



GUILDFORD
B O R O U G H

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Tom Horwood
Joint Chief Executive
Guildford & Waverley
Borough Councils

EXECUTIVE

MONDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2023

Supplementary Information Sheet

Agenda No Item

9. **Supplementary Information Sheet (Pages 1 - 8)**

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Executive

20 March 2023

Supplementary Information

Procedure for the discharge of business at this meeting

The Leader of the Council welcomes the attendance of members of the public and non-Executive councillors at this meeting.

The procedure for dealing with each item of business shall be as follows:

1. Lead Councillor to introduce report on the matter
2. Non-Executive councillors invited to ask a question or comment, for which they will have a maximum of **five** minutes each
3. Lead councillor to respond to any questions/comments
4. Executive debates the matter
5. Lead councillor to respond to any questions/comments
6. Executive to make decision on the matter

AGENDA ITEM 5: REPLACEMENT OF GUILDFORD SPECTRUM (Pages 13 - 18)

Lead Councillor: Councillor James Steel, Lead Councillor for Environment and Regulatory Services

Lead Officer: Damien Cannell, Asset and Property Manager

The report has been withdrawn as it requires further work.

AGENDA ITEM 6: COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER POLICY (Pages 19 - 40)

Lead Councillors: Councillor Joss Bigmore, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Finance and Planning Policy, in the absence of Lead Councillor Tim Anderson, Lead Councillor for Assets and Property.

Lead Officer: Damien Cannell, Asset and Property Manager

Correction to the draft policy document as follows:

Page 7, sub-paragraph 6, 'Application process'.

Para 1 should now read as follows:

"Any VCO considering submitting an expression of interest should contact their local ward Councillor first to discuss their proposals."

Below the minute extract from the meeting of the Service Delivery Executive Advisory Board meeting 09 March 2023:

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER POLICY – MINUTE EXTRACT FOR EXECUTIVE

At its meeting held on 9 March 2023, the Service Delivery Executive Advisory Board (EAB) considered the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy together with a covering report, which were introduced and presented by the Asset and Property Manager.

The following points arose from ensuing questions, comments and discussion for forwarding to the Executive:

1. The EAB welcomed and expressed its support for the Policy, which was considered to be clear, accessible and aligned with associated legislation, offering opportunities for local community groups to assume the operation of assets, possibly saving a building for community purposes which would otherwise be leased or sold commercially. However, it was wished that the Government would simplify the legislation to render it more comprehensible to local organisations.
2. The principles behind the community asset transfer legislation and the related 2007 Quirk Review confirmed the Government's wish for local authorities to facilitate the transfer of assets to community groups meeting the required criteria and to mitigate the risks associated with the process.
3. Councillors acknowledged that some local communities or existing voluntary groups may experience difficulties with establishing the type of organisation that was required to operate a community asset following transfer unless they possessed the necessary level of expertise and funding.
4. Although the Council could not offer direct financial assistance to local community groups wishing to pursue an asset transfer, it could provide other forms of assistance such as signposting to financial and other available resources. Also, measures such as short-term leases, initial rent free periods and leases at nil, or less that best, consideration could be granted to offer financial assistance to community groups formally expressing an interest in acquiring assets. There were a number of existing examples of such support methods in place. However, it was expected that community groups seeking a transfer in respect of larger buildings would have the necessary funding provision organised prior to application.
5. In the event that funding for community groups to acquire a transferred asset was dependent upon the prior agreement of a lease from the Council, which may not be forthcoming without evidence of funding provision in place, this issue could be dealt with under the terms of the associated legal agreement, subject to Executive approval.
6. The Policy featured stringent criteria and thorough processes in order to mitigate against the operation of a transferred community asset failing. As transfers were dealt with by way of a lease in most cases, break and surrender clauses or other legal mechanisms could be incorporated into leases to offer some protection against operational failures following transfer.
7. It was highlighted that the Council was able to grant leases or agreements to local community organisations outside the parameters of the Policy and this was currently the case concerning negotiations with Burpham Community Hub in respect of the lease of Sutherland Memorial Hall.
8. In the expectation that the Policy was adopted, it was felt that local community groups wishing to submit an expression of interest in respect of acquiring community assets should initially be directed to the relevant local ward councillors who would have knowledge of existing community groups and assets in their ward and be able to offer assistance and advice in respect of pursuing the process in the

first instance. Related information published on the Council's website should include initially directing applicants to their local ward councillors for support.

