**Minutes of a meeting of the CIL Committee**

**Held in the King Edward VII Meeting Room, Ascot Racecourse, SL5 7JX**

**On Wednesday 06 March 2024 commencing at 7pm**

Members present: Councillors R Wood (Chairman), L Davison West, J Gripton, B Hilton, D Hilton, C Richardson, D Sanders, A Sharpe, B Story & M Turton.

In attendance: O Marsden, Project Administrator, Parish Council

**8714 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr R Tavoletti and accepted by the committee. Cllr C Roberts was absent.

**8715 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman asked to receive any Declarations of Interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct. None were received.

**8716 MINUTES**

The minutes of the CIL Committee meeting held on 31 January 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed as such.

**8717 UPDATE ON VICTORY FIELD PROJECT**

* Cllr Davison West gave an update on the progress of the Victory Field project. The feasibility report is being prepared by consultants, The Project Centre, and will be submitted to the parish council in advance of the Full Parish Council meeting on 20 March 2024. Cllr Davison West explained that the feasibility study will reimagine the space at Victory Field, and give a visual description of how it could look, with several different options. In terms of costs, it was pointed out that how much the parish council spends on Victory Field will depend on the elements chosen and the justification ~~.~~ Victory Field and South Ascot Recreation Ground are the two most visible playgrounds in the area, and plans to refurbish both (in the long term) will show the parish council’s investment in its facilities.
* The Clerk’s office was requested to circulate the draft feasibility study slides ~~(~~amongst the CIL Committee members.

**8718 INSIDE SPACE STRATEGY**

* Cllr B Hilton gave an update on her research as follows:
  + Ascot Day Centre: the terms of its use were examined. The Day Centre has very specific usage, which cannot be changed, for example it is restricted for use by 55+ age group and no parties can be entertained. There is also little opportunity to use the Day Centre premises outside of its fixed hours.
  + The playing fields adjoining the Day Centre: these are currently used by the pupils of St Michael’s School, Sunninghill. This land forms part of St Michael’s School by a lease (detached from the school site) and RBWM owns the freehold. Removing this valuable piece of land from St Michael’s School use would deprive pupils of the right to exercise and play sports on the site. The Headteacher of St Michael’s School has stated that this playing field is used regularly, particularly for the school’s entire soft outdoor (PE) programme. It is clear that this means any future community use of these playing fields would be quite restricted.
* Cllr D Hilton agreed to provide a list of all buildings in the parish which could be investigated as part of the Inside Space Strategy. Cllr B Hilton will update the spaces available and their current use and any spare capacity and restrictions thereon.

