

EXECUTIVE

- * Councillor Caroline Reeves (Chairman)
- * Councillor Fiona White (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor Joss Bigmore | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | * Councillor John Rigg |
| * Councillor David Goodwin | * Councillor Pauline Searle |
| * Councillor Jan Harwood | * Councillor James Steel |

*Present

Councillors Dennis Booth, Angela Gunning, Ramsey Nagaty, John Redpath, Tony Rooth and Deborah Seabrook were also in attendance.

EX67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

EX68 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

In relation to agenda item 7, the following non-pecuniary interests were disclosed:

Councillor Caroline Reeves was a Trustee of Guildford Action.
 Councillor Julia McShane was the Council's representative on the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, Guildford Action and Guildford Philanthropy
 Councillor Pauline Searle was a patron of Homestart
 Councillor Fiona White was the Council's representative and a Trustee on Guildford Citizens Advice

Councillor Joss Bigmore disclosed a pecuniary interest in relation to Item 8 in that he and his wife were landlord owners of property in Guildford. Councillor Bigmore absented himself from the meeting during the consideration of Item 8.

Councillor James Steel disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 8 in that he was a tenant in a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), a member of the "Cut the rent" Committee at the University of Surrey and a member of the Guildford Private Renters Association.

EX69 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 26 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

EX70 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council made two announcements. Firstly, that Surrey County Council had confirmed £1 million funding for a project that would improve bus services in Guildford, particularly with regard to the provision of 'real time' information at bus stops. It would also become possible to request developer contributions for the provision of 'real time' services when planning applications were submitted in appropriate cases.

Secondly, the Leader relayed residents' concerns about the use of sky lanterns and would be seeking legal advice on how we might discourage local people from using sky lanterns and launching them from Council owned land.

EX71 SHALFORD COMMON LAND MANAGEMENT

The Lead Councillor for Countryside, Rural Life and the Arts introduced the report.

It was noted that Shalford Common was registered as common land and that Guildford Borough Council as the freehold owner had a duty to protect and manage the Common as set out in the Commons Act 2006. The council had been in receipt of complaints about car parking on the Common over many years and such activity was in breach of commons legislation. In response, the Executive was asked to consider measures drawn up in an action plan in respect of car parking, access onto the Common, leisure activities and highway improvements to ensure the council was in compliance with its statutory duty to protect the Common and to reduce the number of local conflicts and complaints..

It was proposed that such measures be applied to seven priority areas and consist of a combination of designated car parking, physical measures to prevent unauthorised access and the enforcement of such through new byelaws. Public consultation would be a statutory requirement to introduce new byelaws and the proposed changes to registered Common Land.

It was noted that there was a proposed amendment to recommendation 5 on the Supplementary paper to ensure any decision concerning an introduction of new byelaws and revocation of existing byelaws for Shalford Common would be subject to approval of full Council.

Public speaker, Mr Ivor Thomas described the area of the Common around the village sign as still vulnerable to parking damage and that provision for parking in support of local business was adequate in Kings Road without designating a part of the Common into parking bays.

The meeting was also addressed by the Chairman of Shalford Parish Council, a local businessman and an ex-parish councillor for Shalford who expressed their views on the proposals. The Lead Councillor welcomed their views and the forthcoming public consultation which would hopefully provide the opportunity to capture a local consensus.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the options for seven priority areas on the Common, as set out in the report submitted to the Executive, be put forward for public consultation.
- (2) That an action plan be implemented to comply with commons legislation for car parking, access, leisure activities and highway improvements.
- (3) That a public consultation be carried out as part of the action plan
- (4) That the introduction of new byelaws and revocation of existing byelaws for Shalford Common to support the proposed actions be approved in principle, subject to approval of full Council

Reasons:

- Compliance with Guildford Borough Council's statutory obligations as land owner to protect Shalford Common from encroachments in line with the Commons Act 2006 including the prevention of unauthorised parking

- Reduction of conflicts and complaints regarding un-authorised car parking
- Provision of car parking areas compliant with the Commons Act 2006
- Protection of biodiversity on Shalford Common which is a designated SNCI

EX72 RIPLEY VILLAGE HALL FORWARD FUNDING PROPOSAL

The Lead Councillor for Assets and Finance, Customer Services introduced the report.

When it was built in the 1970's, Ripley Village Hall was designed to last for up to 25 years. Currently, it was in a poor state and nearing the end of its useful life. There was a need for a replacement hall to meet the need for community facilities in the village and borough ward area of Lovelace. Planning permission for a new village hall was granted in February 2019. Ripley Village Hall Trustees had raised funds locally to help pay for the new village hall and Ripley Parish Council had taken a £500,000 loan from the Public Works Loan Board. Although significant funds had been raised, there was still a funding shortfall of £600,000 for the main village hall and Trustees had asked the Borough Council for a contribution.

The Executive was asked to consider granting a cashflow loan drawn from anticipated S106 monies to be received from the Garlick's Arch site which had been allocated in the council's adopted local plan for development. In addition, if the development of Garlick's Arch were to proceed the council anticipated receiving a New Homes Bonus (NHB) grant. The amount of the loan would be determined if, and when, planning permission for the Garlick's Arch was granted and the council signed a S106 agreement with the developer. The value of the loan would not exceed any agreed S106 contribution due to Ripley together with 30% of the anticipated NHB grant from the development.

However, given the urgency of the matter and on approval from the Executive, it was proposed a contribution of £25,000 (as an upfront payment of the 30% NHB grant from the development) funded from the new homes bonus reserve, would be paid to the Trust to enable them to proceed to the next stage of the development. Repayment for the loan would be at the point the Council received the S106 contribution from the developer and the NHB income from the government. If for any reason, the S106 monies are not received following a signed S106 agreement, the Village Hall Trust would be asked to enter into a repayment plan for the loan over a period of 50 years.

Two members of the Ripley Village Hall Trust spoke in favour of the proposals.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a cashflow loan be provided to Ripley Village Hall Trust, to be repaid from S106 contributions for community use in Ripley and 30% of the New Homes Bonus grant anticipated from the Garlick's Arch Development.
- (2) That the exact sum of the loan be agreed by the Director of Resources in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Finance, Assets, and Customer Services once planning permission is in place and a S106 agreement is signed.
- (3) That the loan amount shall not exceed the S106 and NHB funding available to the Council.
- (4) That an upfront payment of the loan of £25,000 be made from the Council's new homes bonus reserve, which will be part of the 30% NHB contribution towards the scheme.

Reason:

To enhance community facilities in Ripley by supporting and making a contribution towards the redevelopment of the Village Hall.

EX73 REVIEW OF GRANTS

The Lead Councillor for Community Health, Support and Wellbeing introduced the report.

The Executive was asked to consider a report setting out recommended changes to the way in which financial support could be offered by the council to local voluntary and community organisations in future. These changes were centred around the mechanisms being made available for voluntary and community organisations to raise funds, such as the Guildford Community Lottery and the proposed Guildford crowdfunding platform.

In recognition of the commitments within the Corporate Plan there were proposals to increase funding available for voluntary organisations working with priority groups, such as homelessness, mental health services, support for vulnerable families and services for the elderly. In particular, there was a proposal to increase in the funding of the core service provision of both Guildford and Ash Citizens Advice.

It was recommended such changes should come into effect in readiness for implementation in the 2021/22 financial year. The Voluntary Grants and Community Grants Schemes would continue to operate in the usual way for the last time during 2020 for funding in the 2020/21 financial year.

It was noted that a Surrey County Council report would be delivered to Cabinet in 28 January with the intention to set up a crowdfunding platform for Surrey. Therefore, the Supplementary sheet proposed amendments to the recommendations accordingly.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council enters into funding agreements for the services provided by the following organisations and that the sums indicated below be included in the 2021-22 budget for this purpose:

Guildford Action Day Service	£90,000
Citizens Advice County Court Service	£5,000
Guildford Action for Families	£30,000
Home Support Services Guildford	£20,000
Oakleaf Enterprise	£20,000
Canterbury Care Centre	£20,000
Homestart	£5,000

- (2) That a revised Voluntary Grants Scheme with an annual budget of £50,000 be retained to provide financial support for organisations working with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents.

