

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

7 OCTOBER 2020

Councillors: Adeleke (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs Bassadone
England
Imarni (Chairman)
Mahmood
Pringle
Arslan
Durrant
Johnson
Hollinghurst
Barry
Freedman

Officers:	Alex Care	Community Partnerships Team Leader
	Claire Foster	Community Partnership and Wellbeing Officer
	Ryan Glanville	Tenancy and Leaseholder Team Leader
	Katie Mogan	Corporate and Democratic Support Lead Officer
	Sandra Mogan	Welfare and Sustainment Lead Officer
	Matt Rawdon	Group Manager - People
	Linda Roberts	Assistant Director - Performance, People and Innovation
	Layna Warden	Group Manager - Tenants and Leaseholders
	Fiona Williamson	Assistant Director - Housing

Also Attendance: Banks
Griffiths

The meeting began at 6.30 pm

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MINUTES

The minutes from the previous meeting were not available to sign.

63 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

64 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Barry declared an interest in item 6 as she was employed as a youth worker in Hertfordshire. Councillor Banks declared an interest in item 6 as she was employed by Grovehill Neighbourhood Association.

65 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation

66 **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

None

67 **HOUSING INCOME COLLECTION**

S Mogan introduced the report to members and ran through its highlights.

Councillor Freedman thanked the officer for the report and suggested that the report should focus more on the known metrics such as how difficult is it to make contact once a tenant is identified as needing support and how much contact is required to get a response from them.

Councillor Adeleke was concerned that the system would not be able to recognise underlying issues. He referred to paragraph 3.11 and asked if there was a perception that tenants are scared to speak to rent officers. He also referred to the Universal Credit officer and noted the hard work this post had completed. He asked if there were plans to extend the contract beyond May 2021 as the current covid-19 situation is going to have a lasting impact.

S Mogan noted Councillor's Adeleke's concern about the system not recognising underlying issues. She explained that the system does not just look at rent arrears, it will look at payment patterns and if, for example, the tenant pays their rent on 25th of each month, it won't highlight this as a risk until the payment has been missed. It is an intelligent system but will take the point away about it potentially missing important information, especially those tenants who pay their rent on time. In relation to the fear of talking to rent officers, she said the team are working hard to change that perception that they are debt collectors. When the team manage to contact a tenant in serious arrears, it often comes as a relief to the tenant as we are able to offer support and help them pay their rent and apply for any benefits they may be entitled too. There is a huge benefit to tenants if they remain in contact with rent officers. The intention is to review and extend the contract of the Universal Credit Officer.

Councillor Mahmood said arrears had gone up 1.06% which totalled £400k. He asked if this was correct.

S Mogan said the percentage of the arrears is worked out as a percentage of the gross debit which equals approximately £54 million a year.

Councillor Mahmood referred to paragraph 3.8 and the automatic reminders that are issued. He asked about the wording in these as this could cause stress to tenants.

S Mogan said there are a variety of letters than get sent out and are based on stages of the rent arrears that appear on the Housing Management system. There has been a 60-70% reduction in letters sent in quarter 1 and 2 this year compared to last as the team are making more phone contact with tenants. If a tenant is not engaging with the team, as a very last resort we send them a support letter explaining what we can do to help them and this is to encourage them to contact the team.

Councillor Mahmood asked if the letters threaten to take legal action in them. He said it was important to get the rent income but need to balance this against our tenants' wellbeing.

S Mogan said as the arrears increase, the message becomes more serious in the letters. We want them to understand how serious the situation is.

Councillor Mahmood referred to paragraph 3.22 and the five pending court cases and asked for some clarification.

S Mogan said the five cases are waiting to be looked at by the courts, they were shut at the start of the pandemic so there has been a delay. The courts will not look at any cases where a tenant is claiming universal credit or has rent deductions. The team was previously focussed on enforcement and are now moving into a support role to prevent tenants getting into high arrears. For example, one account had arrears of £5,500 and the tenant was due to be evicted but the team have worked with him over the last couple of months and they have just cleared the last outstanding arrears and court costs.

