
Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee MINUTES

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Northway,
Rickmansworth, WD3 1RL on Wednesday, 13 March 2024 from 7.30 pm - 8.39 pm.**

Present: Councillors

Steve Drury (Co-Chair)
Lisa Hudson
Chris Lloyd (Chair)
David Major
Ian Morris
Louise Price
Ciaran Reed
Andrew Scarth
Narinder Sian
Jon Tankard (Co-Chair)

Also in Attendance:

Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy & Partnerships
Emma Sheridan, Associate Director Customer & Community
Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change & Sustainability Strategy Officer
Charlotte Gomes, Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure
Judy Simpson, Marketing & Campaigns Manager
Ben Terry, General Manager
Josh Sills, Head of Customer Experience
Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
Michelle Wright, Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager
Anita Hibbs, Committee Manager

CCLC22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anne Winter, Abbas Merali, Stephen King, with the substitutes being Councillors Lisa Hudson and Andrew Scarth.

CCLC23 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The minutes of the meeting, held on 11 October 2023 were also approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CCLC24 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

None received.

CCLC25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CCLC26 BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT - PERIOD 10

Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner introduced the report, which covers this Committee's financial position over the medium term 2023-2027 as at the end of Period 10, (end of January 2024).

Revenue:

There is a favourable variance of £49,000 that is made up of a reduction in the cost of salaries of £64,000, which is due to a salary realignment. This is done once a year, and it takes into consideration revised employee estimates, and vacancies and change elements throughout the year.

Other variances include the Cemeteries'; a pressure of £9,800, which is £1,800 for water rate and £8,000 for memorial stone management, due to statutory memorial testing.

Extra income is just under £76,000 for burial fees, burial right fees and memorial fees. This is a net favourable variance of just under £66,000.

Community Arts; there is an extra income of just under £6,000 from art activities. At Watersmeet there is a pressure of £28,700 due to the increase cost of electricity.

Playing fields and Open Spaces; there is a pressure of £14,500 for gas, £11,500 pressure for electricity and £17,500 pressure for water rates. These are all due to increase in supplier cost and backdated bills.

In addition, there is a £22,000 pressure on a reduction of income due to the decrease in the use of our football pitches.

There is a £21,000 pressure at the Aquadrome that is made up of £15,000 for electricity, £6,000 for water rates. These are also due to increase in supplier cost. Sports development and Sports projects; have an extra income of £7,500 that is due to the activities sessions.

There is a £10,000 saving on the Environmental Health contract. This is due to a contingency plan that has not been required this year.

A budget of £11,500 will be transferred from Community Partnerships to Communications, due to a service called Engagement HQ, that the Council pay for, and it was felt this budget would be more appropriate within the Communications team's budget.

There is a total of £49,000 grant income from the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund and Countrywide Stewardship grant.

Capital:

There is a £278,000 favourable variation and everything within this will be rephased into 2024-2025:

- Community CCTV: £6,000

- Scotsbridge Chess Habitat: £8,190 – the budget is being rephased into 2024-2025 as the project is being led by Countryside Management Service. This is an ongoing project.
- Replacement grounds maintenance vehicles: £264,000 – they will not be delivered by the end of this financial year.

Staff vacancies:

There was only one staff vacancy for a Trees & Landscape Officer. This is no longer a vacancy, due to a service restructure, the post has been replaced with an apprenticeship, which is currently being advertised.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation; that Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being 7 For, 0 Against and 3 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

That Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

CCLC27 CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2024/27

Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change & Sustainability Strategy Officer introduced the report, covering the key points.

The new Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy was adopted by Council in December 2023, and this is the action plan that supports the strategy and supersedes the old plan.

The old plan there were a 142 actions, of which a 107 were completed, 32 were moved to the new plan and two that did not progress.

The Retrofit program continues at pace; a further 35 homes are benefiting from Eco4 funding, spending an average of £21,000 per home, and the Retrofit One Stop Shop has been launched in areas focused on 'hard treat homes'. 71 applications have been received and they are progressing through to survey stage.

Through the Fast Followers project; The First Transition streets programme is up and running at Townfield, Rickmansworth.

