

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Guildford Borough Council held at Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB on Tuesday 5 December, 2017

- * Councillor Nigel Manning (Mayor)
- * Councillor Mike Parsons (Deputy Mayor)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Councillor David Bilbé * Councillor Richard Billington * Councillor Philip Brooker * Councillor Adrian Chandler <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Councillor Alexandra Chesterfield * Councillor Nils Christiansen * Councillor Colin Cross <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Councillor Geoff Davis * Councillor Graham Ellwood * Councillor David Elms * Councillor Matt Furniss * Councillor Andrew Gomm * Councillor Angela Goodwin * Councillor David Goodwin * Councillor Murray Grubb Jnr * Councillor Angela Gunning * Councillor Gillian Harwood * Councillor Liz Hogger * Councillor Christian Holliday * Councillor Liz Hooper * Councillor Mike Hurdle * Councillor Michael Illman * Councillor Gordon Jackson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Councillor Jennifer Jordan * Councillor Nigel Kearse * Councillor Sheila Kirkland * Councillor Julia McShane * Councillor Bob McShee * Councillor Marsha Moseley * Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith * Councillor Susan Parker * Councillor Dennis Paul * Councillor Tony Phillips * Councillor Mike Piper * Councillor David Quelch * Councillor Jo Randall * Councillor David Reeve * Councillor Caroline Reeves * Councillor Iseult Roche * Councillor Tony Rooth * Councillor Matthew Sarti <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Councillor Pauline Searle * Councillor Paul Spooner * Councillor James Walsh * Councillor Jenny Wicks * Councillor David Wright |
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*Present

Honorary Aldermen Mrs S Creedy, T Patrick, and M A H M Williamson were also in attendance.

The Council stood in silent tribute to the memory of Honorary Alderman Mrs Mary Lloyd-Jones, who had passed away on 2 December 2017.

CO66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alexandra Chesterfield, Geoff Davis, and Pauline Searle, from Honorary Freeman Jen Powell and from Honorary Aldermen Mrs C F Cobleby, Mrs C F P Griffin, J Marks, B Parke, and L Strudwick.

CO67 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

CO68 MINUTES

The Council confirmed, as a correct record, the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 10 October 2017 and the extraordinary meeting held on 21 November 2017. The Mayor signed the minutes.

CO69 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on the fund raising efforts for his chosen charities, which were going well. Mayoral Events so far had raised approximately £14,000, and the Mayor thanked all those who had supported them.

There would be further opportunities to support the British Heart Foundation in the New Year, in particular a charity Ten Pin Bowling evening at Guildford Spectrum on 25 January 2018, involving both the Mayor and the Mayor of Waverley with the proceeds divided between the respective mayoral charities.

CO70 LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Leader of the Council expressed his sadness at the recent death of Honorary Alderman Mrs Mary Lloyd-Jones.

The Leader also commented on the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge that the Council was currently undertaking, and thanked the LGA Peer Challenge team, who were attending the meeting.

CO71 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions or requests to speak had been received from the public.

CO72 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions, on notice, from councillors.

CO73 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2018-19

The Council received a report on its statutory duty to consider annually whether to revise its Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS), replace it with another or make no changes. The Council was obliged to consult with interested parties if it wished to revise or replace the scheme. In addition, the Council had to approve a scheme for the 2018-19 financial year by 31 January 2018.

In 2017-18, the scheme remained the same as in 2016. For 2018-19, it was proposed to introduce the following changes, which could be met from within the existing revenue budget:

- To increase Personal Allowances and Premiums to ensure that the help given does not unduly reduce due to inflation.
- To increase Non-Dependant Deductions to reflect an expectation that their contribution to the household expenses should increase each year.
- To increase the minimum income floor for self-employed claimants to ensure the rule remains simple to understand.
- To mirror the following changes to Housing Benefits to avoid claimants being subject to two confusing sets of rules: reduce backdating to one month; restrict family premium; reduce the allowable period of temporary absence outside Great Britain from 13 to 4 weeks.

A stakeholder consultation was held between 6 October 2017 and 3 November 2017, the results of which were set out in the report. The results supported the proposed changes.

Councillors noted that the Council continued to operate in a tough financial climate and that its medium term financial plan position remained challenging. However, it was recognised that passing on further savings via the LCTS scheme in 2018-19 would place additional financial pressure on vulnerable households. A discretionary hardship fund would help support any

resident suffering adversely from the consequences of savings in welfare support over the past five years, in addition to the proposed changes for 2018-19.

The Executive had considered the report at its meeting on 28 November 2017 and had endorsed the recommendation therein.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Housing and Environment, Councillor Philip Brooker, seconded by the Lead Councillor for Finance and Asset Management, Councillor Michael Illman, the Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the current Local Council Tax Support scheme be amended for 2018-19, as referred to above and set out in detail in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, and implemented with effect from 1 April 2018.
- (2) That the Council maintains a discretionary hardship fund of £40,000 in 2018-19.

Reasons:

- (1) To ensure that the Council complies with government legislation to implement a Local Council Tax Support scheme from 1 April 2018.
- (2) To maintain a discretionary fund to help applicants suffering from severe financial hardship.