Councillor Pringle asked if there were lessons to be learnt in terms of future engagement to reduce arrears. It seems that once the enforcement option has been removed, the team become more successful in collecting the rent. She asked how the team would manage collecting rent if the economic situation becomes worse with further lockdowns and the end of the furlough scheme.

S Mogan said moving forward, the team will be focussed on supporting tenants and on early intervention. We will contact tenants as soon as they enter into arrears to find out what the issues are before it progresses and gets worse. Going forward, enforcement action will only be taken on those tenants who are not engaging when all methods of contact have been tried and often, a final court date prompts engagement and payment. At the start of the pandemic, the team started recording what tenants were financially impacted by covid-19 and a marker was placed on the system to alert officers. We know what tenants will be affected when the furlough scheme ends and those who could be a risk of redundancy. Some tenants who were furloughed and only receiving 80% of their wages were able to pay 80% of their rent and a repayment plan would be introduced when they are back to their full income. Building these relationships with tenants will be important moving forward.

R Glanville introduced the report to members. He said he had received an enquiry from a member before the meeting requested seasonal patterns for reporting of ASB and said this is something he will provide after the meeting and will look to add detail of the length of time cases are open.

Councillor Adeleke said it was excellent and reassuring for tenants that reports of ASB are looked into within 24 hours. He had concerns that now the ASB had moved into the housing team, that private tenants would not be given the same level of service and asked what powers the team have and how private residents are supported.

R Glanville said moving the ASB team to housing meant they could specifically focus on council tenants and leaseholders. The report in the agenda addresses the private sector which falls under a different team and work closely with the police. There are a range of powers to tackle ASB; notice seeking possession, acceptable behaviour contracts, injunctions, closure orders. The measures are always proportionate and officers must complete a proportionality statement.

L Warden added that she was involved in the transfer of ASB officers from Regulatory Services into Housing. The team were sitting outside housing but were managing housing cases which made up about 80% of their case work so it made sense for them to work alongside the housing officers. They still have a number of cases involving private landlords and there are a few different routes, there is a Community Safety Action Group held on a monthly basis where cases are discussed and talk about a variety of methods and action plans for example, a Community Protection Warning/Notice or liaising with the landlords. Once a new post has been created, ASB issues affecting private residents will fall under the Community Safety Team and ASB cases affecting council tenants will be dealt with in the Housing team.

R Glanville said that the courts are now open but we make sure we engage with tenants. Last week, we were successful in securing a closure order in Grovehill due to the severity and the nature of the crimes being committed at the address. We will still push to take residents to court were necessary once all options have been exhausted.

Councillor Adeleke asked which age groups were the worst offenders.

R Glanville said we could look to include supplementary information and there is a wide range of age groups.

Councillor Mahmood referred to paragraph 4.4 and the different case numbers that have increased during lockdown. He asked if the table was broken down into the average duration of time taken to resolve cases and the nature of the ASB.

R Glanville said we do see a peak in reported ASB in the summer months and this obviously increased during the pandemic. The most common behaviour reported was noise nuisance and the use of cannabis and drugs. The team don't have powers of entry but work closely with the police when they are entering properties to seize drugs and ride on the back of their investigation to take action against tenants.

Councillor Freedman said he had concerns about providing age demographics and would be more interested in the case being broken down into severity levels.

R Glanville said the team do deal with complex cases including those tenants who suffer mental health issues and this could cause issues if they are not put into context.

Councillor Pringle enquired what level of training the ASB officers had in recognising potential signs of domestic abuse.

R Glanville said the team have continued to undertake training virtually throughout the pandemic and they are trained to spot the signs. One concern raised in the report is that officers have not been able to visit tenants in their homes so have been unable to spot visual signs. Telephone conversations have happen with tenants and perpetrators and the officers are well versed to ask the right questions. He said he was confident that the team have all the necessary training for their role.

