



**MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S FACILITIES AND ASSET
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2020 AT 2.00PM USING THE ZOOM VIDEO MEETING
FACILITY AND STREAMED VIA YOUTUBE**

Present: Cllr Karen Lucioni (Chair), Cllr Henry Adams, Cllr Adrian Axford, Cllr Michael Lilley and Cllr Ian Stephens

In Attendance: Jon Baker, Shona Parnell, Liam Pearce

1/20 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There had been no public questions submitted.

2/20 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Lou Temel.

3/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

4/20 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Adams nominated Cllr Stephens for the position of Vice Chairman of the Committee and this was seconded by Cllr Lilley. After a show of hands, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

THAT Cllr Ian Stephens be elected as Vice Chairman of the Facilities and Asset Management Committee

5/20 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were none received.

6/20 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2019 were reviewed.

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 were agreed.

7/20 UPDATES ON FACILITY CONTRACTS

The following updates were received by the committee:

i. Lifeguard Station

Members were presented with an annual report from the Ryde Beach Lifeguards.

The Committee wished to place on record they're thanks to the Lifeguards for all the work that they had carried out throughout the summer season and during very difficult times owing to the Covid 19 pandemic. It was agreed that the Town Council should recognise their vital work publicly by issuing a press release with a public show of thanks from the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, local ward member and Chair of the Committee. The Mayor and Chair would contact the Beach Lifeguard Manager to arrange the meeting and press release.

The Beach Lifeguard Manager would also be invited to a future meeting to advise on how the visitor statistics within the report were arrived upon as well as address any other matters around beach safety.

ii. Beach Safety

The committee were concerned that the area around the Harbour was a risk to public health with incidents of people falling into the sea at high tide. It was therefore suggested that safety signs were erected around the harbour to warn of the hazards. It was also suggested that signs were also put in place at various point along the beach to indicate where Life guards were present.

On the issue of the build-up of sand that was coming up against the Harbour, a local contractor had been approached to provide quotes on collecting the sand and transferring it to Appley Beach. There was also the possibility that the Isle of Wight Council could finance the operation.

iii. Planting & Watering

Members noted that on the whole the Summer planting had been a success and the winter planting process was now underway. It was also noted that the large pots in the Western Gardens needed to be filled with more soil to allow the plants to be more visible.

With regard to the large planters that were provided to Southern Vectis to be utilised at the bus station on the Esplanade in order to create a barrier between bus traffic and pedestrians, these had not been put into use. Instead seating had been placed there to form the barrier. It was therefore agreed that the planters should be retrieved from Southern Vectis in order for them to be used elsewhere in the Town.

Members were also pleased to note that South East in Bloom had sent a certificate of achievement to Ryde Town Council in recognition of its public plants and flowers and a press release would be issued to promote the accolade.

iv. Allotments

Despite the Covid 19 pandemic, the allotments had been in regular use and they continued to be a popular asset of the Town Council with a long waiting list of potential future tenants.

The annual rents were 70 percent paid up for 2020/21 financial year and the remaining balance would be chased in the coming weeks.

Japanese knotweed continued to be monitored and there was no major outbreak to report on. Legionella testing had also been carried out in accordance with the Town Councils legal responsibilities.

v. Skatepark

The Facilities and Procurement Officer advised members that she and the Clerk had met with the Isle of Wight Council to discuss renewing the lease for a further year. The Town Council would prefer a much longer period or the possibility of a Freehold, but agreement on this was looking unlikely for 2020.

It was also noted that there were possible future options around purchasing the park and potentially moving it. Owing to its location, the wooden ramps were deteriorating due to it being close to the sea and this could pose future Health and Safety problems to its users if it was not maintained correctly, which in itself could present sizeable costs.

Cllr Lilley proposed and Cllr Adams seconded that a small Task and Finish Group be established in order to look at all options for the future of the Skatepark. Its membership would be established outside the committee but would consist of members of the Facilities and Asset Management Committee and would meet informally with relevant stakeholders who have a vested interest in the Skatepark invited to contribute.

The Mayor advised members that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ryde Town Council and the Isle of Wight Council that would look to deal with many asset and facility issues in a more coherent way as opposed to dealing with matters separately, had been in draft form for some time. In order to expedite the MoU, it was noted that a delegation of Ryde Town Councillors should meet with leading Cabinet Members of the Isle of Wight Council in order to reach an agreement. Such an MoU would help aid the Town Councils position with regard to the Skatepark. Any outcomes would be reported back to a future Facilities and Asset Management Committee meeting

Following discussion it was:

RESOLVED:

THAT a small Task and Finish Group be established to look at all options around the future of the Skatepark

vi. Public Toilets

The Facilities Team advised members that some of the issues around cleaning had been addressed and there were regular meetings with the contractors in order to discuss issues.

