

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

Thursday, 18th April, 2024

The decisions summarised below were taken by the Executive at the above-mentioned meeting and, subject to the call-in procedure referred to in Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 and to Note (a) at the end of this document, shall have effect five working days after the day of the meeting. Details of any recommendations to Council are also included for completeness.

Members of the Executive

Chairman:

Councillor Julia McShane (Leader of the Council & Lead Councillor for Housing)*

Vice-Chairman:

Councillor Tom Hunt (Deputy Leader of the Council & Lead Councillor for Regeneration)

Councillor Angela Goodwin, Lead Councillor for Engagement and Customer Services*

Councillor Catherine Houston, Lead Councillor for Commercial Services*

Councillor Richard Lucas, Lead Councillor for Finance and Property*

Councillor Carla Morson, Lead Councillor for Community and Organisational Development*

Councillor George Potter, Lead Councillor for Environment and Climate Change

Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith, Lead Councillor for Regulatory and Democratic Services*

Councillor Fiona White, Lead Councillor for Planning*

*Present

Councillors George Potter and Yves deContades were in virtual attendance.

Agenda Item No.		Officer(s) to action Item
1.	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom	

Hunt and George Potter.

2. Local Code of Conduct - Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February were confirmed as correct. The Chairman signed the minutes.

4. Leader's Announcements

Guildford and Waverley businesses were invited to the second year of a free networking event organised by Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils. Business Question Time would take place on Monday 3 June at the University of Surrey from 5pm to 7pm. The keynote speech would focus on the national and regional economic forecast for local businesses. It would be followed by questions to a panel of business leaders. To obtain a free ticket, visit the Eventbrite website.

Over the past few months, the council had been working with Surrey Police and Experience Guildford to introduce changes to help make Guildford town centre safer for everyone.

- There were now additional police officers patrolling in Guildford town centre at the weekends and street marshals were present in the town centre on Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00pm to 8:00pm whose role was to:
 - Help reassure visitors and residents in Guildford town centre.
 - Work with police to enforce Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) that are in place; and
 - Deal with other environmental and public realm issues, such as littering.
- Over the next few weeks, Surrey County Council's Targeted Youth Support (TYS) would begin a youth outreach project.

The street marshals and youth outreach project were initiatives funded through the Safer Streets Fund. In Guildford, this funding was being used to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Guildford town centre. This would continue

throughout 2024 and into 2025.

This month the council was encouraging residents to try something new to keep fit. There was a variety of sports places to visit around the borough such as Guildford Spectrum, the Lido, and the outdoor gyms to keep active during this month. More information was available on the website by searching for 'Spectrum', 'Lido' or 'outdoor gyms'.

5. O&S Recommendations to the Executive - Air Quality

Decision:

Gary
Durrant

The Executive formally agreed the proposed responses and the reasons for those responses as set out in the table at item 5.

Reason(s):

1. In order to help improve air quality and reduce emissions.
2. To improve the Council's communications in regard to air quality, particularly the air pollution concentrations in the Borough and the benefits of clean air.

Other options considered and rejected by the Executive:

None.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by the Leader or lead councillors and any dispensation granted:

None.

6. Option Agreement with Blackwell Park Limited in respect of purchase of Council-owned land - outcome of Call In of decision taken by the Strategic Director: Place

Decision:

John
Armstrong

The Executive noted the outcome of the call in by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the decision taken by the Strategic Director: Place on 29 February 2024 in respect of the Option Agreement with Blackwell Park Limited providing for the purchase of Council-owned land, which was to endorse

that decision.

Reason(s):

The Executive was now aware of the decision and the outcome of the call-in.

Other options considered and rejected by the Executive:

None.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by the Leader or lead councillors and any dispensation granted:

None.

7. Asset Disposal Strategy *

Decision:

The Executive approved the draft Asset Disposal Strategy set out at Appendix 1 and noted the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2 of the report.

Vince
Sibley

Reason(s):

To set out a strategy to generate capital receipts through the sale of assets to meet the £50M (net) target as part of the Financial Recovery Plan to reduce Council debt to achieve a sustainable financial position.

Other options considered and rejected by the Executive:

1. Do nothing and continue to adopt a business-as-usual approach to disposing of the Council's surplus owned assets without an approved Asset Disposal Strategy. This option is not recommended as it is highly unlikely to deliver the targeted capital receipts of £50M net by March 2027.
2. Proceed with the Asset Disposal programme ignoring political, local community and any other sensitive issues along with all operational requirements of the Council's service teams whilst basing any decision to dispose of an asset purely on economic grounds. This option is not

recommended due to the inability of the Service teams to function without suitable premises and the likely objections that this would raise.