Councillor England said the numbers would be quite small if broken down by severity and would rapidly run out of sufficient numbers to draw effective conclusions. It is difficult to satisfy all people around ASB and tends to be a lose-lose situation. He asked if the council use preventative communications that are available to get residents thinking about ASB and importantly, involve members who go out into the community.

R Glanville said there have been some recent improvements made to the website where residents can go for initial advice and hopefully makes them think twice about reporting and suggests speaking to neighbours first if it is safe to do so. The team work closely with partners at Herts Mediation and offer conflict coaching and gives an opportunity to learn techniques on how to deal with neighbours when it doesn't amount to ASB. He suggested that the team could look into more joined up working with members.

Councillor Hollinghurst said he had some concerns that the private sector may be neglected. He raised a point about older people who are less likely to contact the council electronically and are more likely to feel intimidated by ASB and may be afraid to complain.

R Glanville reassured members that they were not being neglected and the team can offer them advice and signpost them to other agencies and the police if it is serious enough. Older people in supported housing schemes have an allocated Supported Housing Officer who visit tenants regularly and can raise concerns with the ASB team. When the pandemic is over, we can begin to offer the Silver Street meetings again at schemes where an ASB officer goes to give a talk on how to report and deal with ASB. Tenancy officers have spoken to all residents over 70 during the pandemic and conversations about ASB would have been addressed in those.

Councillor Imarni asked if the team were still involved in joint briefings with the police. She said a lot of the ASB complaints she received from residents was increasing about joyriding.

R Glanville said he has set up a separate meeting with Inspector Jeff Scott which he feels works better in addressing ASB cases. There has been an increase throughout

the pandemic on reports of joyriding in public spaces and he said the team were reliant on residents reporting this behaviour to police with the number plates. The team can step in if a council tenant is perpetrating this crime.

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SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE PROGRAMME THROUGH THE ACTIVE DACORUM HUB

A Care introduced the report to members. The report outlines information about projects the team are looking to run and how this will be funded and sustained. The money for this project was set aside many years ago for the Highfield Youth Club which did not materialise and was then used to create the Cycle Hub at Cupid Green. This is no longer running and so following on from what Ryan was saying about anti-social behaviour, the council are looking to provide activities for young people to engage in activities to support their physical and mental health. By doing this the council will be taking them away from anti-social behaviour from just hanging around in the streets and reducing pressure on statutory services such as community safety and PCSOs. There are a number of proposed activities and these are costed out in the report. Should this be approved the activities may change depending on changes in circumstances for Covid or other things that may come up. The Council has received some feedback from Adventure Playgrounds, DBC's Hertfordshire Year of Culture officer, Herts Sports Partnership, APEX and also The Community Safety Partnership Team around the kind of activities that would be useful and interesting to young people across Dacorum. Champion Sports Leadership Course- Peer-to-Peer young people leading other young people, Theme Nights at the Hub, Flight Club darts and Bounce-table tennis were given as examples and that these were popular in London and would enable young people to experience them locally and not have to travel to London. A Care stated that the money would be used for the same activity area as it was originally intended for but the activities are going to be open to young people across Dacorum with free parking and an accessible bus route and on an adventure playground site which is already heavily used. Considering the sustainability of these activities and an understanding that this money is finite therefore there is an allocated budget for monitoring, consultation and evaluation to understand what is and isn't popular and to gain some evidence to focus on what works and how to develop it for the future. There will be a minimal charge of £1-£2 and APEX will be doing this on a cost basis; this will be put into a pot to ensure the activities can continue.

