

Question from Councillor Dr Crampton

At the Cabinet meeting of 1st September 2022 it was agreed that "Cabinet will ask the LGA or another recognised body to provide an independent investigation in response to the request from Audit Committee that Cabinet carries out a review of the application of project governance, financial controls and reporting for the Shapley Heath project".

Has the LGA or another recognised body been engaged and if so when will the investigation commence?

Reply from Leader Councillor David Neighbour

Both the District Councillors Network and the LGA have been contacted and both are currently looking for a suitable candidate to carry out a reflective review of the Shapley Heath project. It is hoped that a candidate will be identified by next week and will be able to start immediately. The Cabinet have also approached a barrister and retired CEO who will be able to carry out the review, should the two organisations not be able to find a suitable candidate.

Question from Councillor Forster

1. How many of the CCTV cameras that cover Fleet town centre have not been working for at least 24 hours over the last six months and are all the monitors in the CCTV control room fully functional if not, how many are not working and how long have they not been working for?

Reply from Councillor Bailey.

Made in writing as Councillor Bailey was not at the meeting.

In the period from 1st April there has one camera where the camera was not operational for more than 24 hours. Two other cameras have had faults that lasted more than 24 hours which meant that they were not fully functional but these faults but did not stop the cameras for being able to be used during this period.

I can also confirm that all the monitors in the control room are working.

Question from Councillor Forster

2. How many staff are involved, full-time or part time in the community safety team. Can you please specify what work - and any specific outcome - of work they have done over the last six months, following the spate of cycle thefts that have occurred at the leisure centre, the station, and the centre of fleet plus in some of our residential areas other than producing some information in a newsletter. Have any arrests directly resulted?

Reply from Councillor Bailey read out in his absence by Councillor Neighbour

Hart Community Safety team consists of a Community Safety Manager and a Community Safety Officer which are both full time roles. The role of the team as stipulated by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is ***to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area*** and it further provides our strategic and operational response to antisocial behaviour across the district.

It is not the role of Hart Community Safety team to detect or investigate crime as this function falls to the Police service, nor do we have the powers to effect arrests but the team works closely and collaboratively with Hampshire Constabulary to ensure that we focus our attention where it is most needed - dictated by number of reports - and raise awareness of issues and any means to promote crime prevention accordingly.

Regarding bike thefts specifically, following concerns raised by Cllrs, the team have been in contact with Police who confirmed that as of 21st September 2022, they had received 5 reported cycle thefts in the last 40 days across Hart including 2 relating to Hart Leisure Centre which resulted in a visit to the Hart Leisure Centre to see if there was any way in which they could be supported in terms of crime prevention advice out to the public. This resulted in the article around bike safety in the Hart Community Safety Newsletter which is also published on the HDC website. Unfortunately, outcomes in prevention work are difficult to quantify but the team will continue to monitor the situation.

Any Police enforcement action taken is always reliant upon reports being made and the availability of sufficient evidence. The Community Safety team are not responsible for and would not get involved in the provision of any such evidence that may result in arrests being made but do encourage reporting and sharing of evidence in all communications with residents that contact them.

Earlier in the summer, the team were considering a joint Bike Safety event with the Fleet South Neighbourhood Policing Team, offering bike register stickers at a heavily discounted rate, but it was decided that, proportionately, the number of reports being received did not justify such an event at the time. We are more than happy to revisit this if it is felt that it would be of proportional benefit.

Supplementary question From Councillor Forster

Would Cabinet consider adding to what is in effect a back office non-outcome admin function, by employing patrol or community safety officers that can go out and target problem areas, as is done in Rushmoor and Basingstoke.

Reply from Councillor Neighbour

Hart had had wardens of this sort many years ago, however they were stopped as a cost saving measure. The council can debate restarting this service as part of the budget debate in February.

Question from Councillor Forster

3. What is the current utilisation of Gurkha Square car Park in percentage terms on an average weekday and weekend and can you provide similar figures for the Civic Centre main car park, Victoria Road car Park and the council staff parking area please.

Information to support a written response is being collated and a response will be circulated to all Councillors as soon as possible.

Question from Councillor Forster

4. Church Crookham and Fleet, Men's Shed is a phenomenal service for our community and currently has a waiting list of 25 or more people wishing to join. Having spoken with the chair, there is a desire for a second Men's Shed. Would this council be willing to provide consideration of support, space and funding for such a facility on the Edenbrook SANG which could be located near 'minding the garden' and the pump track and become a pavilion (or similar) for all three groups, in particular for young people visiting the Pump Track as well as for all those using the park.

Reply from Councillor Bailey read out in his absence by Councillor Neighbour

We really appreciate the work of the Men's Shed too, and their work on Minding the Garden, with HVA has been invaluable.

If and when we receive funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we would certainly investigate the opportunity of Men's Shed at Edenbrook as part of Hub development of Harts Green Garden.

The feasibility would all be researched in the first 6 months of UKSPF funding (if we receive it)

Supplementary question From Councillor Forster

It is good to hear that the Leader will support investigating this if there is funding forthcoming from the shared Prosperity Fund. I wonder if consideration could be given to using S106 funds that may not as yet exist but as they come forward; or any other funds including allocating grant funding to such a project

Reply from Councillor Neighbour

Providing it is lawful to do so, we can look at S106 funding. The council as a whole looks forward to moving this project forward.

Comment from Chairman

There is a desire to have Mens' Sheds across the district. It is hoped that these will also be considered if we receive funding from the UK Shared Prosperity fund.