

Chairman's Report November 6th 2019

1. New build- at last we are able to prepare the Exchange to open on January 13th 2020. This date fits with the Library Service and their arrangements to move/stock and place fittings/organise technical input – so with the Councils agreement we can officially offer a Parish Council hub and library service from this date.

Ascertain level of support

2. A meeting is to be arranged with the Library Service officers/managers to look at marketing and increasing library use and our all the facilities on offer going forward.
3. Cllr Gooding has responded to my question in relation to what advantage we would gain from submitting an EOI – unfortunately the question was not answered – but, the response does state that in addition to supporting CRL's, ECC is also open to partnerships with organisations to support Council-run libraries in other ways, and that these discussions can take place with members of the Library Service Management Team. I will pursue this with both Cllr Gooding and the management Team for clarity on this strategy.
4. The Clerk and I are pursuing the payment of the shortfall of the contract/lease agreed following the Library Consultation process with ECC. Cllr Finch has agreed that the initial agreement of a ten- year lease on the previously agreed terms be upheld- following discussion with Cllr. Gooding. The one-year lease agreement has a shortfall of £3,000 on the lease and % payment of the running costs.
5. UDC CEO, Dawn French was considering the possible use of the Exchange as a Polling Station – the Clerk is following up on this proposal as the election has now been confirmed for December – this will give us a chance to make use of the building before we and the library are fully installed.

6. CAB – We have an agenda item to discuss our Charging Policy for hire of rooms in the new building – this has a relevance to our ongoing discussions with the CAB re the accommodation and frequency of use of the building.

We also need to clarify what practice and outcomes they aspire to in the future from their expression of interest in running a Community Library for ECC and how this will fit with the other services on offer from the Exchange.

7. The Community Information Centre provision within the Exchange needs to be confirmed and established by UDC in time for the January service delivery from the new build. Our District Councillors are requested to give their full support to this initiative. Cllr Melvin Caton agreed at a recent library network meeting to pursue this with his colleague District Councillors and the current UDC administration (this was agreed by the previous administration).
8. Similarly, we have had no communication from UDC in relation to the costs/funding opportunities to demolish Crafton Green House to provide additional car parking spaces – again we request District Councillors to support and pursue this action.
9. Our Clerk has chased officers at UDC on our behalf to arrange a meeting to confirm the terms and conditions in relation to the agreement between UDC/the Police/the Parishes re the deployment of a PCSO. In relation to the Parishes- this is especially important as the PCSO is now in post, having completed their training. Given the % splits in funding we need to agree practice terms. The Parish Council will also be inviting the PCSO to attend a Full council meeting.
10. The Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation – the consultation period has been postponed due to the required time for production of the mapping exhibits, venue uncertainty and volunteer contributor's availability to support the consultation. A new date is yet to be confirmed – but the exhibition will be housed now in the Exchange.

11. Grove Hill – we await a date for a stakeholder meeting which will be set following ECC Technical Officer visits to the location and review of their findings.
12. Youth Club – There has been no outcome from the work agreed with UCVS – we therefore need to discuss with Gemini Support Services, who manage the delivery of the Youth work for us, how we will continue to move forward to provide safe, efficient and valuable activities to meet the needs of our youth in future years.
13. Finally, a reminder to all Councillors that Remembrance Sunday is this weekend – with the expectation of attendance in the parade and at the service. We meet at Crafton Green at 10.10 a.m. We need 2 volunteers to help hand out the Orders of Service in the Memorial Gardens, and 3 volunteers to help with the retiring collection in the Memorial Gardens after the service – who can help please? Please let Ruth know.
14. We continue to respond to FOI requests in relation to our accounts and Asset Register. Councillors will receive a copy of the latest response.