Councillor Adeleke said he thought this was an excellent initiative and he was a hundred percent behind any projects that support the youth in the community. However, he had a number of grave concerns. Starting with the historical background Cllr Adeleke and asked why the Cycle Hub moved out of Grovehill and why the original project in Highfield became unviable this will allow us to make comparisons on what is going to happen in future. He added that the project was designed to plug the gap for young people aged 11-16 during weekends, evenings and holidays but he did not feel there was an adequate explanation as to what this gap is, what are they doing now or what they needed support with. He noted that the officer had met with high profile partners in Dacorum and also the Councillor for Grovehill and that this is meant to be a Dacorum wide initiative, He had concerns that members were not invited to provide their views on the initiative if it was going to be a Dacorum wide initiative. He referred to the impact on Covid-19 and said all the activities listed are group activities and felt it was reckless to provide these activities at this point in time and questioned the timing. He reiterated that he was in support of a youth initiative

but when looking at the costings he felt that the team were determined to spend the £44k balance and he could not see how some of the costings were arrived at. He listed some examples of costing queries; software, marketing contingency and others. He asked where the evidence base was and if they were the market rate and stated that huge clarifications on the costings side were needed

Councillor Banks said the Grovehill ward councillors were not consulted and neither were the Woodall Farm councillors. She as the portfolio holder has had a brief but had not had any input into the costings or the schemes proposed. She gave some background into the Highfield Youth Centre that prior to her becoming a council about 6 or 7 years ago there had been a joint project between the councillor for Highfield, Cllr Jeff Lawrence (who has now passed away) and Highfield youth charity that was set up. There was some match funding from the council and said the project never materialised and only got as far as identifying the land where a youth centre might be built, adjacent to the Highfield Community Centre. That land has now been used by The NHS; they have a doctor's surgery there. The Highfield Youth Centre project fell over and didn't happen. Councillor Banks stated there wasn't the will in the Highfield community at the time for the youth project to happen. The money for this project is sat in reserves waiting to be spent and part of it was originally used to help set up the Cycle Hub which was run by Watford Cycle Hub, they had overreached themselves as a Watford based organisation and we weren't able to engage with them engaging in the community as far as the Cycle Hub. What we have now in the Activity Hub in partnership with Apex, that are delivering a much wider facility, instead of just being a bike store, it's now a keep fit studio, a small gym suitable for personal training, onsite café and there are proposed partnerships with wellbeing providers, other exercise groups as well as utilising the outside space and developing conversations around the management of the tennis and netball courts. Although this site is based up at Cupid Green it's very much a Dacorum wide facility and Cllr Banks stated that she has questioned officers already about how they were going to open up to include not only the wider Hemel Hempstead cohort but also the villages. One of the things that had been done is to include bus routes when advertising activities and events to make provision and opportunity for young people to be drawn in from across Dacorum.

A Care said she did not make it clear than it was Councillor Banks as the portfolio holder was consulted who happens to be the ward councillor for Grovehill and apologised for this. She said the team know from other partners and the national press there is a gap and it is known nationally, that mental health and obesity are key concerns for young people and these are perceived to be an ongoing issue that may have been made worse by the current Covid pandemic. A Care advised that the aim was to organise activities for young people where they can come out and gather with likeminded people and people of their own age so they have the experience and don't feel isolated. This is the main gap the project seeks to fill; to provide cost effective activities so that young people don't feel isolated.

In response to the question on timing and if the council is being reckless A Care responded that at this stage, the report has been brought to Overview & Scrutiny Committee for comment and feedback and needs to go to Cabinet for approval to draw down the money from reserves. We are not looking at getting the project in place until February/March next year at which point, the weather starts to improve and we will have a better idea of where the pandemic is and hope to capture these young people coming out of the pandemic. All relevant risk assessments would be undertaken to ensure Covid safety and the building is already Covid secure. We

have already had our launch day their but it was limited in numbers as will the proposed activities. Sport England have approved the use of ongoing sporting activities to continue as long as they are Covid safe and A Care assured the committee that the project would be adhering to the guidelines. She said the team were not looking to spend the whole £44k but are looking to Apex to deliver as they are hosting the Active Dacorum Hub, and the costings in the report were provided by Apex. It is unknown whether they are market rate or not. A Care suspects that if there is a market rate the costings in the report will be lower than market rate as Apex is and their organisation is about any profits going back into the community and provision for the community. If the project is approved at cabinet level, the costings will be more defined and the projects will be more defined.

