

# POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday, 25th November, 2020 at 7.00 pm.

## Voting Members

Cllr J.B. Canty (Chairman)  
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr C.J. Stewart (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Sophia Choudhary  
Cllr P.J. Cullum  
Cllr Prabesh KC  
Cllr Nadia Martin  
Cllr Sophie Porter  
Cllr M.J. Roberts  
Cllr B.A. Thomas

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr T.W. Mitchell.

## 21. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th October, 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

It was noted that an update relating to the Aldershot Transition Plan and current work within the town centres was appended to the work programme for reference.

## 22. ROWHILL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Tim Mills, Head of Economy, Planning and Strategic Housing, gave a presentation on the Rowhill Nature Reserve Habitat Management Plan 2020-2030.

It was noted that, over the previous year, the Management Plan had been developed and refreshed, in conjunction with the Rowhill Nature Reserve Society (RNRS) and other partners, to cover the Reserve's management over the following ten years. The ten-year Plan would be supported by an annual work plan.

A number of surveys had been undertaken during 2019/20 to establish what was present on the site which was made up of coppiced woodland, the Blackwater River, ditches, ponds and a bog, and meadow, scrub and heathland. The Surveys had also identified a number of species present on the site, including:

- Badgers
- Bats (5 species)
- Birds (24 species)
- Reptiles, a small population due to make up of the site

- Amphibians, not varied at present but will be encourage more through habitat management
- Invertebrates – not varied at present but a rare species of spider, the Pirate Spider, had been found
- Flora/Woodland – a rich variety was present due to the varied terrain of the site

Members were informed on the vision for the Reserve, as follows:

*“The vision for Rowhill Nature Reserve is to create a sanctuary for wildlife, allowing free open access for people to experience wildlife in a well-managed setting and to fulfil its function as a SANG.”*

To support the vision there were a number of objectives, in particular:

- Maintaining and enhancing the woodland/heathland/grassland
- Managing the bog and enhancing the ditch and pond areas
- Monitoring the species present and any effects caused by the Management Plan
- Complying with health and safety requirements and other statutes
- Management of paths and signage, including disable access
- Management of non-native species, such as Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Variegated Yellow Arch Angel

The Board discussed the Plan and raised a number issues around boundaries, fly-tipping, the path network and signage. In response, it was noted that even though the Reserve lay within both Rushmoor and Waverley the site was owned and, therefore, the responsibility of Rushmoor. The site was designated a Site of Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Rushmoor benefitted from the housing that was developed and the subsequent funding which helped to maintain the site because of this. With regard to fly-tipping, it was noted that education was the best way of dealing with the issue, Rowhill visited schools and community groups and addressed fly-tipping issues and the Council supported this work on a wider scale. It was noted that incidents of other antisocial behaviour were few on the site and were dealt with individually.

The path network and signage improvements were welcomed but it was felt important to ensure disabled access was available without compromising the natural terrain of the site. The signage could be more informative and give a positive message regarding looking after the site

A discussion was also held on the data held on visitors to the Reserve, it was proposed that counters would be installed around the site to measure the number of people visiting and the RNRS collated data which was reported in their quarterly reports.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Mills and his team for the work put in to produce the Plan and asked Members to ensure that any further comments should be provided in writing to Mr. Mills within the following week for consideration before the Plan was formally approved.

## 23. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES STRATEGY AND PLAN

The Board welcomed Andrew Colver, Head of Democracy and Community, Emma Lamb, Community and Partnerships Manager and Tony McGovern, Supporting Families/Strategy Coordinator, who were in attendance to give a presentation on the draft Supporting Communities Strategy and Plan, which aimed to address deprivation and inequalities in Rushmoor.

Rushmoor had had areas of deprivation for many years but, during this time, some areas have dropped out and others had been maintained within the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Work has taken place over the years to help address these issues but change takes time. The latest IMD data had been reported to the Board in January, 2020. At that time, specific areas for action had been identified and the Action Plan sought to address those areas.

The Board was given an overview of the background to the development of the Plan. There had been a strong partnership working approach to develop the Plan and this had led to a better understanding of the work of different local groups and access to funding that would not have been accessible to the Council alone. Key Council services had also been involved alongside Member involvement and engagement. Through the work with partners, four priority areas had been identified, two of which focused on specific deprivation factors and two were Borough wide issues. The Plan would initially focus on these four areas but would be reviewed annually as priorities might change over time.

