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21 December 2006

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Community and Environment Board
DATE: 8 January 2007
TIME: 6.00pm
PLACE: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Eileen Povey

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Cully) (ex-officio)

Councillor Ms Ballard	Councillor Edgar
Councillor Carr	Councillor Kimber
Councillor Champion	Councillor Smith
Councillor Clinton	Councillor Wright
Councillor Dickson	Councillor Mrs Wright

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AGENDA

RECOMMENDED
MINUTE FORMAT

PART A ITEMS

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE
2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN
3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2006

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Environment Board held on 30 October 2006 (copy herewith).

6. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Thursday 4 January 2007. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Thursday 4 January 2007).

8. HIGH STREET IMPROVEMENTS

PART II

To provide Members with an update on completed Town Centre improvements; to seek approval for use of the remaining budget and to agree to phased improvements over the next three years. (report attached)

Contact Officer:
Rob Harper
Ext 5456

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS
which by reason of special circumstances the Chairman considers should be considered as a matter of urgency

A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD

WAS HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2006

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Cully)(ex-officio); Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Hook)(ex-officio)(P), Councillors Ms Ballard (P), Carr (P), Champion (P), Clinton (P), Dickson (P), Edgar (P), Kimber (P), Smith, Wright (P) and Mrs Wright (P)

In accordance with Standing Orders, it was reported that notice had been received that Councillor Foster-Reed would replace Councillor Smith for this meeting.

16. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of The Mayor and Councillor Smith.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 September 2006 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

19. DEPUTATIONS

It was reported that no deputations had been received.

20. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from the public.

PART I

21. ANN'S HILL CEMETERY – MEMORIAL TESTING RESULTS

Members had received a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book as Appendix A), which informed the Board of the outcome of the memorial testing procedure that had been conducted at Ann's Hill Cemetery earlier this year.

The Council had conducted a survey to assess the stability of all memorials in the Cemetery and it was reported that the work had addressed the health and safety concerns and the risk assessment had identified the issues that the Council would need to consider. The report outlined the options available to the Council for remedial action.

The costs of the initial survey and interim works had exceeded the original estimated budget and at present there was no capital or revenue budget provision for any future works. The capital programme included a budget of £30,000 in respect of this matter against which £59,000 had been spent to date. The remedial cost options available to the Council outlined in the report were all unbudgeted and, if approved, would impact on the Council's capital resources and revenue budget.

The legal considerations for the Council and powers as the Local Burial Authority, under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, were also detailed in the report.

A Member expressed the view that consideration of this matter should be debated by Council and that this Board should refer any recommendations to full Council. The majority of Members of the Board felt that a resolution was within their terms of reference and therefore consideration should be given to advising officers of recommendations for action. Under Standing Order 6.10 (Minority Order), two Members requested that the matter be referred to full Council.

Notwithstanding the Minority Order and that the Borough Solicitor had not received any requests for deputations, Members agreed that Mr Bone, a local resident, could address the Board. Mr Bone made the following points:

- headstones were the ownership of families concerned;
- it would be theft if the Council removed them;
- if headstones were not replaced or repaired would they be taken away?
- it was emotional blackmail to suggest they would be removed and tantamount to vandalism.

The Chairman read out to the Board the contents of a letter received from Mrs B Sharp, a local resident, referring to the manner in which the procedure had been carried out.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Manager explained in detail the reasons, on health and safety grounds and the Council's duty as owners of the cemetery, for undertaking the memorial testing, the extensive consultation that had ensued and the comprehensive methods of communication, how the work had been undertaken with sensitivity, and the number of memorials tested and of those repaired.

A Member proposed a recommendation, which was duly seconded, as follows:

'That, on this occasion, the Council pays for the cost of reinstatement of gravestones laid down or temporarily staked as a result of this process.'

The recommendation was put to the meeting and declared LOST.

Two Members reiterated their wish that this matter be referred to full Council under Standing Order 6.10 (Minority Order).

RECOMMENDED: That Council be requested to consider the outcome of the memorial testing procedure that was conducted at Ann's Hill Cemetery earlier this year and advise officers of its recommendation for action.

PART II

22. TEMPORARY HEALTH CENTRE, JUNCTION ROWNER LANE AND GRANGE LANE

The Board considered a report of the Development Services Manager seeking approval for the renewal of a lease of land at the junction of Rowner Lane and Grange Lane for a period from 31 October 2005 to 31 December 2010.

The Hampshire (formerly Fareham and Gosport) Primary Care Trust had approached the Council with a request to renew the lease to enable continued use of the accommodation at temporary health centre buildings in order to decant some of the facilities from Gosport War Memorial Hospital whilst works were taking place at the hospital.

