Community Protection Notice if ignored and no changes in behaviour were seen. Court proceeding could then be initiated should the notice be ignored.

Following discussions a number of queries were raised, including:

- In response to a query regarding an increase/decrease in hate crime reports since the BLM campaign, it was noted that there had been a 9.9 % increase in the last twelve months in Rushmoor and a 13.7% increase for the whole force. This type of crime was significantly under reported and an rise could show both an increase in confidence to report such crimes or/an increase of incidents. It was noted that reported hate crimes were reviewed daily and all directions and outcomes were fed through Inspector Troman.
- It was noted that residents trying to report crime via 101 had complained of a poor or no response from the telephone system. Inspector Troman advised

that online reporting had been available for about eight months and encouraged residents, with internet access, to report non-emergency crimes through this platform. All website reported crimes were triaged and handled accordingly. Data was requested on how many calls were dropped through the 101 phone system.

- In response to a query regarding the Independent Advisory Volunteers' Groups, who carried out independent scrutiny of police activities, it was advised that Hampshire Constabulary currently advertised for help to increase participation from seldom heard groups both strategically and locally across Hampshire.
- Reports of residents complaining of individuals/residents smoking suspected class B drugs was raised as a concern. In response it was advised that it was difficult for the police to enter a property without hard evidence. However, through working with the Community Safety Team a plan had been devised to utilise the Community Protection Warning notice system to collate information to give police more power to move forward. The police encouraged Members to continue asking residents to report incidents.

Following further discussion, it was **AGREED** that contact details for Inspector Troman and PS Mayne would be shared with Members to allow further question to be raised.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Troman, Police Sergeant Mayne and James Knight for their presentations.

19. **COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN - Q1 PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Cllr Adrian Newell, the Portfolio Holder for Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships introduced the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring. It was noted that in July, 2020 the Council had agreed the updated three year Council's Business Plan based on four themes:

- People
- Places
- Partnerships
- Better Public Services

It was advised that quarterly update monitoring reports for Cabinet were provided on all four aspects of the Business Plan: Corporate Projects, the ICE Programme, the Regeneration Programme and the Organisational Health dashboard. For the purposes of this meeting the quarterly monitoring focused on the Corporate Projects only.

It was noted that overall 72 % of the projects were on track or completed. Key successes in the quarter had been highlighted and projects that had been delayed due to COVID-19 had been identified. It was also noted that since the last report a "trend" column had been added to compare progress since the previous quarter and a colour coded RAG (Red/Amber/Green) status checker had been added.

It was noted that the ICE and Regeneration Programmes would be focussed on at future meetings.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Newell for his presentation.

20. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current work programme and it was agreed that it would be considered further at the next meeting of the Progress Group.

The meeting closed at 9.12 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
