

## JOINT EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

23 April 2018

- \* Councillor Adrian Chandler (Chair)
- \* Councillor Jenny Wicks (Vice-Chairman)

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| * Councillor Nils Christiansen  | * Councillor Bob McShee      |
| * Councillor Andrew Gomm        | * Councillor Mike Parsons    |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin     | Councillor Dennis Paul       |
| * Councillor Angela Gunning     | * Councillor Tony Phillips   |
| * Councillor Liz Hogger         | * Councillor Mike Piper      |
| * Councillor Christian Holliday | * Councillor David Quelch    |
| * Councillor Gordon Jackson     | * Councillor David Reeve     |
| * Councillor Jennifer Jordan    | * Councillor Caroline Reeves |
| * Councillor Nigel Kears        | * Councillor Matthew Sarti   |
| * Councillor Sheila Kirkland    | * Councillor Pauline Searle  |
| Councillor Julia McShane        | Councillor David Wright      |

\*Present

Councillor Matt Furniss was also in attendance.

### **13 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Joint Executive Advisory Board

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Adrian Chandler be elected as Chairman for the meeting.

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Julia McShane and Paul Spooner. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 23(i), Councillor Caroline Reeves acted as substitute for Councillor Julia McShane.

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

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

### **16 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Executive Advisory Board held on 8 January 2018 were agreed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

### **17 NEW CORPORATE PLAN**

Councillor Matt Furniss introduced the draft new Corporate Plan by advising that the Council had invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a corporate peer challenge of the Council in December 2017. The final report on the outcome of this review was very positive and was well received by the Executive and Management Team. A number of useful recommendations were also made in respect of suggested improvements, with one key area for consideration being prioritisation within the Corporate Plan.

Since the peer challenge, the Council had undertaken consultation with residents, partners and other interested parties to assist with informing its future priorities. The Council had also held workshops for Councillors and senior officers to help shape the content of the new Corporate Plan. Following this consultation and a review of existing activities and future challenges, the new Corporate Plan had been prepared for adoption by the Council.

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The Corporate Plan set out the Council's strategic framework and priorities for the next five years. The priorities and associated projects were fundamental to ensuring that the Council managed its business and resources effectively. They would also ensure that Council activities continued to be aligned to the issues that mattered most to local people. The Corporate Plan had been streamlined to focus on the three strategic themes of Place-making, Community and Innovation and referred to the Council's recent key achievements. The Board was invited to comment on the draft Corporate Plan before its consideration by the Executive.

Arising from consideration of the Corporate Plan and in response to related questions, the following points and suggested amendments to the draft Plan were made:

- In addition to work with Network Rail to progress the planning and delivery of new stations at Guildford West (Park Barn) and Guildford East (Merrow), further work on the redevelopment of Guildford Railway Station, including a capacity study, was being undertaken with Network Rail.
- Discussions would be held with Guildford City Football Club concerning its proposed improvements and the Board's expressed view that the new football pitch should be constructed to Football Association standards would be passed on.
- Guildford had strong innovative core clusters which included electronic gaming and related technologies which were extending into other areas such as three dimensional (3D) architecture. It was suggested that the term 'gamification' and the word 'communications' be added to the Innovation section of the Plan together with the wording 'and other new technologies' following the reference to projects exploiting the opportunities provided by 5G.
- The paragraph concerning the encouragement of local entrepreneurs through incubators and accelerators should be expanded to include business networks, workshops and other support.
- The redevelopment of North Street was advancing and action would soon become evident.
- Reference should be made in the Plan to protecting the character of the Borough's villages and assisting the rural economy.
- Reducing the number of priorities, possibly by marrying together aspirational and practical elements of the Plan, would sharpen its focus.
- Review of Action Plan target dates was sought to ensure greater precision in the timings.
- This was the first occasion when the Council had undertaken consultation in respect of the Corporate Plan. The Council's consultants had designed the survey which had been undertaken in a time limited fashion. Consideration could be given to the nature of survey questions if the exercise was repeated in the future. The survey results indicated that respondents attached most importance to transport and housing in the Borough. The break down of survey respondents by age group reflected the Borough's mature age profile of 30 per cent of the population being over 65 years of age.
- The word 'including' should be added to the Community section before the reference to Project Aspire to reflect that there were other initiatives which delivered health and wellbeing improvements for less advantaged residents. The Lead Councillor for Project Aspire, Health, Safeguarding and Sport would be able to elaborate.
- Development briefs, which were sought in respect of all Local Plan sites in addition to Bedford Wharf, were being prepared to control development as part of the Local Plan.

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- Further reference to education should be made in the Plan to reflect the strength of the education sector locally and its ties with the economy. Respondents were asked if they were studying in the Borough.
- The inclusion of further reference to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty was requested.
- Although the Plan was commended for being more concise and legible than its predecessor, it was suggested that the use of bolder colouring and text for headings would improve its clarity. Priority headings required revisiting to ensure that they sat in the correct section of the Plan and the photographs required updating and reviewing to reflect greater diversity. Inclusion of an issue date on the front cover of the Plan would avoid confusion.
- Review of wording was sought to give greater emphasis to protecting all aspects of the environment, including the Council's leadership role (e.g. reducing single use plastic and promoting and using electric vehicles).
- The use of clearer English was suggested to replace the terms "Fundamental Service Reviews" and "New website to improve transactional capability and increase channel shift" and to clarify the meaning of acronyms such as BME (black and minority ethnic) and EM3 (Enterprise M3 local enterprise partnership).
- Wording of a strategic priority should be amended to indicate that the Council was creating smart places infrastructure across Guildford.
- The Place-making section should include reference to accessibility in connection with providing a range of housing, public transport, community and other facilities for all ages, lifestyles and cultures.
- Owing to delays associated with flood and land ownership issues, the accuracy of the target date of 2019 for the new Walnut Bridge should be checked.
- It would be helpful for the savings and additional income figures in the 'Our recent achievements' section to be shown as two separate achievements.
- The sub-title in the 'Our Performance' section would be clearer in meaning if worded as 'Values for our staff'.
- The figure of "At least 35% of new housing will be affordable homes" quoted in the Place-making section should be checked for consistency with the Local Plan.
- Protecting the environment by maintaining and improving air quality by implementing the Borough's Air Quality Strategy 2017 was important.
- Consideration should be given to including within the Plan wording from the LGA peer challenge on using the Council's assets and financial position to support its strategic priorities. Planning for staff development in addition to strengthening systems such as project management would be beneficial.
- The Council would implement the Rural Strategy to support the delivery of rural initiatives to address issues of rural deprivation, including skills and enterprise, crime reduction, and environmental, cultural and leisure projects. This could include extending playground provision.
- The inclusion of an action referring to the provision of a new burial ground should be considered.

The Board's comments in respect of the Plan would be reported to the Executive for its consideration prior to recommending the Plan to the Council for adoption.