The Board were reminded that the PCT had originally proposed using the building for a limited period only whilst the Rowner Health Centre was being built. A Member expressed the view that, as this was situated in a conservation area, the land should be returned to an open space and that an extension to the lease should not be granted. He commented that, rather than further developing the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, better use of the excellent facilities at the Royal Hospital Haslar should be encouraged.

Members were mindful of the Council's vote of 'no confidence' in the PCT at its meeting on 20 January 2005 and confirmed their view that Haslar should be promoted at every opportunity, in compliance with the wishes of the community.

Following a vote on the recommendation, the Board were unanimously against approving an extension to the lease.

RESOLVED: That the proposed granting of a lease of land at the junction of Rowner Lane and Grange Lane to the Hampshire Primary Care Trust for a period commencing on 31 October 2005 and terminating on 31 December 2010 be not approved.

23. ELSON AND LEESLAND ALLOTMENTS

The Leisure and Cultural Services Manager submitted a report seeking approval for the use of funding received by the Council from the sale of land at Camden Allotments in order to upgrade the existing perimeter boundary fencing at both Elson and Leesland Allotments.

The Allotment Stakeholders Consultative Group had identified that the existing perimeter fencing at those locations was in need of urgent improvement and provided only a low level of security for the sites. As the Group did not have any delegated authority, it was necessary to submit any proposals requiring funding to the Board for approval.

RESOLVED: That the expenditure of £12,400 from the funding received from the sale of land at Camden Allotments be approved, in order to upgrade fencing at Elson and Leesland Allotments.

24. IMPROVEMENTS TO LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT PLAY AREA, LEESLAND PARK AND ROWNER BOWLING CLUB

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager seeking approval for the use of Developer Contributions in order to undertake a range of improvement works to leisure facilities at the locations identified above.

The report outlined the proposed improvements and identified how they would address any risks that had been assessed with the current provision. Each of the proposals set out in the report sought to enhance and upgrade equipment and security, contributing to an improved quality of facilities for residents local to the areas identified. As such, the schemes were within the permitted use of planning developer contributions.

A Member expressed disappointment at the lack of developer contributions that were available for the Bridgemary area and suggested that Groundwork Solent be invited to a future meeting of the Board to inform Members of progress on work being undertaken in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That:

(a) the use of £48,600 from Developer Contribution funding for improvements to Lee-on-the-Solent Recreation Ground Play Area, Leesland Park and Rowner Bowling Club be approved.

(b) Groundwork Solent be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board to update Members on work being carried out in the Borough.

25. FORTON RECREATION GROUND

The Board considered a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager seeking approval for the use of additional Developer Contributions in order to continue the upgrade of the open space facility at Forton Recreation Ground by providing an additional pathway and a Teenshelter.

The route of the additional proposed pathway, as shown in the report, would overcome concerns of an informal pathway being formed over the existing grassed area and would facilitate the current users of the recreation ground.

The installation of the Teenshelter would assist in providing a recognised meeting place for youngsters using the recreation ground facilities.

RESOLVED: That the use of £22,000 from the East Gosport Children's Playing Space fund, which currently has a balance of £34,177 of which £12,210 related to sites where development has not yet started, be approved.

26. DEDICATION OF LAND ALONG HOWE ROAD

The Board considered a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager seeking approval for the dedication of the area of land along Howe Road to Hampshire County Council for the use of the public as a public highway.

It was proposed that the portion of land incorporating the footway verge and street lighting, referred to in the report and shown on the plan, be dedicated as public highway. Hampshire County Council had expressed its willingness to undertake maintenance of the land within its role as highway authority.

If approved a Deed of Dedication would be drawn up as a formal recognition of this arrangement.

RESOLVED: That the area of land along Howe Road, referred to in the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager's report, be dedicated for use by the public as a public highway.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.12pm

CHAIRMAN

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

Board:	COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT
Date of Meeting:	8 JANUARY 2007
Title:	HIGH STREET IMPROVEMENTS
Author:	HEAD OF CONSERVATION & DESIGN
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To provide Members with an update of the Town Centre improvements that have been completed, to seek approval to use the remaining budget to implement improvements to the alleyways, and to request that the delivery of the 'Islands of Enrichment' be phased over the next three years.

Recommendation

That Members:

- note the progress made with the Town Centre improvements;
- agree to the completion of the alleyway improvements within the remaining budget, and
- agree to the phasing of the Islands of Enrichment over the next three years and the inclusion within the draft capital programme of the required funding for this totalling £248,000.