Councillor Adeleke referred to his query about software part of the costing. Councillors are being present this report and costings tonight to take a view on. There are rates that can be used to evaluate the activities part of the costings but not so apparent with the marketing aspects. He asked what the basis of the budget for marketing and contingency of nearly £12k was and stated that it was a lot of money for marketing this project.

A Care said the Youth Voice costing is around the hall hire and the food. The £2k grant listed in the report is for them to set up their own events, having a conversations with young people about setting up their own events. Shed advised that as pot of £2k has been set aside for young people to come up with their own events, and that the team didn't know what the young people would come up with in terms of activities so didn't know how much it would cost. In a similar way by which community grants are run to give some discretion and ownership. Costing on social media, flyers and banners and other marketing items are based on previous experience in other projects so A Care knows those costs to be pretty accurate. A Care advised that the team has experience of monitoring and evaluation, video and photo elements from a number of events and so had a pretty good idea of how much these will cost. Contingency planning was taking into account impact that Covid may have but it may not all be spent.

Councillor Barry echoed Councillor Adeleke's comments about investing in young people but also shared his concerns that young people had not been consulted on what activities they would like to be provided. She was also concerned that, as the ward councillor for Highfield, she was unaware of any money put aside for a Highfield Youth Service and would like to know who to contact about this. Councillor Barry made reference to the activities such as darts that were highlighted and backed up by being popular in London and enquired whether and local youth services or young people in Dacorum had been approached for input into this. Councillor Barry stated that in her work as a Youth Worker in Dacorum darts had never come up. She advised that there are youth councils in Dacorum that have been in contact with the Council and queried why they had not be consulted as part of this report or contacted about the parts of the report that were earmarked for Youth Voice. She said the Redbourn Road was quite heavily congested at times and bus travel is not favourable in the current climate due to residents concerns about Covid and it would mean fewer emissions if activities could be spread throughout all areas and all the adventure playgrounds. Councillor Barry stated that Grovehill is not the most impoverished area although it may appear high on the list; Highfield is one of the seven most impoverished wards in Hertfordshire. She questioned why schools had not been considered as sites because the young people are already in their school

bubbles and it would help those who don't have bus fares or parents that drive as they could access activities more easily if it was an afterschool or in school activity. She referred the boxing activities and that there were several boxing gyms across the borough and questioned whether the money could be used with those. She stated an understating of the need to use the Hub as it had failed as a Cycle Hub. She felt as if the team were desperate to use the site at Cupid Green even if it isn't the best site.

Councillor Banks said that whilst she was also the councillor for Grovehill the ward, the ward councillors were not consulted and neither were the Woodall Farm councillors who also have the boundary line with Cupid Green in their ward. She said the site is located at Cupid Green and it was looked at for developing the athletics track but the site wasn't suitable. These activities have to be based somewhere but the outreach should be far reaching and she agreed that officers needed to take on board the comments from members to look at how they can include villages and the wider Dacorum.

Referring to Highfield Youth Centre Councillor Banks highlighted that both her and officers are quite sketchy because that was well before their time. It was unknown by Councillor Banks what happened to that project or the funds that committee held the only contact Cllr Banks could recall was the late Cllr Lawrence and the late Cllr Maureen Flint. Cllr Banks reiterated that she agreed that the project needed to be spread widely across the borough and that as the project unfolded more and more stakeholders would be brought in and consulted about provision particularly young people and youth forums and asked that officers take that point on board

