

Minutes of an Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 27th January 2020

Present Adrian Keward, Paul Mundy, Jane Hartley (Acting Chair), Claire Andersen, Roanna Collis, Neil Jackson and Pat Sutlieff.

Apologies for Absence Jo Akeju

Absent Jim Gillett

Open Forum – No Residents attended

Declarations of Interest – There were no declarations of interest

To consider and Understand the Process for Developing a Neighbourhood Plan that would take effect in the period 2026-36 and to decide whether Council wishes to undertake such a plan

– There is a financial incentive to adopt a plan because without one, a Council receives 15% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (Developer Contributions) capped at £100 per elector, but with one, a Council receives 25% with no cap. The plan must be in line with national and local planning policies but does give residents a greater say in what is built and what community assets may be provided. There is also the benefit of greater community engagement and good PR. While the plans do cost upwards of £7,000 – often in the region of £25k – there are grants available to mitigate these costs. Time is also an issue, so it is important not to let them drag as there is a danger of losing Community interest. It was agreed to recommend approval at the next full council meeting.

To work on how to bring together the strands of the Strategic Planning Session in November into a workable draft five-year plan up to 2026, and to have coherent options to take to residents later in the year

– The first decision was whether Council was broadly supportive of developing a new facility, which would be built to high environmental standards, or to pursue a number of smaller initiatives. Because there are many concerns about the longevity of the pavilion, and its ability to meet the required environmental standards, the consensus was that something will be needed to be done about it, even if it is just a direct replacement or complete refurbishment, but if Council were to be given more security, or even a ground lease, then a more ambitious plan could be considered, with the help of loans, grants, reserves and the CIL monies already received. Location would be an issue, and the ideal would be at East Park Farm, but it could work elsewhere if very close by. It was felt that it may be a good idea to employ an architect to see what is possible, and to explore the possibilities for a new location for the tennis courts and even a skate park. The Scouts storage problems were also discussed, and while any new building would be designed to house them long-term, it is recognised there are short-term issues that need addressing, particularly storage, so this is a priority whatever the long-term building plan is. The modernisation and possible expansion of the East Park Farm playground was also regarded as a must for the five-year plan and would probably be one of the first items to be addressed. It was also agreed that Council should get environmental surveys done of its buildings as a matter of priority.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm