54. PRESENTATION: HILLCROFT COLLEGE

Members received an oral presentation by the Principal of Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College, Gabrielle Flint on new adult learning opportunities at the 12 South Bank, Surbiton site. Ms Flint informed the Committee that she would email her presentation to members after the meeting to enable further sharing.

Members were informed of the history of Hillcroft College, formed in 1920 and originally a residential college solely for the education of adult women, and its merger in September 2017 with Richmond Adult Community College to form Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College (RHACC), operating from the Parkshot site in Richmond and at South Bank. The College is built on shared expertise in adult learning and commitment to the needs of adults and communities that need further educational or tailored opportunities to develop the skills to thrive and achieve their potential. Ms Flint told the meeting of the College’s mission to empower adults and communities through education, skills and enterprise. It was noted that the key to RHACC’s recent growth and success has been its ability to adapt to the challenges of constantly changing social and economic trends, as well as responding to major changes in government policy on adult funding. As a result, the College achievement rates are above national standards and were rated as a Grade 2 "Good" by Ofsted in May 2015.
Ms Flint went on to identify recent challenges, including changes to previous levels of government funding for the College, along with difficulties facing a number of the learners, for example a significant increase in enrolled learners with mental health challenges. Members noted that the 2 campuses had superb facilities including a dedicated Art School and Business School, a women-only education offer, a 120-seat theatre, specialist co-working and office space, meeting rooms, classrooms, workshops and kitchens. Serving over 7,000 learners each year, RHACC offers a vibrant learning environment tailored specifically for adult learners. The intention was to develop the curriculum offer in lifestyle transitions to help to ensure that the College could serve the community for another 100 years, with an aim to outreach involvement with the community.

Ms Flint asked that Members regard the College as part of Surbiton’s infrastructure with a duty to deliver community needs and to “ask us and task us” in collaborative working on mental health, loneliness and inclusion issues, along with key life skills and learning strategies.

In response to a question from Councillor White, Ms Flint confirmed that the emphasis is on ‘learners first’ and the College were keen to work with Kingston Adult Education and also the Council and the South Thames College Group on an integrated strategy. Councillor Falchikov-Sumner expressed her support for the College’s work and asked about any development plans for the Surbiton site. Ms Flint confirmed that the College planned to develop a more inclusive environment and offered to discuss this further with Councillor Falchikov-Sumner outside of the meeting. The Chair confirmed that the current meeting would not be an appropriate forum for the discussion of any future planning application.

Discussion continued and Councillor Beynon referred to mental health ‘champions’ and said that the Council was keen to develop relationships around this. Ms Flint undertook to invite Councillor Beynon to Hillcroft with regard to this issue. Councillor Green then made reference to the voluntary and community sector review and said that the College could input into this review. It was further noted that the South London Partnership Skills and Employment Board (chaired by Councillor Green) gave additional scope for interaction with the College.

At the conclusion of discussion, the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Flint for attending and giving her presentation.

55. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were two public questions:-

1. **Fishponds Park**

   Mr Rob Eyre-Brook asked the following question:

   **Q:** Please would you inform us on the progress towards a Heritage Lottery Fund application for Fishponds Park and how the Friends can best be involved in the process?
Mr Eyre-Brook also asked if it would be possible for a meeting to be arranged with the Council prior to 9 January 2020.

In reply, the Neighbourhood Manager, James Geach summarised the following answer set out in full below, and undertook to provide Mr Eyre-Brook with a copy.

1. The Historic Landscape Assessment of the site has been completed, and this information can be used to inform and support the development of grant funding applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) or any other identified suitable grant providers. It is also a valuable document in its own right and can guide any future interventions to the landscape of the park.

2. The Phase 1 Habitat Survey for the site has been completed and this provides ecologically based information about the habitats and species currently present on the site. It also makes outline recommendations for improving and extending habitats to improve biodiversity. As noted in 1 above, this document can be used to support any future funding bids. It is also a valuable document in its own right and can guide any future interventions to the habitat and species biodiversity of the park.