1.0 Background

1.1 At the Community and Environment Board meeting of 31st October 2005 Members resolved that approval be given for the first phase of works in the High Street to include:

1. Improvements to street lighting, especially in the alleyways leading to the High Street;
2. Removal of Brick Planters on the High Street except for those in the Town Hall area which would be given coloured cladding and the provision of additional seats; and
3. Refurbishment/upgrading of street furniture in the High Street.

1.2 It was also noted that the Islands of Enrichment proposed by Plincke Landscaping Ltd had been approved by the Town Centre Study members Panel on 24th October 2005.

2.0 Report

2.1 The following items have subsequently been implemented:

- Removal of chewing gum,
- Replacement of High Street lanterns, bins, benches, new directional signs to the Finger Posts; and
- Refurbishment of bollards, lamp columns, railings and an ornamental screen at the eastern end of the High Street.

The cost of these works totalled: £145,094.00.

- 2.2 A proposal has also been developed to put in new 'gateway' plaques on the three pairs of obelisks within the High Street using the names Haslar Gate, Clarence Gate and Ferry Gate.
- 2.3 From the original budget £79,841.00 remains.
- 2.4 There have subsequently been two meetings of the Town Centre Study Members Panel and it was resolved that the remaining budget be used to implement improvements to the alleyways, with Hobbs Passage being the priority.
- 2.5 The Panel requested that Members of this Board note the update provided within this report, and that a proposal be made to phase the delivery of the 'Islands of Enrichment' over the next three years, subject to Budget approval.
- 2.6 The three Islands of Enrichment have been independently costed as follows:
- | | |
|--|-------------|
| Heritage Island: | £75,200.00 |
| Maritime Island: | £52,500.00 |
| Discovery Island: | £63,100.00 |
| Fees, preliminaries and provisional costs: | 30% |
| Total: | £248,040.00 |
- 2.7 It was proposed that the first 'Island' to be implemented, in 2007/8, is that entitled 'Heritage' located towards the eastern end of the High Street and including the 'time line' of Gosport's History. The cost of this element of the scheme would total: £97,760.00 including fees, preliminaries and provisional costs.
- 2.8 With regard to the alleyways, the Panel has agreed to develop a 'maritime' theme. This is to be represented by a proposed line of red, green and white ground fixed LED's representing port, starboard, bow and stern, as used on a ships deck.
- 2.9 Hobbs Passage requires the most work and would include a proposal to lighten the colour of the alleyway and provide a series of panels relating to Gosport's maritime heritage. The Gosport Society would be engaged in developing these ideas. Local sixth form colleges will also be approached to develop ideas for the panels. Negotiations with retailers alongside the alleyways will be undertaken to enable the delivery of the proposals to the side walls as these are in private ownership. A sketch plan and photomontage of proposals for Hobbs Passage are attached as Appendix A.
- 2.10 The other alleyways to be included in the proposed works are adjacent to Oxfam to the north of the High Street ('Vigars Yard'), and either side of the former India Arms on the south side, ('Carters Yard' to the East, and 'India Arms Yard' to the west).

2.11 The estimated cost of improvements to the alleyways is as follows:

Hobbs Passage: £20,200.00
Vigars Yard: £10,400.00
Carters Yard: £11,980.00
India Arms Yard: £12,580.00

Total: £71,708.00.

There are sufficient funds within the current budget to implement the alleyway schemes.

2.12 All the work would be coated with anti-graffiti paint and high level lighting would be improved. The alleys would be provided with plaques that reflect their historic names.

3.0 Risk Assessment

3.1 The cost of completing a scheme for the alleyways would use the remaining funds within the available budget. The delivery of the Islands of Enrichment would be dependent on further Budget approval.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 There have been a number of improvements carried out in the High Street that have received positive public comment. With the priority remaining the completion of works within the alleyways the proposal put forward by the Town Centre Study Members Panel would help complete an important phase of improvements within the High Street area. By phasing the Islands of Enrichment, as proposed, the pedestrianised area would be progressively enhanced over the next three years.

Financial Services comments:	The additional costs identified for the Islands of Enrichment (£248,000 at para 2.6) have been included in the draft capital programme which is subject to final approval.
Legal Services comments:	None for the purpose of this report.
Service Improvement Plan implications:	Accords with actions in the Development Services Improvement Plan.
Corporate Plan:	Enhancement of the environment, particularly public areas, is a strategic priority.
Risk Assessment:	See Section 3
Background papers:	Report and Minutes of C&E Board 31 st October 2005
Appendices: Appendix 'A'	Appendix 'A': Draft Hobbs Passage Proposals
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Head of Conservation and Design, Rob Harper extension 5456