**8719 UPDATE ON INITIAL PROJECTS PUT FORWARD BY COUNCILLORS**

* **Footpath Enhancement Nos. 10 & 24 – Cllr R Wood (on behalf of Cllr R Tavoletti)**. The aim is to improve these respective footpaths and make South Ascot and Sunninghill more accessible, improving their connectivity. In particular:
  + - To make Footpath 24 (St George’s Lane to Wells Lane) more accessible to people with disabilities, older people, those with pushchairs and the general public, by eliminating water logged areas, laying down concrete, gravel or mulch, reducing vegetation, restoring the side fencing, installing benches halfway down the path, improving transit in the upper part of the path, which is currently very steep and slippery, especially after rainfall, installation of lighting (tbc).
    - Footpath 10 (St George’s Lane to Lower Village Road) requires improvements to drainage, vegetation clearance and installation of lighting (already partly in place).
    - As both paths are in the green belt acceptability of lighting needs to be investigated.
    - Next steps are for a detailed spec to be prepared for each path, including ensuring space is sufficient for pedestrians and cyclists. This will be carried out by Cllr Tavoletti working with the Clerk’s office, who will obtain the required quotes etc.
    - It was reminded that responsibility for PROWs resides with RBWM and that a contribution for funding should be sought. A possible sum of CIL funds of £125k is being sought, subject to further investigation.
* **Sunninghill Congestion Relief – Cllr R Wood**. At present, Sunninghill High street is severely congested, with existing parking provision causing restrictions to free-flowing traffic alongside St. Michael’s School in particular. Traffic coming from the west (down the hill) has priority over traffic coming from the Cordes Hall end. This results in cars needing to wait their turn at either end, making large parts of the high street only functional as a one lane carriageway. A blind spot due to the road being obscured at a more or less central point causes both parties to move forward at the same time, causing a face-off at the junction with School Road. At this point, either party must reverse, in order to allow the other through. This issue is happening many times throughout the day but is especially bad at rush hour and when school is starting/finishing. The project proposal is:
  + To remove a part of the pavement on the southern side of the high street, between the Jade Chinese restaurant and No.10 Mimosa Interiors, by taking 1.35m away from that stretch of pavement. This will move parked cars closer to the buildings, while still allowing for an acceptable size of pavement. It will result in an increase of carriageway width to 7.35m, thereby permitting slow, two-way movement on the high street, instead of the current difficult one-way situation. This proposal would alleviate congestion and avoid the majority of gridlock which frustrates residents, shop owners and all road users in the local area. Borough Cllr J Sharpe has already had an input into this project.
  + The Committee was reminded that there is a need to establish where utilities are situated. A question was also asked about RBWM’s input into this scheme.
  + Cllr Wood will continue discussing the proposals with RBWM.
* **The refurbishment of South Ascot Recreation Ground – Cllr C Richardson.** It is clear that South Ascot Recreation Ground is in desperate need of complete replacement and improvements to the site. The proposals include:
  + New playground equipment for toddlers to 10 year olds
  + New playground equipment for children aged 10+
  + Improvements to infrastructure e.g. mobile kiosk, access to water, power, toilets
  + Improvements to drainage adjacent to the outdoor gym equipment
  + Clear the banks of the stream
  + Reinstall benches in the lower part of the Recreation Ground
  + Replant fallen trees
  + Improve access to public footpaths connecting South Ascot to Ravensdale Road and towards Allens Field through the woods.
  + It was unanimously agreed that South Ascot Recreation Ground is in high need of attention, and it has been impossible to carry out any work while the issues with the lease are ongoing. Cllr Richardson explained that there is less need for a high level of detail over playground equipment than say, Victory Field. It was pointed out that South Ascot Recreation Ground is a more straightforward project, a start point may be simply ripping out the old playground and replacing it with new equipment. Ideas can be gleaned from the Victory Field proposals. It was suggested that parish council officers seek playground equipment ideas and costings.
  + It was felt that this project should be a Leisure & Culture project, instead of CIL.
  + In addition, drainage is required to make the football pitch properly useable and the suggestion of including the possibility of a duck pond was made.
  + Cllr Richardson will continue to clarify the overall plans, which are likely to take a phased approach.
* **Youth club – Cllr L Davison West.** This is not being presented as a project for CIL funding yet as it is clear that surveys need to be carried out, to establish what form a youth club could take. Subsidised or free gym/boxing club was suggested.
  + Surveys were suggested - the Explorer Scouts (children aged 14-18) based locally have already participated in a similar survey; there could be a tie-in with the Victory Field improvements survey. This would address the different concerns including whether young people actually want a physical building to meet in, and what they would they do there; how their needs can be catered for.
  + It was highlighted that although CIL funding could be used to provide equipment, it can’t be used for running costs, such as rents, insurance, utilities or staffing to cover safeguarding and DBS.
  + It was suggested that a youth club wouldn’t necessarily have to be a physical building, it could be a virtual club or a membership club where young people get involved in activities but not in a specific place.
  + Cllr Davison West will arrange a relevant survey from Charters school and other bodies to identify requirements.
* **Electric minibus shuttle - Cllr D Sanders**. This idea is for an electric shuttle bus, or “hopper bus” which will have multi users. The proposal would:
  + Provide a taxi bus service in the Ascot area, in line with Neighbourhood Plan strategy.
  + A hopper bus would meet the needs of older people without cars in the area and those unable to afford to run a car (an increasing number) and would also help reduce carbon emissions, by encouraging less reliance on cars. Currently, this area has the highest car ownership per household in the borough.
  + It was suggested that the outlying villages might also be served, not just those in our parish -Sunningdale, Windlesham, Cranbourne etc. could all benefit from a hopper bus service.
  + West Berks has recently set up a similar service. Ascot Racecourse could be involved.
  + Cllrs Sanders and D Hilton will seek to move the project forward and it was suggested that:
    - Borough Cllr J Sharpe be consulted as he has already been involved in researching transport options
    - Information be sought from both Milton Keynes and West Berkshire, which have both set up similar services;
    - Ascot Racecourse be consulted to see if they would be involved. .
* **Tom Green’s Field extension – Cllr R Wood.** The Clerk’s office has obtained details of the title deeds but more information is needed. Cllr Wood will progress this with the Assistant Clerk.

**8720** **UPDATE ON ANY OTHER RELEVANT CIL MATTERS**

* The chairman reminded the committee of the need to submit agenda items in a timely manner. It was requested that in future any councillor who wishes to have an item on the agenda should contact the Clerk and the Chairman at least 10 days prior to the meeting, for consideration.
* The committee was reminded of the Committee Terms of Reference which state: “The public and press shall not normally be admitted to meetings of the CIL Committee… Under normal circumstances members of the public may only attend by invitation of the committee” – such invitation must only be extended with the agreement of the chairman.
* Cllr A Sharpe spoke about the cemetery, which is now virtually full. An option to consider would be to obtain land to be used as a Natural Burial site. This would entail plots to be marked out without a headstone and allow family members to bury the deceased in coffins made of natural, degradable materials, such as willow, bamboo and cardboard. Cllr Sharpe will continue to pursue this option with local landowners.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Robin Wood

Chairman, CIL Committee