

Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT AND SAFE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 21 March 2023

PRESENT -

Councillor John Beckett (Chair); Councillors Monica Coleman, Chris Frost, Rob Geleit, Steven McCormick, Julie Morris and Humphrey Reynolds

Absent: Councillor Arthur Abdulin, Councillor Steve Bridger and Councillor Lucie McIntyre

Officers present: Justin Turvey (Interim Head of Place Development), Mark Rachwal (Environment and Sustainability Officer), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager), Brendan Bradley (Head of Finance) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

24 ELECTION OF MEMBER TO PRESIDE AS VICE-CHAIR

In the absence from the meeting of Councillor Arthur Abdulin (Vice-Chair), the Committee elected to appoint Councillor Chris Frost to preside as Vice-Chair of the meeting.

25 QUESTION TIME

No questions were received from members of the public.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests were made by Members in respect of any item of business to be considered at the meeting.

27 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 24 January 2023 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

28 TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received a report presenting the Council Tree Management Plan and seeking support for its adoption.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) The Committee considered that the Tree Management Plan (as seen at appendix 1 of the report) ought to include further information with regard to legislation in relation to tree management in the interest of robustness and clarity. It was remarked that the Tree Management Plan contained grammatical and spelling errors that required correction.
- b) The Environment and Sustainability Officer explained that a number of the amendments to the Plan had been informed by a 'tracked-changes' document provided by the Tree Advisory Board in response to the consultation. He explained that there were a number of comments received relating to development and planning processes, and these comments had been passed onto the planning policy team for consideration.
- c) The Committee and the Chair agreed that the Plan should be brought to future meetings of the Committee for yearly review.

Councillor Steven McCormick proposed that an additional recommendation be added asking the Committee to agree that the Tree Management Plan be reviewed and revised to ensure the absence of grammatical and spelling errors and to include further information with regard to legislation in relation to tree management, and that any revisions be reviewed and approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

The Committee unanimously agreed to the addition of the proposed recommendation.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Agree to adopt the Tree Management Plan set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- (2) Agree that the Tree Management Plan set out in Appendix 1 of the report be reviewed and revised to ensure the absence of grammatical and spelling errors and to include further information with regard to legislation in relation to tree management, and that any revisions be reviewed and approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.**

Following the conclusion of item 4, the Environment and Sustainability Officer left the meeting.

29 SURREY ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP - SEP2025

The Committee received a report requesting that the Committee reviews and endorses SEP2025 on behalf of the Council.

Following consideration, Councillor Julie Morris proposed a motion to defer consideration of the matter until the next ordinary meeting of the Committee in order to allow for the opportunity for the Committee to receive comment on the matter from the Transport and Waste Services Manager, who could not be present at the meeting.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Steven McCormick.

The Committee unanimously resolved to defer consideration of the matter until the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

30 PLAYGROUND PROJECT FOR BOURNE HALL

The Committee received a report seeking approval for the provision of a multi-sensory play area in Bourne Hall park for children under six years old.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) In response to a question from a Member, the Streetcare Manager informed the Committee that currently no contractor for the play area project had been procured but was a matter under current investigation. She explained that should the Committee be minded to agree the recommendation, the work on the play area and the work on the patio at Bourne Hall would be conducted simultaneously in the Springtime.
- b) In response to questions from Members, the Streetcare Manager explained that safety fencing will surround the perimeter of the play area. She explained that the area will contain small-scale play equipment, with an emphasis on the encouragement of imaginative play, and contain no large climbing frames. The play area will be located away from areas where waterfowl mess collects. She explained that the possibility of having a gated entrance to the play area was being considered.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the procurement and installation of a toddler play area outside the library at Bourne Hall as detailed in this report.**

31 2023/24 ANNUAL INCREASE FOR HOME GROUND AGREEMENTS

The Committee received a report recommending the annual increase to the home ground agreement charges coming into effect from 1 April 2023.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) A Member queried the disparity between the increase to charges for Football/Cricket pitches and for Bowls greens. The Streetcare Manager explained that, following the pandemic, a lot of Bowls Club members terminated their memberships due to cost, and that the Clubs were

experiencing difficulty in replacing lost members – the lower increase for Bowls greens was in the interest of the survival of Bowls in the Borough. The Chair explained that Bowls greens are very costly to bring back once gone, as compared with Football/Cricket pitches.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (3 votes for, 3 votes against, and the Chair exercising his casting vote in favour of the recommendation) to:

- (1) Agree the increase to the charge for home ground agreements as set out in appendix 1 of the report.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.09 pm

COUNCILLOR JOHN BECKETT (CHAIR)