CO74 THE VILLAGE PROJECT

The Council considered a report which sought approval to reduce the income budget for 2017-18 from the letting of containers at The Village by viring the budget from external interest and to increase expenditure to cover the projected costs of The Village for 2017-18 by viring the budget from the Minimum Revenue Provision budget.

The report had set out the challenges The Village had had to overcome since its opening on 1 December 2016 and re-launch on 10 June 2017, together with the financial position of The Village to date. The report had also proposed to include a budget of £224,903 to operate The Village in 2018-19 in the Council's draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2018-19.

At its meeting on 28 November 2017, the Executive had also considered the report and had endorsed the three recommendations set out on page 69 of the Council agenda. The Executive had also considered a recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee following its consideration of the matter on 14 November 2017, which was:

“That the Executive honours Council commitments made over the 2017 Christmas period until The Village closes on 24 December, and thereafter work up a full exit strategy to include consideration of alternative future uses. As part of this process, consideration should be given to whether or not The Village should reopen on Easter Good Friday 2018”.

The Executive had resolved:

“That an exit strategy in respect of The Village project be drawn up by the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Economic Development and Tourism, such strategy to be used as a contingency should the project become unsustainable in the future.”

The Lead Councillor for Economic Development and Tourism, Councillor David Bilbé proposed, and the Deputy Leader of the Council, and Lead Councillor for Infrastructure and Governance, Councillor Matt Furniss seconded the following motion:

- “(1) That the income budget for 2017-18 in respect of The Village be reduced by £376,280 by viring the budget from external interest.
- (2) That the expenditure budget for 2017-18 in respect of The Village be increased by £254,762 to cover the projected Village costs for 2017-18 by viring the budget from the Minimum Revenue Provision budget.
- (3) That the proposal to include a budget of £224,903 to operate The Village in 2018-19 in the Council’s draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2018-19, be withdrawn.
- (4) That discussions be held with third party operators for the purpose of taking on the management of the site for the extended period of three years, at no further cost to the taxpayer.
- (5) That, should no suitable operator be found, officers be requested to investigate alternative temporary uses for the site, and to report back their findings to the Executive”.

During the debate, councillors suggested that the discussions referred to in paragraph (4) of the motion should be held in parallel with, rather than prior to, the investigations into possible alternative temporary uses referred to in paragraph (5). Accordingly, under Council Procedure Rule 15 (o), the proposer of the motion, with the consent of his seconder and of the meeting, altered the motion by the omission of the words “*should no suitable operator be found*” in paragraph (5) thereof.

The Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the income budget for 2017-18 in respect of The Village be reduced by £376,280 by viring the budget from external interest.
- (2) That the expenditure budget for 2017-18 in respect of The Village be increased by £254,762 to cover the projected Village costs for 2017-18 by viring the budget from the Minimum Revenue Provision budget.
- (3) That the proposal to include a budget of £224,903 to operate The Village in 2018-19 in the Council’s draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2018-19, be withdrawn.
- (4) That discussions be held with third party operators for the purpose of taking on the management of the site for the extended period of three years, at no further cost to the taxpayer.
- (5) That officers be requested to investigate alternative temporary uses for the site, and to report back their findings to the Executive.

Reason:

To account for the reduction in income and increase in budget for 2017-18.

CO75 SELECTION OF THE MAYOR AND THE DEPUTY MAYOR 2018-19

The Council considered a report on nominations received for election of Mayor and appointment of Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2018-19. The constitutional changes adopted by the Council as part of the review of the Civic Function in April 2014 in respect of the Mayoralty, provided that the Council would normally elect the Deputy Mayor appointed at the annual meeting of the Council as Mayor at the next succeeding annual meeting.

Political group leaders had been asked to submit nominations in respect of the Deputy Mayoralty for 2018-19. The only nomination received was Councillor Richard Billington.

Accordingly, the Council was asked to consider the nominations of Councillors Mike Parsons and Richard Billington respectively for Mayor and Deputy Mayor in 2018-19. Both councillors left the meeting during the Council's consideration of the nominations.

Upon the motion of the Deputy Leader of the Council, and Lead Councillor for Infrastructure and Governance, Councillor Matt Furniss, seconded by Councillor Caroline Reeves, the Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mike Parsons be nominated for the Mayoralty of the Borough for the 2018-19 municipal year.
- (2) That Councillor Richard Billington be nominated for the Deputy Mayoralty of the Borough for the 2018-19 municipal year.

Reason:

To make early preparations for the selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2018-19 municipal year.

CO76 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE

In relation to Minute No. EX42 (Town Twinning and International Relationships) of the draft minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 26 September 2017, Councillor Angela Gunning asked whether councillors could receive a short report on the outcome of the recent visit to Dongying by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Managing Director.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Matt Furniss confirmed that he would circulate something to councillors in the New Year.

The Council

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 26 September and 20 November 2017 be received and noted.

CO77 COMMON SEAL

The Council

RESOLVED: That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to any documents to give effect to any decisions taken by the Council at this meeting.

The meeting finished at 7.55 pm

Signed
Mayor

Date