3. The topographical survey of the site has also been completed at a detailed level. The topographical survey will be required to permit detailed landscape design and hydrological proposals to be developed for the site. This will be a requirement of any application to HLF or similar grant providers.

4. There is an outstanding requirement to understand from Thames Water the hydrological changes they made to the site as a result of the Brown Road Alleviation scheme they undertook in circa 2009. It would also be beneficial to understand the outcome of their monitoring of the scheme post installation e.g. whether the design intentions have been achieved and any impact on existing water bodies etc. It is considered that this information would be of considerable benefit and may remove or reduce the need for the Council to develop its own hydrological survey, for which, funding isn’t currently available (See 5 below). Various attempts have been made to get a response from Thames Water about this matter, however to date this has not been forthcoming.

5. In order to support the development of an application to HLF or similar grant funders there is a requirement for financial resources to be identified. This is needed to: fund the further development, design and costing of detailed proposals to provide a firm estimate of overall project costs and to provide a sound financial and feasible basis for submitting an application to funders.

6. There is also a need to establish a commitment to financial match funding of any bid should it progress successfully. On the basis that the Council would either need to submit the bid or be a key partner to any bid, there would normally be an expectation that the Council would commit a reasonable match funding component.
7. A bid for Capital Funding to support the development of grant funding applications has been submitted to the Council’s 2020/2021 Capital Bids Process. The outcome of the Bid will be known following the February 2020 Council Meeting. If the bid is successful it is anticipated that work to prepare the project scope and therefore the required information to support grant applications would start in April 2020.

Involvement of the Friends

1. The Council is currently carrying out an extensive ‘Greenspaces in Kingston’ community engagement exercise. The outcome of this process will be used to inform the future strategic direction of parks and greenspaces in the borough and to inform the basis of future maintenance contracts. As part of this process existing community groups such as the Friends of Fishponds Park have been sent specific questionnaires. As a starting point it would be appreciated if the Friends could complete this questionnaire.

2. As part of any grant funding bid development there will need to be an agreed vision for the future of the park and it is considered that the Friends would be in a good position to assist in this process with the Council and other agreed partners. As noted above the Council’s involvement in this process would ideally start after development funding had been confirmed in 2020.

3. The Friends could assist in building wider community support for the improvements to the park, proposed through any grant funding application. This type of support would be required to provide evidence of community involvement and engagement required by potential grant funders.

4. The Friends can continue to support and build on their existing volunteer activities to assist with the future maintenance of the park and this would in some instances be able to count as ‘contribution in kind’ to provide an element of match funding for grant applications.

5. Should grant funding applications progress in future, the Friends would be involved in the development of design proposals, improvement priorities, workshops and events to communicate and agree the proposals with the wider community. This will, by its nature require detailed and intensive consideration to arrive at an appropriate and agreed range of solutions.

6. As part of any grant application over a value of £10,000, the HLF is also offering Community Grants of £10,000 - £25,000, this is to allow a ‘grantee’ to give out ‘third party’ grants to both not for profit organisations and private owners for small-scale conservation and activities. The detail of this option would have to be developed as part of any larger application to be submitted by the Council. There is a potential opportunity, therefore, for the Friends to receive direct funding for their activities within the park to benefit the project post application.

The Chair asked that the meeting that had been requested by Mr Eyre-Brook be arranged and the Neighbourhood Manager undertook to confirm the details of this.
2. **Ellerton Road**

Mr Ernie Allen asked the following question:

**Q:** Please would you investigate and deal with blocked drains in Ellerton Road? – recently this was causing water pooling from the top of the kerb out for 15 inches and also puddling in the vicinity of the Co-op. I do not believe these have been cleaned adequately for some time.

In response, the Chair said that this matter would be investigated and action taken as soon as possible. He confirmed that the issue had also been raised by Councillor Abraham.

56. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Schaper and Self.

57. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

58. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 November 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

59. **PETITIONS**

There were no petitions submitted.

60. **NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGER’S REPORT**

The Committee received the oral report of the Neighbourhood Manager summarising the following:-

- The Council is undertaking a review of how it works with the voluntary and community sector, with a Surbiton co-design session on 10 December between 16.00 and 19.00 at Surbiton Library. Those wishing to attend could sign-up by visiting vcskingston-codesign3.eventbrite.com.

- This year’s Community Grants programme is still open and applications could be made via the Council’s website and searching Community Grants.

- Consultation on the Council’s emerging Community Plans has finished, with the draft Plans to be submitted to Neighbourhood Committees in spring 2020.
61. **VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Committee agreed to vary the order of business to consider item 9, Community Grants as next business.

62. **COMMUNITY GRANTS**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Head of Healthy and Resilient Neighbourhoods on an application received from Surbiton Youth Marching Band for a Neighbourhood Community Grant of £2,450. The application sought to provide 62 waterproof capes for members of the band to wear over their uniforms when performing in bad weather, including extras, in several size groups, in order to cover the continuous growth of the young band members.

The report informed the Committee that Surbiton Royal British Legion Youth Marching Band (Surbiton Youth Marching Band) teaches young people between ages 8 - 25 to play traditional musical instruments as well as drill and parade skills. All band members are given a musical instrument, tuition and uniform for a nominal fee, allowing them to learn to play an instrument, something many would not have had the opportunity to do without the Band, due to the cost of lessons. The Band have played at many local and National events including Surbiton Remembrance Day, The Lord Mayor’s Show, The Victory Youth Tattoo, Surbiton festival, Bricquebec festival, France and most recently a concert with the Band of the Scots Guards.

The Committee heard from Mr Ron Spence, Bandmaster and Trustee, in support of the submitted application. Following questions from the Committee, and responses from Mr Spence, it was

**RESOLVED** – That a Neighbourhood Community Grant of £2,450 to Surbiton Youth Marching Band be approved.

Voting – unanimous

Councillor Falchikov-Sumner left the meeting at the conclusion of discussion on this item (8.30pm).

63. **PLANNING APPLICATION 19/01931/FUL: CLAREMONT COURT, 4 ST JAMES' ROAD SURBITON, KT6 4QP**

Before commencement of discussion on item 8, and with reference to earlier consideration of the Hillcroft College item, the Principal Planner, Alex Rosser-Trokas confirmed to the Committee that the Council had not received a planning application for the College site.
Members had before them the report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration on an application for development in the Borough.

A summary of the reasons for granting planning permission and of any relevant development plan policies and proposals is included in the report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration for each application where permission is recommended. Permitted applications are subject to the conditions, legal agreements and informatives set out in the report and late material together with any other details on late responses to consultations or comments received since the agenda was printed, revised drawings circulated at the meeting and any recommendations, additional conditions and informatives set out below.

19/01931/FUL – Claremont Court, 4 St. James’ Road, Surbiton, KT6 4QP
Erection of a three storey residential building in the courtyard to provide 5 flats (3x1 bed and 2x2 bed) and extensions and alterations to existing building to provide 1x1 bed flat and 1x studio flat, plus associated works to enlarge an existing flat, pedestrian circulation, amenity space and bin and cycle stores on site.

[Late Material was circulated for this item, including correction and amendments to the previously published report.]

Permitted, subject to completion of a Section 106 agreement, and the conditions set out in the report, with an amendment to informative no.1 to emphasise that it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the proposed development can be implemented in full compliance with the relevant provisions of the Building Regulations, in relation to the new and existing dwellings and the proposed alterations to access and egress routes.

Voting: Unanimous

64. INFORMATION ITEM: WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme for January to March 2020 be noted.

65. URGENT ITEMS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no urgent items.

Signed…………………………………………………….Date…………………
Chair