A Care referred to Cllr Barry's question about Youth Voice and why other youth council's hadn't been consulted. She stated that Youth Voice hadn't started yet and that it was one of the projects that they were looking to set up and to have that pot of money set aside to use with them. With reference to the question about darts the council spoke partners that regularly feedback to the council. She said that she found it interesting that some time ago some feedback was given by Cllr Banks that in a previous consultation with youth clubs, young people were asked what they wanted to be provided and they responded by saying nothing yet when they were provided with a space to do nothing, they came up with great ideas i.e. squash and that this is when bands were started. A Care stated that the council intends to monitor events that are offered very closely and ascertain which ones are popular and mediums such as Facebook will be used to find out what young people want. A Care stated that she could not remember how long ago this feedback was given but that it was sometime ago. A Care advised that she would feedback to the team the point about using schools facilities and sites but was aware that some schools were not in favour of outside bodies coming into school because of Covid safety.

Councillor Barry asked if A Care could clarify why the team had suggested setting up another youth voice group when they already existed and could be invested in. Councillor Barry gave names of some of the youth councils that she was aware of in Dacorum.

A Care said it wouldn't be something new it was just the name they are calling it, it will coordinate what is already out there.

C Foster said she and Annie the officer managing Herts Year of Culture had already started conversations with Councillor Barry about the youth voice/council and how to grow this.

Councillor Hollinghurst said he and another town councillor had both been independently approached by young people interested in skateboarding and he queried why this was not mentioned in the project list. He stated that he was aware that it needed some capital investment to set up but once they were set up they were almost self-running.

Following up on these approaches, he had visited a number of skate parks: Tring, Berkhamsted and Aston Clinton. He said the one in Tring is quite old about 25 years old and the new one provided in Berkhamsted has been a great success. He gave an overview of the materials used in its construction. He said he had been impressed with how friendly the young people using the park were, the way they organised themselves without needing any supervision, that they travel a long way to use it. After speaking with the young people he met at the skate park they advised that it was going to be an Olympic sport, that the young people using it felt they benefitted from becoming fit, improved self-esteem and sense of achievement from using the skate park through overcoming fear. He asked if additional provision for skateboarding could be considered in future budget cycles specifically because once it is in situ it lasts a long time, it's self-running, the type of person it attracts has a sense of responsibility and it provides hours of interest. He advised all present to visit the Berkhamsted skate park.

Councillor Banks agreed with Councillor Hollinghurst's comments and shared that she had also spoken to young people about skate parks and said she would like to see some charitable organisations and the community centre networks who could possibly claim some funding from the Dacorum community grant as a kickstart to extend this provision. She stated that this might be more suited for the community centre network to extend this provision as they are able to claim for grants that the council cannot.

Councillor Hollinghurst added that the Tring park was put in a cage, which was not liked by young people and asked if any future new skate provisions could not have cages like the one currently in Tring.

C Foster said there were fantastic skateboarding facilities already across the borough, there is a new park in Gadebridge Park and there is also the XC centre at Jarman Park but understand this did not cover Tring and said it is something that could be looked at.

Councillor England said he felt that officers had started with the buildings available and not the people and he said there were six wards in Dacorum with deprivation and felt these should be focussed on as priority. He said there were already established buildings across the borough that could host these activities and listed a few of them. He suggested that if we are starting with buildings we should start with these buildings and that he did not feel comfortable to make a decision that all of the money would be spent unless we were clear that it would be spent across all of the wards that we needed to address. He had concerns over the governance of the project that was established in the sport strategy highlights that the council will have improved engagement with stakeholders and have a collaborative approach but didn't feel this was reflected in this project in full, namely 4.1, 5.2 and 5.5 in the sports strategy. He stated that 5.5 in the strategy contained his main points.

Councillor England referred to the Community Impact Assessment for this report which states that consultation was carried out with the local councillor, not the portfolio holder. This councillor is also employed by the Grovehill Community Centre which would be affected by the project quite a lot and so felt the committee should not agree that this report goes to Cabinet as it is not ready and there has been wide cross-party concern about the consultation.