The four priority areas were:

- Physical and Mental Health, including, smoking obesity self-harm, mental health issues within schools
- Economic Hardship including, youth unemployment, impacts of COVID
- Young People – cuts across all priorities and includes opportunities and aspirations for the younger population of the Borough
- Connecting Communities including, reducing loneliness, the digital divide and isolation

A number of projects had been identified within the four priorities, some would be Council led and some led by partners. It was important to recognise that this was a partnership plan and there was a combined desire from all involved to work together to deliver change for the community and produce a Plan that was achievable, with local projects that would work and hopefully make a difference. The Plan was adaptable and data would be considered regularly so adjustments could be made to the work to fit community needs. The Plan would be resourced through the Council's Community and Partnerships team, a range of partners and funding streams. The Council had a reserve fund of £100,000 and proposals within the Plan highlighted how some of those funds could be used. These included unemployment and skills development work for young people, work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on addressing health and inequalities and pump priming local projects.

The Board were asked to share their views on the draft Plan and further comments would be accept over the following two weeks to inform the Report being prepared for the Cabinet meeting on 19th January, 2021. Additional consultation/engagement had also taken place with partners, the Portfolio Holder for Community, Strategy and Partnerships and the COVID-19 Cabinet Champion.

Members discussed the Plan and a number of comments were made to help inform the final document and the Report being prepared for the Cabinet. These included:

- Further engagement with the private sector (small medium large employers in the area), Faith groups around their work relating to food provision, befriending, young people and help for the vulnerable etc.
- Testing to be applied to projects i.e. is something already being done, can we support it, do we have capacity to do/support
- Evaluation of the success/relevance of the projects - are they doing what was intended and making a difference to the right people?
- Ensure Plan adaptable to address changes in need
- Emphasis on the Council being there to facilitate and enable and not just do
- Initiatives to address core issues around debt/access to food/housing etc. resulting in stress/self-harm/addiction etc.
- Role of Ward Members - especially in most deprived areas
- Military Families – engagement
- Ensure projects affect the most people in the shortest time and ensure value for money
- Reflect the need for English Language Training in the BAME community
- Careers advice in schools
- Mentoring for the self-employed
- Barriers in training
- Purchasing of goods and services locally to economically support local business

Mr. Colver, thanked Members for their contributions and welcomed written responses, in addition to those already submitted by the Chairman. The importance of being realistic was stressed and some comments would be considered going forward as the Plan developed and needs changed.

#### 24. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee **NOTED** the current work programme.

The meeting closed at 9.28 pm.

CLLR J.B. CANTY (CHAIRMAN)

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# POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

Virtual meeting held on Wednesday, 27th January, 2021 at the at 7.00 pm.

## **Voting Members**

Cllr J.B. Canty (Chairman)  
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr C.J. Stewart (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Sophia Choudhary  
Cllr Prabesh KC  
Cllr Nadia Martin  
Cllr T.W. Mitchell  
Cllr Sophie Porter  
Cllr M.J. Roberts  
Cllr B.A. Thomas

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr P.J. Cullum.

## **25. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th November, 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

## **26. ITEM WITHDRAWN - SOUTHWOOD WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Board was advised that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda and would be considered at a future meeting of the Board (date to be determined). In the meantime, any comments or questions on the Southwood Woodland Management Plan should be referred to Tim Mills, Head of Economy, Planning and Strategic Housing.

## **27. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board **NOTED** the current Work Programme and were updated on a number of items:

- Elections Working Group – The recommendations of the Election Working Group on the Polling Station Review were approved by the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee on 25th January, 2021. Thanks were given to the Elections Team and the Members who had engaged in the process.
- Supporting Communities Strategy – it was noted that the Strategy had been approved by the Cabinet at its meeting on 19th January, 2021.
- Black Lives Matter – The Local Government association (LGA) Peer Review Challenge had taken place the previous week and the findings were due to be

reported to the Council on 28th January, 2021. The Board would be considering the findings, in more detail, at the March 2021 meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

CLLR J.B. CANTY (CHAIRMAN)

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# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Virtual Meeting held on Thursday, 4th February, 2021 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

## **25. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October, 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

## **26. ALDERSHOT TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB**

Mr. Shahid Azeem, Chairman, Aldershot Town Football Club, attended the meeting to give the Club's response to the representations made by the Aldershot Town Football Club Supporters' Trust at the Committee's meeting on 3rd September 2020 and to update on the current position in relation to the Club's operations.