3. Proceed with the Asset Disposal programme ignoring operational service requirements for use of selected assets. This option is not recommended as for each impacted Service to continue operating, it would likely result in the Council needing to fund the purchase of alternative premises.
4. Proceed with the Asset Disposal programme without first investigating any legal issues such as restrictive covenants and planning issues which may need to be resolved prior to placing an asset on the market. This option is not recommended due to the risk of sales falling through and possible reputational damage to the Council, as such encumbrances could potentially frustrate the sale of an asset completing.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by the Leader or lead councillors and any dispensation granted:

None.

8. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural Prosperity Fund (REPF) *

Decision:

Abi Lewis

The Executive agreed:

1. The revised project allocations of Guildford's UKSPF grant funding for 2024/25, as outlined in the report.
2. To delegate to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Regeneration, authority to enter into such contracts and legal agreements connected with the UKSPF and REPF as may be necessary in compliance with Procurement Procedure Rules and within the allocated grant funding budget.
3. To delegate to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Regeneration, authority to

reallocate budget across projects as required in order to meet the grant spend deadline.

Reason(s):

The £790,320 total capital and revenue funding Guildford Borough Council has been allocated from the UKSPF for 2024-25 is a significant sum of money that could have a positive impact on the borough's local communities and businesses.

The projects put forward align with the borough's local priorities and we intend to leverage collaboration with the Council's partners to maximise value for money.

Other options considered and rejected by the Executive:

OPTION 1: The Executive could decide not to approve the proposed revised interventions for Guildford's UKSPF grant for 2024-25. However, this would result in a high likelihood that the Council would not be able to use the grant within the funding availability period and would therefore have to repay a proportion of it to the DLUHC. This would also mean that the Council would be unable to advance the proposed projects and make use of the grant allocated within the prescribed timescales to empower our local businesses and communities.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by the Leader or lead councillors and any dispensation granted:

None.

9. Creation of new post of Head of Business Improvement

Decision:

Pedro
Wrobel

The Executive:

1. Noted the Chief Executive / Head of Paid Services' decision to revise his staff structure with the creation of the role of Head of Business Improvement; and
2. Approved the budget for the new role of £95,484 (which includes on-costs) funded from the savings made on the insurance contract renewal which was recently

completed. This would be vired to cover the cost of the new post.

Reason(s):

To ensure resources are available to create and drive an improvement plan and to address governance challenges in the Council.

Other options considered and rejected by the Executive:

1. There was an option to fund the role from an alternative budget where ongoing provision was available and this budget would need to be identified.
2. There was an option of not agreeing to fund this post however the Joint Senior Staffing Committee had delegated the responsibility for the appointment of a Head of Business Improvement to the Head of Paid Service.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by the Leader or lead councillors and any dispensation granted:

None.

NOTES:

- (a) Any decision marked “#” means that the item was deemed by the Joint Chief Executive and agreed by the Executive and Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be a matter of urgency for the reason indicated and, in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 (h), such decision takes effect immediately and is therefore *not* subject to the call-in procedure.

The call-in procedure is as follows:

- (i) the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; or
- (ii) a minimum of five members of the Council

may require that a decision be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review.

- (c) Councillors wishing to exercise their right to call-in a decision taken by the Executive must give notice in writing to the Democratic Services and Elections Manager. The reason for a councillor calling-in a decision shall

accompany any such request and must meet one of the following criteria:

- (a) that there was insufficient, misleading or inaccurate information available to the decision-maker;
- (b) that all the relevant facts had not been taken into account and/or properly assessed;
- (c) that the decision is contrary to the budget and policy framework and is not covered by urgency provisions; or
- (d) that the decision is not in accordance with the decision-making principles set out in the Constitution.

Such notice should be marked for the attention of John Armstrong who can be contacted by e-mail on john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk

- (d) On receipt of a call-in request, the Monitoring Officer will decide, in consultation with the chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, whether it is valid and will notify the councillors concerned accordingly.
- (e) In the case of a valid call-in, the decision shall be referred to a special Call-in meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which shall be held within 21 days of the decision on validity referred to in paragraph (d) above.
- (f) A decision marked with an asterisk denotes that the matter is a “Key Decision” which is defined in the Council’s Constitution as an executive decision:
 - (i) which is likely to result in significant expenditure or savings (of at least £200,000) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - (ii) which is likely to have a significant impact on two or more wards within the Borough.