

## **COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **ITEM NO: 13 – Update on 5 Year Local Plan Advisory Committee Work**

**This information report provides a brief update on the work of the 5 Year Local Plan Advisory Committee**

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#### **Information**

Following the Annual Parish Meeting in March 2019, it was agreed that the creation of a 5 Year Local Plan for the Parish would be a desirable development. It would enable the Parish Council, together with its community, to plan ahead and highlight development needs for the Parish to enhance both the services and assets available to the community as well as secure activities which meet agreed aims for the Parish, such as in support of maintaining and improving the environment.

While the Parish Council would be the custodian of the Plan, it is envisaged that this should be a Plan owned by its community and to that end, further consultation on a proposed Plan would be undertaken, once a draft is created. This would be particularly important where funding and resources were needed which could result in further precept increases – e.g. the Playground, now in the ownership of the Parish Council, will require reserve funds to be developed to maintain it and also prepare for a longer term replacement programme.

Additionally, the Advisory Committee will actively seek contributions from individuals or groups in the local community of possible projects or priorities across the three headings of Assets, Services and Activities which can be considered for inclusion. To that end, the Advisory Committee has proposed that over time, one or two community members might be invited to join it for specific discussions.

Finally, the Advisory Committee is looking at the potential development of a Village Design Statement (VDS) in the Plan. Obviously, this would be a single VDS for the Parish across all its villages. It would also, at this stage not be a VDS which conforms to the requirements of a ‘formally designated’ statement, but be more of a first stage development of a VDS. Any draft of the VDS would be included in a working draft issued for consultation.

In the interim, some activities have already been highlighted which were existing in the Parish Council ‘plans’. These are noted below.

#### **Developments to Date**

The 5 Year Plan Advisory Committee has now met 5 times (twice as a Working Group and three times under our new Advisory Committee designation), with the most recent meeting in August 2019.

The work to date has included:

1. Creation of the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee (previously a Parish Council Working Group)
2. Development of a timetable for the work of the Advisory Committee
3. Development of a template on which to create the Plan and the production of some initial text for inclusion in the Plan for context, history, aims and objectives, values and process. The headings in the template are identical to those presented in the report on proposed 5 Year Local Plan development earlier this year at the February meeting of the Parish Council.

4. Development of some priorities for the current Plan, based on the issues already raised with the Parish Council in various reports and included in the Parish Council's current forward budget and reserves programme. The proposed priorities for action in the current year (which may expand over two or more years, depending on funding requirements) are:
  - a. Repair / replacement of benches – now considered urgent (see appendix 1 attached)
  - b. Telephone boxes – a plan is already in hand for this
  - c. Village signs – as previously agreed by the Parish Council

N.B. It is proposed the fourth contemporary item – Noticeboards – will enter the Plan next year, given the need to 'manage' time and investment appropriately.

Some other possible inclusions for the short to midterm Plan cycle will be included in a working initial draft to be prepared during September, for consultation at Parish Council and ultimately with the community. The exact process for consultation with the community will be determined at a later date.

5. Each item / activity identified will have an 'owner' as well as a brief project plan to enable the Advisory Committee and ultimately the Parish Council to monitor progress and budget compliance.

#### Conclusion

The work of the 5 Year Plan Advisory Committee is progressing well. Ultimately, it is hoped that a final first draft Plan will be available on which consultation can take place and in readiness for the next round of Parish Council budget setting, commencing in November.

Simon Lucas

September 2019

## APPENDIX 1 - Parish Benches – Update on Condition Assessment

This information report provides a brief update on the issue of the Parish Benches. Assessed condition and possible requirements

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### Information

Over the past 6 months, some of the benches owned by the Parish Council across the Parish have been found to be rotting away / in need of some maintenance and repair. One bench has had to be removed and another partially restricted in use as a result of major deterioration of the fabric of the benches.

We have a total of 11 benches under our ownership / responsibility.

A survey was conducted during August this year to check the condition of the benches and this report summarises the position as of the end of August 2019.

### Survey

In conducting the survey, a simple 'condition status' was created to record the issues with each bench.

This was as follows:

**Category A** – good condition – no work needed / minor intervention such as cleaning required;

**Category B** – poor condition in some respects and requires some repairs / major maintenance / cleaning and treatment to bring up to standard;

**Category C** – very poor condition requires major intervention / replacement and potentially or actually a health and safety risk.

The survey has revealed the following:

Bench 1 – Crossroads at New Inn Road / Southampton Road: Steel and timber construction; requires a major clean and seal and metal parts painted and one seat slat replacing. Over time, this will deteriorate further and ultimately will need major repairs: **Grade B/C**

Bench 2 – British Legion: new bench; no action: **Grade A**

Bench 3 – Outside Conservative Office, Cadnam: all timbers require replacement and metal supports cleaning and painting: **Grade C**

Bench 4 – On verge outside White Hart on Romsey Road: very poor condition; rusted metal ends and warping timber; one metal leg is flaking and delaminating - requires replacement: **Grade C**

Bench 5 – Splitwind Pond: identical construction to Bench 3 above; all timbers require replacement and metal supports cleaning and painting; Note, this is a commemorative bench: **Grade C**

Bench 6 – Crossroads at Pollards Moor and Romsey Road: very poor condition and in danger of being a safety risk; all timbers rotting and legs in poor condition; requires major (total) repair or full replacement; note, this is a commemorative bench; bench is located very close to shelter seat and query whether or not (subject to commemorative status), this bench could be relocated when replaced: **Grade C**

Bench 7 – War Memorial Bench 1 – timber and metal ends; metal ends sound but need painting; timbers all need replacement / major intervention: **Grade B/C**

Bench 8 - War memorial Bench 2: as for above Bench 7: **Grade B/C**

Bench 9 - War Memorial Bench 3: brand new metal bench: no action: **Grade A**

Bench 10 – Parish Hall upper field Bench 1 – very poor condition; running repairs already showing further failure; full replacement required: **Grade C**

Bench 11 - Parish Hall upper field Bench 2 – collapsed and has been removed; full replacement required: **Grade N/A**

#### Next Steps

For those benches requiring major repair and maintenance (Grades B and B/C), a work programme is required. It is proposed that we find a suitable source of hardwood timber supplies which can produce timbers of the right dimensions (all the benches have slightly different timber sizes), on behalf of the Parish Council and a programme is put in place to undertake the work with a suitable contractor appointed.

For those benches requiring replacement (Grade C), we investigate the most suitable replacement variants and price them into the programme. These investigations are already in hand.

NOTE: we also need to consider the status of the commemorative benches, especially the one at the Pollards Moor / Southampton Road crossroads. We will undertake further investigation on these benches and their provenance.

In terms of timescales, should we maintain all the current bench locations irrespective of the condition of the benches, it is likely that the Parish Council would need to develop a programme which spanned two years, dealing with the most urgent requirements (major repair / replacement) first and then full maintenance and working repair second. An exact appraisal of the timescale could be made once the costs of the works have been estimated against quotes for materials and where appropriate, labour.

#### Recommendation

The programme to start work on the benches is commenced and the identified budget used to source, in the first instance, the materials for bench repairs.

Where benches are to be replaced, assuming we wish to maintain a bench in any specific location, recommendations will be made at a future meeting for the most appropriate replacement (taking into account that the new benches purchased in the last 4 years are 1. plastic and 2. cast metal).

Further investigation is undertaken on the provenance of the three commemorative benches prior to any work being undertaken.

Simon Lucas

September 2019