

# EXECUTIVE

25 August 2020

- \* Councillor Caroline Reeves (Chairman)
- \* Councillor Joss Bigmore (Vice-Chairman)

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|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| * Councillor Tim Anderson  | * Councillor John Redpath |
| * Councillor Jan Harwood   | * Councillor John Rigg    |
| * Councillor Julia McShane | * Councillor James Steel  |

\*Present

Councillors Chris Blow, Angela Goodwin, Angela Gunning, Gordon Jackson, Ramsey Nagaty, Deborah Seabrook, Paul Spooner, Fiona White, Catherine Young, were also in attendance.

## **EX24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **EX25 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **EX26 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

## **EX27 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader announced that this August Bank holiday weekend the council would be celebrating with local traders in the town with a special Bank Holiday Sale Bonanza, a weekend of competitions, amazing offers and lots of prizes. It was the last few days of the government #EatOuttoHelpOut scheme, and there would be free parking in the town from 3pm on Saturday, 2pm on Sunday and 4pm on Monday. The Leader reminded everyone that as we all get used to a little more freedom, we must remain mindful of the pandemic and respect social distance.

The Leader referred to the proposal made by Surrey County Council to make the whole of the county into a single unitary authority, effectively removing the whole tier of local government that represents the boroughs and districts. All households had been sent a communication from the County Council leader, Tim Oliver, about his plans of a vision for Surrey. The Leader regretted that this proposal was produced without any consultation with the leaders of the boroughs and districts on the change to the structure and ignored all the work done by the boroughs and districts throughout the pandemic. In response, district and borough leaders across the whole of the county had come together to put a counter proposal to the government. The Leader explained that Guildford Borough Council was working collaboratively to create a single voice whilst ensuring that each individual authority would be able to adopt its own approach to sharing information with residents, businesses, associations and other stakeholders. It was proposed that the eleven boroughs and districts across Surrey would work jointly on all communications with residents and businesses and would engage KPMG to prepare a presentation of an alternative joint approach to be submitted to government.

To share the cost of this joint work across all boroughs and districts the Leader had requested an additional report to feature on the agenda, which proposed that this council should set aside a budget of up to £30,000 to fund its participation in that work.

The next step in the pandemic would be the reopening of local schools. The Leader stressed that Covid-19 was still here and everyone must remain cautious. The number of cases was increasing across the country, but locally numbers were still relatively low. The only way to avoid another lockdown was to remember to stay safe and to look out for each other. Social distancing was still very important and everyone should remain mindful of others.

## **EX28 NEW CLIMATE CHANGE AND INNOVATION BOARDS**

The Executive considered a report recommending the disbanding of the Climate Change and Innovation Board and the creation of two new executive working groups – the Climate Change Board and the Innovation Board.

The Climate Change and Innovation Board had been in operation since August 2019. During that time the business of the Board had expanded and consequently, the Lead Councillor for Climate Change had proposed a separation of the Board into two distinct functions to enable a more focussed working group for each of the two areas which were both of importance to the Council. It was noted that there should continue to be a close interaction between the two new Boards in recognition of their often mutual priorities. Beneficial to that aim was that the Lead Councillor for Climate Change also had portfolio responsibility for innovation.

It was noted that councillor and officer training in Climate Change matters would commence in the near future.

The Executive unanimously

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the existing Climate Change and Innovation Board be disbanded.
- (2) That two new working groups be established, namely the Climate Change Board and the Innovation Board.
- (3) That the terms of reference of each Board, including the respective memberships, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report submitted to the Executive be approved.

### Reason

To facilitate a more focussed approach to this important work.

## **EX29 WEYSIDE URBAN VILLAGE: RELOCATION OF WOKING ROAD DEPOT**

The Executive considered a report recommending the relocation of the Council Depot at Woking Road to make way for the construction of the new Weyside Urban Village (WUV). The WUV was a major 41-hectare brownfield regeneration scheme delivering new homes, community and employment space. The new depot would provide a hub for a number of the Council's services including the relocation of the Parks and Countryside service. The preferred option was to relocate the Depot within the northern section of the new site.

Approval was also sought to move a budget of £2.48 million from the provisional to the approved capital programme in order to progress a detailed design for the new Council depot which would then be submitted as a planning application.

It was noted that news had been recently received that the Secretary of State had refused permission to relocate the allotments. The Lead Councillor for Regeneration would be preparing a response.

The Executive unanimously

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the relocation of the Council depot to accommodate administrative and operational functions, as described in the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.
- (2) That the sum of £2.48 million be transferred from the Provisional to the Approved Capital Programme to enable the detailed design of the new Guildford Borough Council depot to be undertaken.

Reason

The budget will enable the detailed design of the new depot site in order to deliver construction, thereby releasing the current depot site as part of the Weyside Urban Village Development.

**EX30      DEVOLUTION AND RECOVERY BILL: CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS A JOINT LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CASE FOR CHANGE SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

The Executive considered a report submitted as an item of urgent business that sought approval for a financial commitment of up to £30,000 as the Council's contribution towards the joint commissioning by the eleven borough and district councils in Surrey of a business case for structural change to local government in the county, including the cost of any further specialist advice (e.g. communications).

The Executive unanimously

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council commits to contributing up to £30,000 towards the total cost of a submission of a Local Government Reorganisation Case for Change to the MHCLG, to be undertaken by KPMG and commissioned jointly by the 11 Surrey borough and district councils, including the cost of any further specialist advice.
- (2) That the contribution referred to in paragraph (1) above be met from the Corporate Inflation budget.

Reason

To enable a robust business case for structural change, supported by Surrey borough and district councils, to be made to the Secretary of State as expeditiously as possible in response to the Government's anticipated Recovery and Devolution White Paper.

**Note:** By reason of the special circumstances described below, the chairman considered that this item should be dealt with at this meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Special Circumstances:** This matter required a decision by the Executive at this meeting to enable the Council to commit to the commissioning of a joint Case for Change submission, on behalf of the Surrey borough and district councils, as expeditiously as possible.

The meeting finished at 7.45 pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Chairman