- (3) That funding for the core service provision of Guildford and Ash Citizens Advice be increased by 10% with effect from 2021-22, to the following total amounts:

Guildford Citizens Advice	£235,300
Ash Citizens Advice	£76,450

- (4) That the Community Grants Scheme be replaced by a new Aspire Grants Scheme with an annual budget of £30,000.
- (5) That the Managing Director, in consultation with relevant Lead Councillors, be authorised to make all necessary arrangements to implement the new funding arrangements set out in the report submitted to the Executive, including determining the detailed eligibility criteria and rules for the operation of the revised grant schemes.
- (6) That the establishment of a Guildford crowdfunding platform to provide financial support for projects being promoted by local community groups and organisations be approved.
- (7) That the allocation of £160,000 from the New Homes Bonus Reserve to fund the operating costs of the proposed crowdfunding platform and the Council's financial contribution to eligible projects for a two-year trial period be approved.
- (8) That the Managing Director be authorised to investigate and, if appropriate, make all necessary arrangements to establish a joint crowdfunding platform with Surrey County Council.
- (9) That the Managing Director be authorised to seek tenders for the establishment and operation of a Guildford crowdfunding platform and to appoint the most suitable provider.
- (10) That, subject to paragraph (8) above, the Managing Director be authorised to make all necessary arrangements for launching and administering the proposed new crowdfunding platform, including determining the detailed eligibility criteria for voluntary and community organisations wishing to raise funds and making financial contributions towards qualifying projects.

Reason:

To ensure that the Council's support for voluntary and community organisation meets Corporate Plan priorities of supporting those with the greatest needs, whilst maintaining funding streams for local projects that enhance our communities.

EX74 EXTENSION OF PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR ENFORCEMENT POWERS

The Lead Councillor for Housing, Access and Disability introduced the report.

The Executive was advised of new legislative powers for Regulatory Services Housing Standards teams to improve housing standards in the private rented sector which would enable financial penalties to be imposed as an alternative to prosecuting offenders.

The Executive was asked to approve a proposed charging structure for such penalties and to delegate authority to the Regulatory Services Manager to determine the amount of any financial penalty in accordance with the charging structure.

It was noted that the amount of rented accommodation and Housing with Multiple Occupation (HMO's) had vastly increased in recent years and continued to expand. It was important that tenants were protected and the new regulations would send a strong message.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the charging structure for financial penalties imposed in accordance with the powers introduced by Section 126 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.
- (2) That the Regulatory Services Manager be authorised to implement the charging structure and make any necessary arrangements to ensure the procedure is process driven with a consistent approach.

Reason:

To enable the Council to exercise the powers introduced by Section 126 of the Act to impose financial penalties as an alternative to prosecution for certain offences under the Housing Act 2004.

EX75 PUBLIC HEALTH FUNERALS

The Lead Councillor for Personal Health, Safety and Wellbeing introduced the report.

The Executive was asked to consider a draft public health funeral policy that had been prepared in readiness for public consultation. The policy set out the council's roles and responsibilities and the level of funeral provision to provide a dignified, value for money funeral service.

It was noted that the frequency and consequently the cost to the council was low, but that it was good to have policy guidance in place. It was requested that the draft policy make explicit that where an individual had no estate that the council would pay the funeral costs.

The Executive RESOLVED:

That a 6-week consultation on the draft Public Health Funeral Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved, subject to an amendment to paragraph 3.2 to the effect that where the cost of the funeral arrangements cannot be recovered from the deceased's estate, the Council would cover the cost.

Reason:

To ensure that Public Health Funerals are conducted in a fair and transparent way and that the deceased's estate is managed in line with the current legislation and guidance

EX76 DIGITAL GAMES HUB FUNDING PROPOSAL (ROCKETDESK GUILDFORD RIVERSIDE)

The Executive was asked to consider a funding proposal for a new dedicated digital games co-working space in the town centre. Under the proposals highlighted in the report the council would, in conjunction with the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, jointly match-fund the capital expenditure for setting up the new facility. The facility would be owned and run by the proprietors of the Rocketdesk Co-working space on the Surrey Research Park (the new facility would be branded 'Rocketdesk Guildford Riverside).

The report was welcomed and the proposal described as a very positive step forward for a business sector that was important to Guildford.

The Executive

RESOLVED: That funding of £40,000 to Rocketdesk Guildford Ltd. be approved to support economic growth and that such funding shall comprise:

1. A funding grant of £10,000 from existing budgets; and
2. A deferred loan of £30,000, to be repaid over a 24-month period, funded from the business rates equalisation reserve.

Reason:

This proposal will directly support the growth and development of the Digital Games sector in the Borough which is a priority in both the Council's Corporate Plan and Innovation Strategy.

EX77 WEYSIDE URBAN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

The Executive was asked to consider an update on the progress of the Weyside Urban Village Project (formerly known as the Slyfield Area Regeneration Programme) and to authorise the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to sign and complete the grant agreement with Homes England to implement the infrastructure works and to draw down the grant expenditure.

The Executive was also requested to recommend to Council a capital budget to enable the council to act as Infrastructure Developer and to deliver the infrastructure phase of the project.

The project had been in project planning for a period of fifteen years and was described as one of the most discussed projects for the council. An increase in project costs was noted and the project team would seek to mitigate and make savings wherever possible as the project progressed.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

That the Managing Director be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to sign and complete the Grant Agreement with Homes England to implement the infrastructure works and draw down the grant expenditure.

The Executive further

RECOMMENDED (to Council):

- (1) That an additional capital supplementary estimate of £274.057 million be approved to allow a total capital budget of £359.504 million to enable the Council to deliver the infrastructure phase of the Weyside Urban Village Development.
- (2) That £5.781 million of the additional capital budget be placed on the approved capital programme to progress the allotment relocation and funding of the Thames Water agreement costs during 2019-20.
- (3) That the Council acts as Infrastructure Developer until completion of the Thames Water Infrastructure in 2026.

Reasons:

There are financial, economic and social benefits:

The budget would enable the Council to deliver the infrastructure for the development ensuring deliverability and control.

The land value would be increased by the infrastructure phase being delivered upfront and ahead of Land Parcel Sales.

The project would also deliver:

- 1500 new homes including 600 Affordable Homes
- 2000 square metres of community space
- 6500 square metres of employment space
- A new relocated fit for purpose Thames Water Sewage Treatment Works
- Extensive infrastructure improvements
- This scheme contributes to the delivery of the adopted Local Plan
- This scheme contributes £233 million in economic impacts for Guildford

The project has significant infrastructure to be put in place to enable the above critical success factors to be delivered. Allocating the capital budget would enable all of the infrastructure phase to be delivered and would de-risk the site in readiness for the next stage to facilitate the delivery of homes.

EX78 WALNUT BRIDGE - APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING

The Chairman asked councillors present at the meeting to note that the appendices to the committee report contained exempt information about infrastructure costs designated as such under Paragraph 3, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. Discussion of those appendices would require the meeting to exclude the public.

It was further noted there was an error in the report to the Executive on page 158 para 3.17 (f). The figure should read “£500,000”.

The Lead Councillor for Planning, Regeneration and housing delivery introduced the report. It was acknowledged that the replacement of Walnut Bridge had a long history, initially identified in 2012 in the Guildford Interim Town Centre Framework and again in 2014 when it was identified as a priority in the Guildford Town and Approaches Movement Study (GTAMS). The project was subsequently awarded LEP funding as part of the “Unlocking Guildford, Guildford Town Centre Transport Package” in 2014. It formed one of a number of projects and interventions which together would help alleviate congestion in the Town Centre.

In July 2016, the Executive had formally approved the project to replace Walnut Bridge. The replacement would provide improved access to the town centre from the station and was in anticipation of the significant developments expected in the immediate area. There was concern that the existing Bridge was too narrow to accommodate the increasing flow of pedestrians and cyclists. The new Bridge would be wider than the existing bridge, facilitate two-way cycle flow and be fully accessible. It would also lie on a more obvious alignment to encourage use by new and infrequent users as well as local people familiar to the area. Additionally, it would be seen as a catalyst for regeneration in the Bedford Plaza and Bedford Wharf area thereby becoming a critical access corridor from the Station through to the High Street. Finally, it would encourage more sustainable travel and reduce the need for cyclists to have to use the Gyratory. The bridge had received planning permission in 2018.

The Executive was informed that it was proposed to reincorporate the Bedford Plaza Public Realm works into the Bridge project primarily because the lighting design of Bedford Plaza including the Bridge had been included in these works. The planning permission for the Bridge

required that the public realm works be completed within six months of the completion of the Bridge. This would mean that it was possible the Bridge could not be opened after completion until public realm works were completed unless a temporary lighting system was installed. There was therefore a case to be made for these to be undertaken with the Bridge works. This could allow for economies of scale, savings in mobilisation costs etc. and could provide some additional funding from its £500,000 budget to be brought into the Bridge project.

The Executive were asked to consider three recommendations. To address a funding gap in the Walnut Bridge project by means of a transfer from the capital contingency fund of £450,000. Secondly, that the Bedford Plaza Public realm works be incorporated within the Walnut Bridge Project. Finally, £350,000 be transferred from the provisional to approved capital budget to fund the public realm work.

Prior to the formal consideration of the matter, Mr David Smith addressed the Executive in support of the replacement of Walnut Bridge as soon as possible.

During the formal debate, it was generally agreed that Walnut Bridge should be replaced at some stage, but the discussion centred on the cost, design and timing of the project. Two members of the Executive were opposed to providing additional funding to support the proposed design. There were concerns expressed that the level of the increased cost of the project was not acceptable. It was further argued that the project should be put on hold or a temporary structure be installed until there was a more suitable design in keeping with the proposed new Bedford Wharf public realm landscape.

In response, there were arguments concerning the immediate safety of the bridge, the safety of users of the bridge, the impact of the existing design on accessibility and the role of the bridge in realising sustainable transport plans for the town centre. It was argued that a delay in completion of the bridge would not be acceptable to local people. It was noted that if the design of the bridge were changed a new planning application could be required so increasing the cost and timescales further and that the LEP funding would need to be returned if not utilised for the bridge project within the year possibly making the project unfeasible. The meeting heard that should the Executive approve the recommendations infrastructure spending would attract further funding in the future and that there may be some flexibility on the design of the bridge within the parameters of the existing planning permission.

There followed a discussion concerning the designation of some financial information as exempt. It was explained that contractor bids as part of the tendering process must be kept confidential. Once a contract had been agreed the overall budget would be reported to the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee along with regular updates to the Executive as the project progressed. Revised budget figures would also be reported at the end of the year and would become public in due course.

In order to consider the exempt information referred to the above, the Executive

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of information contained in the Appendices to the report on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the 1972 Act.

Having considered the matter and readmitted the public to the meeting, the Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a virement of £450,000 be transferred from the capital contingency fund for the Walnut Bridge Project
- (2) That the Bedford Plaza Public realm works be incorporated within the Walnut Bridge Project.
- (3) That £350,000 be transferred from the provisional to approved capital budget to fund the public realm work.

Reasons:

It had become apparent that there was a funding gap and a virement of £450k was required to get this project completed.

The assimilation of the Bedford Plaza Public Realm works into the Bridge project was twofold:

1. To combine the lighting design for both schemes within the main Bridge Contract and
2. To leverage some of the associated budget for use on the Bridge project through economies of scale and mobilisation costs etc.

The budget for the public realm works would need to be transferred to the approved budget to enable the work to proceed.

EX79 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Executive

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

EX80 WOODBRIDGE ROAD SPORTSGROUND PAVILION REFURBISHMENT - SETTLEMENT OF THE FINAL ACCOUNT FOR WORKS

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

The Executive approved a budget of £1.9 million on 19th July 2016 to refurbish and rebuild the Guildford Sportsground Pavilion at the Guildford Sportsground, registered charity (305056). The refurbishment of the Woodbridge Road Sportsground Pavilion was completed in April 2018. Since April 2018 work has been on going to see through the defects liability period and settle the final account for the project The Executive considered a report which set out the accounting for project. In consultation with the Leader of the Council, Lead Councillors and Monitoring Officer, the Managing Director settled the final accounts which represented value for money to the Council.

A report would be delivered to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course.

The Executive

RESOLVED: That the use by the Managing Director of the delegated power to act in relation to matters of urgency in respect of this matter, be noted.

Reason:

To report decisions in accordance with the Council's Constitution

The meeting finished at 9.07 pm

Signed

Chairman

Date