All toilets had initially shut down from 23 March 2020 owing to the national Covid 19 lockdown, but since early June 2020, all had reopened successfully with social distancing measures in place.

The toilets in St Johns Road continued to shut early owing to Anti-Social issues. A local security company may need to be approached to monitor the facilities in the same way as with the Western Gardens Toilets.

The Committee wished to place on record they're thanks to the Facilities Staff in getting the toilets back into public use during difficult times.

vii. Network Ryde

The Committee received and noted a written report from the Youth Work Manager of Network Ryde.

It was noted that the first meeting of the Network Ryde Sub Committee which superseded the Steering Group held its first meeting on Wednesday, 30 September 2020. Owing to their being young people on the Sub Committee, it was held in private session as would all future meetings.

The Committee was advised that Ryde Town Council and Network Ryde were working closely together with regular weekly Team Meetings in order to communicate better.

Members wished to place on record they're thanks to all staff in keeping some services open during the Covid 19 Pandemic and noted in particular the success of the Virtual Youth Club which had been attended by some 56 young people.

Finally members were advised that a Garlands of light festival would take place over Christmas which would be a Covid friendly display of immersive lighting to celebrate Christmas. There would also be a HSHAZ led Christmas Heritage Project.

8/20 COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Members were advised that a schedule would be circulated for comment after the meeting and presented for agreement at the next scheduled meeting

9/20 KICK START SCHEME

The scheme was now near to its required amount of recruits

The application to the Department for Work and Pensions to be an area representative for the Kickstart Scheme and be delivered in conjunction with Network Ryde had been agreed by the Acquisitions and Commercial Management

Committee on 14 October 2020 . Interest had been expressed, with the required amount of 30 placements nearly met. One of the new placements would be for a new Facilities Officer Trainee for the Town Council.

10/20 FIVE YEAR FACILITIES MANGEMENT PLAN

A long term plan was required in order to identify various jobs and projects over the coming years.

It was noted that there should be a good line of communication between standing committees. Such an example was St Thomas's Church where the instigation of the purchase of the building was carried out by the Acquisitions and Commercial Management Committee but once the sale had been completed, it should be monitored regularly by the Facilities and Asset Management Committee.

Another facility that needed to be on the plan included Ryde Harbour. This was close to being transferred to the Town Council from the Isle of Wight Council, with a handover date of 1 April 2021 set and a transition period of handover planned. Once completed, the Facilities and Asset Management Committee would have the responsibility of monitoring its management.

11/20 ELECTRICITY AND GAS RENEWAL REPORT

The Facilities and Procurement Officer advised that in order to manage the Town Councils energy supplies in a more efficient way, the option of having all electricity and gas supplied by one contractor needed to be explored. This would allow one contract which could then be reviewed annually.

The option to look at more renewable green sources of energy was also being explored, which would fit in with the Islands Biosphere Status and conform to aspirations of the Town Council's Corporate Plan.

Information on prices and potential suppliers would be circulated to members when available.

12/20 SAFER COMMUNITY FUND AND PROJECTS

Following an increase in anti-social behaviour in the town, members believed that there needed to be an initiative set up in order to address the amounts of incidents that had been largely as a result of alcohol and drug misuse.

Such incidents had a detrimental effect on the towns future regeneration strategies and many local business owners and residents alike were becoming concerned at the rise in such occurrences.

The Town Councils Clerk had met with the Isle of Wight Councils Cabinet Member for Community Safety and their Community Safety Operations Manager to discuss and try to address issues. Whilst there was a public order in place in Ryde to ban the consumption of alcohol in public places, there appeared to be little enforcement of the law.

There was a view that a project could be developed where orders could be enforced at a local level by means of utilising Environmental Officers which Ryde Town Council remunerates the Isle of Wight for some weekly work. Alongside this could be a social project in conjunction with Housing Providers.

An application to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) would need to be submitted by the end of October 2020 in order to receive funding in order to set up a Ryde Pilot Scheme.

However there was an issue in where the funding needed to be directed. It could not be applied to an area that was already under the auspices of other agencies and therefore the exposed gaps needed to be identified.

The Chair advised that should a grant funding application not be possible or successful, then other initiatives that were in operation around the country such as the Cornwall Safer Town Partnership could be explored and which could be managed by Ryde Town Council with areas of funding correctly identified.

Members were reminded by the Mayor that the PCC had been invited to attend three Full Council meetings in the past but had declined on each occasion.

It was therefore suggested that an informal discussion takes place outside the meeting to look at options around creating such a scheme for the benefit of the town. Cllr Lucioni proposed that the Grant Funding Application should continue to be made, which was seconded by Cllr Lilley.

RESOLVED:

THAT a submission of an application for the Safer Communities Fund be agreed

13/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

THAT the next meeting of the Facilities and Assets Management Committee will be held on Monday 26 January 2021 at 2pm via the Zoom Video Meeting facility should Covid 19 restrictions still be in place.