Mr. Andrew Colver, Head of Democracy and Community, reminded Members of the background to the item. It was noted that at the Committee's meeting in September, 2020, three members of the Supporters' Trust had raised some issues, in particular relating to the conclusion of a new lease on the site of the Club in line with a number of principles that had previously been agreed by the Cabinet, the approach to engagement between the Club and the Supporters' Trust and future development options for the site. Following the meeting a report had been made to the Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder.

It was agreed that the item would be considered in two parts, firstly Mr Azeem would respond to the issues raised by the Supporters' Trust, this would then be followed by an update on the current position of the Club.

Mr. Azeem thanked the Council for the support given to the Club over the years since he took over as Chairman in 2013. It was noted that, through working with the Council, planning applications were soon to be submitted for the regeneration of the Football Club site and, should these be granted, the long term lease on the site

should also be granted. It was noted that the lease, once agreed, would be in the name of the Aldershot Town Football Club. In response to the Supporters' Trust comments regarding the redevelopment of the site, Mr. Azeem explained that a redevelopment company had been established to oversee the development plans for the site, this allowed for any financial issues, which might occur, not to impact on the operation of the Club. It was also acknowledged that the EBB Stadium was no longer fit for purpose, due to the presence of asbestos, and through the redevelopment of the site, a seven day a week operation could be established, which would provide a basis to secure a sustainable future for the Club.

At the September, 2020 meeting, it had been reported that the Supporters' Trust had been temporarily suspended from the Football Supporters Association (FSA). As a result, measures had been put in place by the FSA, most of which had been addressed, with the exception of diversity awareness training for the trustees, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Mr. Azeem advised that since that time, a letter of apology acknowledging the Trust's errors which resulted in its suspension, had been written by the Supporters' Trust to the FSA and Mr. Azeem asked that this letter be made public.

One of the purposes of the Trust had been to raise funds to contribute to players' wages ('Cash for Shots'). In the past twelve months no contributions had been made by the Trust, and Mr. Azeem urged the Trust to write to its Members advising that their contributions were not being used for the intended purpose and what the monies were being used for.

It was noted that a new supporters club, 'In with a Shot!', had been established as a result of the issues with the Supporters' Trust. In with a Shot, had achieved a membership of in excess of 160 fans in the previous twelve months and had gained approval from the FSA, which the Supporters' Trust no longer had. In with a Shot had also donated £8,000 to the Club as a contribution to the players' wages.

Mr. Azeem then advised of the Club's attempts since 2013 to involve the Supporters' Trust in the running of the Club, all of which had been rejected, resulting in financial losses for the Club and some negative publicity. These offers included a seat on the Board with an equal share in the Club, the opportunity to take over the sole running of the Club and a seat on the Board for the Trusts' Chairman. These rejections has ultimately resulted in the Club no longer engaging with the Trust on the everyday running and decision making of the Club.

In response to the representations made regarding the financial status of the Club, Mr. Azeem advised most clubs in similar leagues were making significant losses and the majority were in a worse financial position than Aldershot. It was noted that match day income wasn't sufficient to sustain a club, commercial sponsorship, goodwill of the local authority and the financial input from directors were what allowed clubs to survive. It was noted that the Clubs' Directors had invested over £1million to support the Club over the past seven years, through the purchasing of shares, settlements of loans from the previous administration and to resolve cash flow issues to pay wages, HMRC and creditors. It was noted that the Club was not aware of any personal financial difficulties of any of its Directors.



In response to the comments raised regarding free tickets for children accompanied by a full paying adult, this promotion had been stopped due to COVID-19 restrictions on crowds and in turn restricted gate numbers. It was noted that this offer would be reinstated when it was safe to do so.

Mr. Azeem then responded to the issue of working with local businesses and supporting the community. It was noted that all the Club's major sponsors had been active since 2013 when he had become Chairman of the Club. Links with the community were also well established. Activities included fundraising for local charities, engagement with the Armed Forces Covenant, work with the military and Nepali communities and assistance with the local response to the coronavirus pandemic. The Club had also secured the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award. In addition, the Club had previously been awarded Community Business of the Year by Hampshire County Council and the previous year the Inspired Business Award for Work in the Community.

The Committee discussed Mr. Azeem's presentation and was fully supportive of the response given and the work of the Club. A request was made for the letter, written by the Supporters' Trust to the FSA stating the errors of the Trust, should be published on the Council website. In response to a query, it was noted that the Trust was still in existence, but the Club would no-longer be engaging with them, and no claim would be made on any remaining funds in the Trust's accounts by the Club.