The new action plan has been split into two sections; one, which focuses on Council emissions, and the second, which focuses on our district emissions. It is a live document and is updated continuously. There are 18 actions in the Council section, and 17 of those are in progress.

There are 59 actions for the district, 46 of which are under way and 12 are yet to start. The plan included a tracker to identify the progress the Council is making, and this tracker will be added to the website.

The Sustainability Careers event is taking place on 27 March at Watersmeet Theatre, to encourage young people to learn about potential roles, work placements, apprenticeships and training opportunities; and network with industry professionals.

Assistance with the delivery of the Action Plan will require support from Parish Councils and the officer would welcome a meeting with the parishes.

It was suggested that a KPI dashboard would be very useful to see the overall progress and any gaps. The officer responded that as soon as this report is adopted a dashboard will be available on the council website.

In response to a question regarding air quality monitoring, the Officer advised that Officers did a complete review of the district in the previous year and have repositioned the air quality diffusion monitors to the most vulnerable areas in the district. Schools will need to come on board with initiatives such as car sharing and walk to schools to reduce the amount of traffic near schools.

To reduce district emissions, the Solar Together programme is installing solar PV on 50 homes this year. Officers hope to continue to work closely with residents' association and Parish Councils to encourage uptake of carbon reduction initiatives.

Councillor Steve Drury moved the recommendation; that the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee approve the updated Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action plan 2024 – 2027.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee approve the updated Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action plan 2024 – 2027.

CCLC28 USE OF S106 FUNDING FOR ONE YMCA WOODLANDS CAFÉ EXPANSION

Charlotte Gomes, Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure briefly introduced the report, explaining that the report had already been approved by the Policy & Resources Committee on 11 March 2024.

The Chair further explained that this report was originally only due to come to the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee as all the funding was going to be provided from the Leisure budget, however, the reason to be able to use the UKSPF is due to the YMCA brining people from a hostel in Watford to provide them with employment opportunities. Therefore, the recommendation is that Members only note the report.

RESOLVED:

That Members note the report.

CCLC29 WATERSMEET BUSINESS PLAN

Ben Terry, General Manager and Judy Simpson, Marketing and Campaigns Manager introduced the report.

In response to questions that were raised, the Officers advised that there is no concern in terms of underrepresentation of any groups. The venue's biggest strength is the ability to adapt to the different requirements when it comes to hiring the venue to the public. The focus is on looking for new opportunities and new groups to bring into the venue and introduce them to theatre.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation; that the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee approve the adoption of the Watersmeet Business plan 2024-2027.

That public access to the report be immediate.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That Climate Change, Leisure & Community Committee approve the adoption of the Watersmeet Business plan 2024-2027.

That public access to the report be immediate.

CCLC30 WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

CCLC31 OTHER BUSINESS (IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE)

None.

CCLC32 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair moved, duly seconded, the following motion:

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

To move into Part ii business.

CCLC33 CCTV UPDATE

Councillor Steve Drury in the Chair

Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy & Partnerships introduced the report and explained the need for an application for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to purchase 8 new cameras for the district,. Three Rivers District Council currently have 6 CCTV cameras that can be mobilised across the district. The Strategy & Partnerships team are proposing to increase the existing 6 cameras to 8, which will enable more cameras to be mobilised across the district.

An increase in Community Safety revenue budget will also be needed and a business case will be developed for this. Should the CIL application be unsuccessful the Strategy & Partnerships team would need to proceed with a capital and revenue business case as part of the service planning process 2024-25.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation, seconded by Councillor Andrew Scarth, to make a CIL application to enable the purchase of 8 new cameras, and should the application be unsuccessful, that a business case can be brought as part of the service planning process 24/25.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

The recommendation in this report is to make a CIL application to enable the purchase 8 new cameras and should the application be unsuccessful that a business case can be brought as part of the service planning process 24/25.

That public access to the report be denied.
That public access to the decision be immediate.

Committee Decision on Public Access: -

1. Public access to report - immediate
2. Public access to report - denied until (date):
3. Public access to report - Council agenda publication
4. Public access to report - denied until issue resolved (see future agenda)
5. Public access to decision - immediate or Council agenda publication

CHAIR