

**Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet  
held on Monday, 20th December, 2021  
from 4.00 pm - 4.38 pm**

**Present:** J Ash-Edwards (Chair)  
J Llewellyn-Burke (Vice-Chair)

R de Mierre                      R Salisbury  
S Hillier                            N Webster

**Absent:** Councillor J Belsey

**Also Present:** Councillors R Bates and R Clarke

**1. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

None.

**2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Belsey.

**3. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18 AND 29 NOVEMBER 2021.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 and 29 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

**4. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE LEADER AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.**

None.

**5. CLAIR HALL SITE.**

Rafal Hejne, Interim Head of Organisational Development introduced the report, highlighting that a public consultation has been conducted by an independent consultant with their report included at appendix 1. He confirmed that Clair Hall is listed as an Asset of Community Value and is being currently used to support the vaccination programme. The report recommends developing investment options which could include refurbishment or redevelopment to support the provision of community facilities on the site, using an evidence-based approach to procure this work with the involvement of specialists to determine the options. It also recommends the extension of the current licence for the NHS to continue using the hall as a vaccination centre.

With regards to the consultation and engagement programme, the Cabinet Member for Community sought clarification on the number of responses stated in the

appendix. For those who did respond he thanked them for their constructive comments but felt that the engagement with younger residents could have been more expansive. He acknowledged that further data was required to inform the final decision, using an evidence-based approach to develop sustainable options to provide multifunctional community facility on the site. He expressed concern that the residents of Lindfield were not included in a leaflet drop but acknowledged that the consultation had been widely publicised in the newspaper and banners around the town. He also acknowledged the importance of keeping all stakeholders updated as the work progresses.

The Deputy Leader sought clarity on what efforts were made to engage with the under 24 age group, particularly asking if it was usual for this age group to be under-represented in consultations. The Interim Head of Organisational Development confirmed the number of responders was estimated at around 800 to 1000 and that the younger age group does tend to be underrepresented in such consultations. Best efforts had been made to engage with young people through schools and multiple drop-in sessions and he confirmed that more data would be collected as the work progresses.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth welcomed the extent of the consultation and noted that the majority of households in Haywards Heath have received consultation information delivered and had the ability to respond.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services noted that many responders preferred either redevelopment or refurbishment. She acknowledged that the facility must cater for future residents of the town and the change in peoples' way of working since the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning acknowledged that the consultation provides a good snapshot of current information. . It is a good basis to collect further information involving experts. This will be very useful to support future trends and habits as we already know that we expect a significant increase in homes, potentially for young families, over coming years.

The Leader thanked the residents that responded, and Haywards Heath Town Council who conducted their own comprehensive consultation. He also acknowledged the overall appetite for change seen in the responses provided.

Commenting on the main report, the Deputy Leader highlighted the importance of obtaining more data on the challenges and opportunities after the pandemic and asked for clarification on how the feasibility work would be progressed.

It was confirmed that work would require officers commissioning different specialists with experience in culture, leisure and arts sectors to determine the challenges, opportunities, and help understand new trends in order to establish how a new facility could support or should respond to these new needs. This was welcomed by several Cabinet Members who noted that environmental issues must also be considered. In response to a query on the proposed reserve figure to fund the feasibility work, the Interim Head of Organisational Development confirmed that the figure was estimated and can be refined once specialists are employed and there is a better understanding of what is required. If agreed at this meeting, work would progress at pace and an update would be provided at the Cabinet meeting in February 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth welcomed the report and supported the recommendations, noting that the central site is of huge importance to the town and would provide both economic and employment benefits.

The Leader confirmed it was important to move forward at pace, to look at investment options and secure a modern multi-function facility for the future. As there were no further questions the Leader took the Members to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That Cabinet:

- (i) Carefully considered the outcome of the most recent consultation and engagement activities about the Clair Hall site (in Appendix 1);
- (ii) Agreed to develop investment options for the site;
- (iii) Requested officers to commission specialists to advise on options for the site. This work to be evidenced-based and reported regularly to Cabinet;
- (iv) Agreed to create a £100k reserve to resource this feasibility work by transfer from General Reserve; and
- (v) Authorised officers to extend the licence for the NHS to continue to use Clair Hall as a vaccination centre (see para 13-16).

**6. TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 100A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT INVOLVES THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE SAID ACT.**

The Leader moved a motion that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the exempt business on the agenda. This was agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

The meeting moved into the exempt session at 4:37 pm.

**7. TO CONFIRM EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2021.**

The meeting returned to the open session at 4:38 pm.

The Leader confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Leader.

The meeting finished at 4.38 pm

Chairman