Councillor Banks responded that Alex Care had already commented that the reference should have been that the consultation was with the portfolio holder and not the ward councillor. Councillor Banks responded and said that Grovehill was one of the wards which were an area of deprivation and officers see this as a base and utilised the estate we already have. She accepted comments from members about spreading the provision across the borough and has asked officers to look into this. She commented that she had stated clearly that she would like officers to take on board the comments made by the committee regarding outreach and how the project is marketed to stakeholders and partners. If the building had been a different part of Dacorum then the same argument would have held up. The reference to the community centre was more about assets that would be used to host activities like all the community centres in Dacorum and would like officers to look at going to all the villages, consult and deliver where appropriate. She added the metaphor that you can't move the tennis court you will have to bring young people to where the tennis court is which happens to be geographically where they are. Councillor Banks agreed that some very valid points had been made during this meeting and that they were points that needed to be taken away and considered.

A Care said that part of the project is consultation and engagement and some projects and locations may change and is not set in stone. A Care reiterated that she would be taking the concerns around location back to the team and would also be consulting with young people.

Councillor Griffiths clarified with the committee that the recommendation is that members note the report and provide feedback and there is no mention of referring this to cabinet.

Councillor England said the if this was more broad-brush then he would have expected the report to include a wider network of buildings in the borough and that the committee need to make clear that this ought to be consulted with all councillors and more widely in the community and queried whether the £56,000 already spent represented good value for money.

Councillor Banks said these were all valid points and the team will take away on work on them. She said the project was worth pursuing and the report will be fine-tuned and brought back to the committee.

Councillor Adeleke asked if there was a time limit on the spending of the £44k.

M Rawdon said there was no timescale for spending the money and could be spent partially but that whenever it is spent it will have to be approved by cabinet.

Councillor Adeleke asked if it had to spent as a lump sum or could be spent partially and if there was any risk of losing this reserve of £44k.

M Rawdon advised that there was no risk of losing this reserve and there is a lot of flexibility on how it is spent.

A Care concurred that it would be spent partially.

Councillor Mahmood suggested the report was taken away and reworked and that it was too Grovehill centric. The report did not consider the location accessibility and we should not be throwing money at a site that may not be easy to access. He also listed that ASB, and levels of deprivation needed further consideration. He stated that the report needed to go back to the drawing board and the committee could not at this stage recommend the report and asked the Chair to ask that the report was reworked and the recommendation to approve the report could not be agreed. He stated that £44k was a lot of money and needed further consideration.

M Rawdon thanked the committee for their comments and the team will take them away and come back to committee with a revised report that factors in the comments that were made at this meeting. He responded to Councillor England's question about value for money in the £56,000 already spent for the Cycle Hub. The team took over the project after it had been tendered and regular performance meetings were held with the Cycle Hub but there were some issues at these meetings about the performance and their ability to give the indicators on whether they were performing the way they should and although we worked hard to continue the Cycle Hub it became clear that it was not sustainable.

One identification was that a change use was needed as it was too narrow and the decision was taken to find a provider who was in better shape who could deliver the service we wanted.

Councillor Imarni summarised the committee's comments as part of their feedback. The committee required clarification on the following: clarifications on costings, increased consultation with youth groups, whether it was feasible or more appropriate to use school facilities, consider streamlining and using the existing youth groups instead of starting something new and look at the provision of skate park facilities and if there is a charitable organisation or community centre to apply for grant funding to kickstart better skateboarding facilities across the borough. There is a feeling from councillors that the officers started with the building not the people and there should be a greater focus on the six wards highlighted as areas with deprivation. To consider the adventure playgrounds as a starting point for a project that needs funding There should be improved engagement with stakeholders and where this should take place. A review of the community impact assessment as it is felt that the portfolio holder may not have been consulted to the extent that the committee may have expected. The committee have noted that the portfolio holder has acknowledged that there is some work to be done. Councillor Imarni stated that considering these comments ,this is not a report that can be noted and it is definitely something that needs to come back to us with all of the quite valid points considered. She advised that the committee have to scrutinise responsibly and this is almost half of the original grant given to the borough as so needs further consideration. Councillor Imarni asked the officers to reschedule the report to come back to the committee before it goes anywhere else and now this has come to light if any members are aware of needs in their wards to make officers aware so that these can be considered also.

