

## **SERVICE DELIVERY EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD**

10 December 2020

- \* Councillor Angela Goodwin (Chairman)
- \* Councillor Ramsey Nagaty (Vice-Chairman)

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Councillor Paul Abbey   | * Councillor Bob McShee     |
| * Councillor Dennis Booth | * Councillor George Potter  |
| * Councillor Andrew Gomm  | * Councillor Jo Randall     |
| * Councillor Diana Jones  | * Councillor Pauline Searle |
| * Councillor Ann McShee   | * Councillor Fiona White    |

\* Present

Councillors Joss Bigmore, Gordon Jackson, Julia McShane, John Redpath, Caroline Reeves, Tony Rooth, Paul Spooner and James Steel were also in attendance.

### **SD7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no apologies for absence or notification of substitute members.

### **SD8 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests.

### **SD9 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Advisory Board held on 15 October 2020 were confirmed as a correct record, and would be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

### **SD10 COUNCILLOR WORKING GROUPS**

The Executive Advisory Board (EAB) considered a report which was prepared annually to invite the Executive to review the work carried out over the past twelve months by the various working groups (including boards and panels) that had been established by the Executive, the Leader or Lead Councillors, together with the work they were likely to undertake over the next twelve months. As part of this review the report also requested the Executive to determine whether these groups should continue as presently constituted and, if so, to make or confirm appointments to them and to identify any changes required to their terms of reference. The requirement to submit this report to the Executive was in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 24 (j).

The EAB was recommended to consider the report and make comments and recommendations as appropriate to be submitted to the Executive when it considered this matter on 5 January 2021.

In his introduction to the report, the Leader of the Council drew attention to the proposal to disband the Museum Working Group (MWG) and expressed a view that, although delivery of the Museum Project was currently unlikely owing to challenging circumstances, there remained a need for a MWG to guide the future direction of the Museum service. The Leader also highlighted proposals to establish two new working groups. The purpose of the first working group was to give detailed consideration to the recommendations of the recent

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Local Government Association (LGA) Planning Committee Peer Review whilst the second working group would oversee the Boundary Commission's electoral review of the Borough.

The Democratic Services and Elections Manager advised that, although this review would normally take place in May of each year, on this occasion it had been delayed owing to the Coronavirus pandemic and any membership changes the Executive agreed in January 2021 would remain in place until the commencement of the next municipal year.

Nikki Nelson-Smith, a co-opted member of the MWG, was present at the meeting and invited to speak in that respect by the Chairman. Ms Nelson-Smith spoke in support of continuing the MWG, which she believed was a beneficial sounding board for the relevant Lead Councillor and would inform the future development of the Museum service. She was of the opinion that the Group should have a wide remit and endeavour to improve the visitor experience and heritage attraction which could potentially enhance tourism and attract visitors to the town thereby building the local economy. The Board was advised that the Museum had undergone a refurbishment whilst it was closed and that consultants and experts had concluded that Guildford deserved a museum and that its collection included objects of national significance. Research had confirmed that the Museum's current location within a scheduled ancient monument site sharing a curtilage with the Castle was beneficial with the potential to string together the heritage buildings of the town. A Forward Plan had been drafted to inform how the service may move forward and to develop the policies to underpin this. Museum staff were commencing the process of digitally recording the collection by entering details onto a Collection Management software system which had been funded by the Friends of Guildford Museum and would aid decisions in respect of collection displays. The Museum service was valued by many residents from within and beyond the Borough boundaries who were keen to work to support it on a voluntary basis.

Numerous councillors spoke in support of continuing the MWG to bring a strategic view to protecting the Museum and related heritage whilst guiding its future development involving the implementation of the Museum Forward Plan to deliver an inexpensive Museum service within the parameters of the current financial constraints. Although it was recognised that it was not currently possible to deliver the earlier strategy for the expansion and enhancement of the Museum site and offering owing to the current circumstances and financial limitations, it was hoped that the Council would continue to focus on this vision in the long term with a view to delivery at some point in the future. As the development of the Museum would not be progressed for the time being, councillors felt that it was not currently appropriate for the MWG to remain part of the Major Projects Portfolio Board and it was suggested that its remit may need to be reconsidered accordingly.

The Lead Councillor confirmed the benefit of continuing and invigorating the MWG to ensure the delivery of a Museum service to meet public expectations at a reasonable cost. Nikki Nelson-Smith's secondment onto the Working Group was welcomed in acknowledgement of her valuable knowledge and experience.

The importance of the Collection Management software system to identify and itemise the Museum's collection was recognised and it was agreed that the Council's gratitude to the Friends of Guildford Museum for funding the system be recorded.

In this connection, reference was made to the future storage, cataloguing and display of the Council's art collection and it was suggested that the MWG should initially assess the collection to recommend a way forward. The Lead Councillor indicated that he was content with this suggested approach.

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Although Phase B of the Future Guildford transformation and the Coronavirus lockdowns had impacted on the progress achieved by many of the Working Groups, it was anticipated that affected groups would resume their work when possible.

Having discussed and reviewed each Working Group listed in the report in the light of the above factors and updates from councillors with experience as Working Group members, the EAB agreed the following comments and recommendations to the Executive:

- The MWG should be retained to guide the future direction of the Museum service and consideration be given to its future membership, including co-optee(s), to utilise the existing knowledge base and experience of members. The MWG should cease reporting to the Major Projects Portfolio Board as it no longer constitutes a major project. The Council's art collection be considered initially by the MWG to inform decisions around its future management and display.
- The membership of the Weyside Urban Village Development Portfolio Programme Board be reviewed and expanded to include cross-party representation and non-Executive members.
- The Major Projects Portfolio Board should resume regular meetings with the existing membership to consider related current issues.
- Relevant information be fed from the Surrey County Council Health and Wellbeing Board to the Aspire Health and Wellbeing Board to facilitate information sharing and joined up working.
- Once the Arts Development Strategy and Public Art Strategy Board, the Electric Theatre Monitoring Group and the Town Twinning Working Group resume operation following the completion of Phase B of Future Guildford and an improvement in the Coronavirus pandemic situation, the opportunity be taken to review their membership with a view to accommodating the involvement of non-Executive members.
- The membership of the Sports Development Strategy Group be reviewed, and increased if considered necessary.
- Owing to the success of work stemming from the Play Development Strategy and Fixed Play Equipment Group, it should continue to operate.
- A Boundary Commission Review Working Group be established and all councillors be invited to submit expressions of interest to join it with the aim of securing a membership mix to reflect differing experience levels and to balance political group and urban and rural ward representation. The Working Group should elect its chairman when its composition is finalised.
- A Planning Committee Review Working Group be constituted along the lines set out in the report to consider and take forward the recommendations of the recent LGA Planning Committee Peer Review.

#### **SD11 EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN**

The Chairman advised that she and the Director of Service Delivery were holding discussions in respect of Forward Plan items which might usefully come before the EAB for consideration and members were welcome to suggest any discussion topics to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

#### **SD12 EAB WORK PROGRAMME**

The EAB work programme was noted and the Chairman expressed the Board's gratitude to the officers who had assisted and supported the EAB throughout the past year.

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The meeting finished at 8.42 pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Chairman