9. In accordance with the transparency agenda, the Council's website published a list of all of its freehold and leasehold buildings and land which would inform any community groups seeking to pursue a community asset transfer.
10. With regard to the classification of Council owned buildings and land, few were designated as community assets. The majority stemmed from service areas advising the Assets and Property section of buildings and land which were surplus to service requirements and could be offered for community asset transfer or were the subject of speculative expressions of interest from community groups and could be converted to community assets and offered to local organisations to operate. There was a necessity to advertise unused Council property available for community asset transfer on the open market nationally, including those sites where expressions of interest had been received, in the pursuit of transparency and free opportunity. In the event that the Council wished to transfer a particular asset, it would be advertised locally and steps would be taken to engage local ward councillors with a view to actively identifying a local organisation to assume the operation of the asset.
11. In terms of communications, all of the Council's policies were available to view on its website in the interests of transparency and consideration was being given to creating a designated area of the website in respect of Community Asset Transfers. The Assets and Property section had been tasked with ensuring that all associated information which the Council wished to publicise was included on the website as many queries were received in relation to the property and land within the Council's ownership. A Question and Answer section was welcomed to improve accessibility as the Policy was high level and technical in places and it was intended that a cross reference link to the list of the Council's assets would be included. The availability of community assets should be publicised as widely as possible commencing with the notification of ward councillors to enable them to commence discussions with local groups who may be interested in acquiring an asset. Most approaches from community groups were via ward councillors, providing early member engagement, and progressed through the chain of relevant officers. The Community Services team, which led on community based objectives and had been involved in the preparation of the Policy, was an initial officer contact point.
12. There was an existing questionnaire template for completion by local community groups seeking to lodge an expression of interest in a possible asset transfer which featured specific tailored criteria set by the relevant service area team against which any applying groups would be scored. The template would be published on the Council's website and distributed to property agents and other interested parties.
13. In this connection, reference was made to Surrey County Council's 'Your Fund Surrey' initiative which also focused on the early involvement of local councillors to assist residents with grant applications.
14. The decision-making path relating to the transfer of assets commenced with the Property Review Group, which would reach a decision in principle for recommending to the Executive for final approval, in consultation with local ward councillors.

In summary, the EAB particularly emphasised and agreed the importance of early ward councillor engagement in respect of community asset transfers in order to inform and assist local community groups expressing interest in this regard and to facilitate possible

transfers. Related communications with local residents and ward councillors were also highlighted as a priority.

AGENDA ITEM 7: GUILDFORD'S UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND AND RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND *(Pages 41 - 56)

Lead Councillor: Councillor George Potter, Lead Councillor for Climate Change and Organisational Development, in the absence of Councillor Julia McShane, Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Communities and Housing.

Lead Officer: Abi Lewis, Executive Head of Regeneration and Planning Policy

Below the minute extract from the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Executive Advisory Board meeting 06 February 2023:

GUILDFORD'S UKSPF AND REPF – MINUTE EXTRACT FOR EXECUTIVE

The Strategy and Resources Executive Advisory Board considered a report in respect of the interventions proposed in relation to the UKSPF and REPF at its meeting held on 6 February 2023. The report was introduced by the Lead Councillor for Finance and Planning Policy and presented by the Head of Regeneration and Corporate Programmes.

The following points arose from ensuing questions, comments and discussion for forwarding to the Executive:

1. Although some of the intervention schemes were delivered directly by the Council, there were also grant schemes, such as new Leader-style grants and the community crowd fund, for which businesses and community groups would need to apply from the Council. A substantial item of work for the Council to pursue in the coming months was to establish the formula to be applied in terms of identifying which groups it wished to target for support specifically and to develop an assessment criterion to determine grant applications submitted.
2. It was confirmed that the reference in the report to hostile vehicle mitigation related to the possible positioning of street furniture in the form of anti-terrorism bollards to prevent vehicle incursions into pedestrian areas. This matter was under discussion with Surrey Police to establish whether such measures remained relevant to certain areas across Guildford town centre.
3. Whilst the E-Bike Hire Scheme did not currently include e-scooters as their use outside trial areas remained illegal, the associated contract included provision for the future inclusion of e-scooters in the event that the legislation changed in favour of them.
4. The proposal to transfer the sum of £50,000 of revenue funding from the UKSPF to the REPF would be funded through a balancing of funding allocations currently profiled to the UKSPF, and also possibly from feasibility fund contributions potentially earmarked for progressing repairs to the Tumbling Bay Weir, depending on whether the Council decided to become involved in that project. Any such funding changes were likely to require the approval of the DLUHC as a standard approach.

Having considered and discussed the report, the Board endorsed the recommendations proposed in the list of interventions in respect of both the UKSPF and REPF.

**AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF GUILDFORD BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN:
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES *(Pages 57 - 466)**

Lead Councillor: Councillor Joss Bigmore, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Finance and Planning Policy

Lead Officer: Stuart Harrison, Policy Lead, Planning Policy

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