Mr. Azeem then gave an update on current operations at the Club. The 2020 season had been extended and the Club had been supported by the Government through the furlough scheme. Over the summer period, due to the uncertainty of the new season and when it would commence, the Club had worked on new protocols with the aim to start playing again in October, 2020. Players' contracts had been adjusted to start one month before the first official game in October, 2020. A clause had also been included in the players' contracts that should another lockdown be enforced resulting in the closure of the Club, players would not be paid.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) had provided grants up to December, 2020, to support football clubs. However, in January, 2021, DCMS made a decision to cease the grant provision and instead provide loans to be paid back on favourable terms. Mr. Azeem advised that the Club had made the decision not to take out more loans and, without the support of the Government and no ticket sales, it faced a significant financial challenge. It was noted that the Club would continue to lobby Government during this difficult time, but would also rely on its huge resilience to continue to provide a sustainable Club for the community.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Azeem for his presentation and expressed the Council's support for the Club and the work it was doing within the community. It was suggested that the Aldershot Town Football Club would remain on the Committee's Work Plan and further updates could be provided by the Club in the future.

**NOTE:** Cllr T.D Bridgeman and Cllr Sue Carter declared personal but non prejudicial interests in this item. Cllr Bridgeman in respect of his ownership of a 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.

## 27. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING APPROACH**

Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive, was in attendance to report on the work which had been taking place to revise the current performance management arrangements. It was noted that the new system was being developed and this report would give a brief on the work undertaken and help shape performance reporting in the future.

A review had been undertaken on how the Council collected and reported on progress against the Council's Business Plan projects and wider performance reporting. A three-tier reporting framework had been developed and implemented at the end of Quarter 2 in 2020/21 consisting of:

- Key Performance Indicator Dashboard – production of a graphical Key Performance Indicator dashboard initially every quarter but more frequent going forward. Comparable against previous years data. There would be an option for it to be automated in the future giving real time information
- Summary Project Progress Report – builds on previous information provided but would focus on exception reporting. It would provide a snapshot for the previous quarter detailing projects not on budget or schedule. A RAG status would be used but only red and amber would appear in this report
- Detailed Project Progress Report – Full report on all projects within the Business Plan. To be published on the Council's website at end of each quarter. It would show more detail including risk, timelines, project manager detail etc.

It was advised that currently Quarter 3 was in the process of being finalised and would be presented at the March, 2021 meeting of the Committee. Moving forward to 2021/22, the assumption would be to see Quarterly reporting to the Committee, this could focus on specific areas or the whole report and timings of meetings would be adjusted to fit more effectively with the quarterly reporting.

In response to a query regarding indexing the Detailed Project Progress Report, it was noted that this could be looked into for easier navigation of the document.

It was agreed that the full documents would be considered at the Progress Group Meeting prior to the Committee's meeting in March, 2021, to scope what would be presented to the full Committee.

The Committee **ENDORSED** the new approach.

## 28. **WORK PLAN**

The current Work Plan was **NOTED** and an update was provided as follows.

Cllr D. B. Bedford gave an update on the work of the Register Providers Task and Finish Group. It was noted that a recent meeting had taken place with Southern

Housing who were now responsible for The Crescent, Southwood and Mills House, North Town. Members had been pleased with the outcomes of the meeting and the work carried out since taking on these properties.

The Group's next meeting was scheduled with A2 Dominion. It was noted that there had been a number of issues raised that it was hoped would be resolved following the meeting.

It was requested that a system similar to the pilot scheme set up by VIVID, to allow Members emails to be addressed separately, could be provided by each of the Housing Associations operating in the Borough. Members agreed that the system had worked well with VIVID and rolling it out would be beneficial – this would be raised for discussion with the local Housing Associations.

Mr. Colver advised that a meeting of the Educational Improvement Group would be taking place on 23rd February, 2021, at which County Councillor Roz Chadd would be present. The meeting would consider the impacts of COVID-19 and other related matters.

Arrangements for the next meeting of the Highways Task and Finish Group with Hampshire County Council had proved difficult. However, it was expected that a date would be arranged in the next few weeks.

Mr Colver advised on the proposed items for the next meeting on 25th March, these were:

- Cabinet Champions activities – to receive a report from the three Cabinet Champions, Cllrs Sue Carter, Peter Cullum and Jacqui Vosper on their activities during the 2020/21 Municipal Year
- Air pollution – to receive a report from Environmental Health Officers on Air Pollution

An item on the current work of the Housing Options Service was requested, taking into account the impacts of COVID-19 and unemployment levels. It was suggested that this could be picked up at the next Progress Group meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)

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