L Roberts advised that to manage expectations because December is joint Budget meeting, January would be the right time to bring this back to the committee.

Councillor Imarni agreed and stated that because of covid social distancing this is one report that we potentially have time on and so once Linda Roberts has been able to review the comments she could come back to the Chairman with a reasonable date for it to return to the committee.

70 DBC PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORTS ACTION PLAN

C Foster introduced the report to members and said there have been a lot of changes because of the pandemic and some activities have moved online which demonstrated how technology can support the delivery of sports and activity. A virtual wellness festival took place online with a range of activities including yoga, mindfulness and healthy eating. There were seven activities with 445 people attending. The Run Your Town event will be held virtually this year on the weekend of 17-18th October and we are asking residents to sign up to walk/run 5km or 10km for a £5 donation and all proceeds will go to the local NHS charity as chosen by the Mayor. All participants will receive a medal. The Active Dacorum Hub is open now as a multi-use communal venue and the aim is to engage all residents in their physical and mental wellbeing. C Foster said she was able to utilise s.106 funding to resurface the tennis courts and add netball courts at Cupid Green.

Councillor England thanked C Foster for their engagement in the changes to the report he had proposed, he said they had done a good job and it was good to see some numbers. He recognised that covid-19 has impacted the programme and makes it difficult to evaluate what is being done. He said he felt strongly that adventure playgrounds and community centres should be involved. He suggested a goal of a greater percentage of projects tackling inactivity.

C Foster said Dacorum is a large borough and the project has to start somewhere. The first task was to find a use for the closed building at Cupid Green playing fields and this has now been achieved. She said she was passionate about creating community partnerships which should allow us to look at other locations. In relation to inactivity, this is being tackled again through partnership working and working with Sports England and the planning team to set up a working group to look at the results from the Local Plan and awaiting on the indoor feasibility study to be published by the end of the year. There are certain areas with a shortfall, such as artificial 4G pitches and local football facilities which is run by the Football Association. She said she would be happy to receive any suggestions or invite interested members to the working group.

Councillor Adeleke asked how many projects C Foster envisioned would happen for the whole year and is there a target to achieve.

C Foster said the action plan was a working document and there aren't any specific targets. New items can be added as the plan evolves.

Councillor Adeleke asked about community grants and how are they policed to ensure the money is being spent for what it was intended for. If a group is successful at being awarded a grant, he asked if they would be able to apply again.

A Care said there was three grants rounds a year. If a community group applies and is successful, they cannot apply for another grant until the next financial year and it cannot be for the same project. If a group applies and is unsuccessful, they can apply again within the same financial year. In terms of policing the grant money, if a group is successful, they are issued with a terms and conditions letter and must complete an evaluation form when the project is complete.

Councillor Mahmood thanked C Foster on a good report and said it was heartening to see the level of activity and engagement.

Councillor Barry asked for clarification on the type of pitch that was being installed at Cupid Green; was it 3G or 4G?

M Rawdon said he would confirm with officers.

Action: M Rawdon to confirm the type of pitch

Councillor Barry suggested that 'Dacorum Active Hub' makes it sound quite central.

C Foster said she wanted to incorporate the whole of Dacorum in the name and not make it specific to Grovehill.

71 WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor England requested an update on when the committee would be able to consider the climate change emergency.

Action: Councillor Imarni to get an update from the Climate Change Lead Officer

The Meeting ended at 9.10 pm