

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

Tuesday, 21st April, 2020

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 17 and to the Notes at the end of this document, shall have effect five working days after the meeting. Details of any recommendations to Council are also included for completeness.

Members of the Executive

Chairman:

*Councillor Caroline Reeves (Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for the Environment & Sustainability across the borough, Transformation, Sustainable Transport, Economic Development, and Governance))

Vice-Chairman:

*Councillor Jan Harwood ((Deputy Leader Lead Councillor for Planning, Regeneration and Housing Delivery))

*Councillor Joss Bigmore, (Lead Councillor for Finance and Assets, Customer Service)
Councillor Angela Goodwin, (Lead Councillor for Housing, Access & Disability, Homelessness)

*Councillor David Goodwin, (Lead Councillor for Waste, Licensing, and Parking)

*Councillor Julia McShane, (Lead Councillor for Community Health, Support and Wellbeing)

*Councillor John Rigg, (Lead Councillor for Major Projects)

*Councillor Pauline Searle, (Lead Councillor for Countryside, Rural Life, and the Arts)

*Councillor James Steel, (Lead Councillor for Tourism, Leisure, and Sport)

*Councillor Fiona White, (Lead Councillor for Personal Health, Safety and Wellbeing)

*Present

Councillors Tim Anderson, Chris Blow, Susan Parker, Deborah Seabrook, Patrick Sheard and Catherine Anne Young were also in attendance

Agenda Item No.

Officer(s) to action Item

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. DECISIONS

The decisions taken by the Leader of the Council on 24 March 2020 were noted.

4. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader made two announcements:

Firstly, the Leader made a statement on this Council's local response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The community spirit and help being given by residents to support the most vulnerable people across the borough in difficult times was described as both outstanding and heart-warming. This spirit would be needed as the community finally emerged and recovered from the crisis.

The coronavirus pandemic had brought out a new respect for the value of public service, most visibly through the applause for the NHS and care workers on Thursday evenings. It was noted that importantly, other keyworkers were also being acknowledged. At a local level, people had been showing much gratitude and appreciation for Council staff delivering essential services. For example, notes had been attached to bins to thank refuse and recycling crews and there had been appreciation on social media from residents for the beautiful parks and countryside in the borough. There had been many messages of thanks received for the ways in which the Council had been supporting the community.

The Leader expressed sincere thanks to Council staff for maintaining essential services during the period of ongoing restriction. In addition, praise was given for the way in which the Council had, within a matter of weeks or even days in some cases, reorganised itself to deliver entirely new services to protect the most vulnerable residents. New community helplines had been installed and were being staffed seven days a week, local food distribution hubs had been established, Spectrum was operating as the countywide base for distributing food to those who were shielding, meals on wheels had been stepped-up and guidance and advice was being provided to residents through Council communications like never before. The Council was receiving wonderful feedback from those who had received food parcels and phone calls.

An indication of the scale of change and adaptation by the Council in playing a part in supporting the community through this crisis was set out as follows:

- 4,919 telephone calls had been made to the most vulnerable residents
- 1,021 calls had been received by the vulnerable persons helpline and housing advice service
- 399 food parcel deliveries had been delivered to residents
- 1,087 food parcels had been delivered countywide from Guildford Spectrum
- 4,492 meals on wheels had been provided
- 88 urgent minor home adaptations had been completed to keep elderly and vulnerable residents safe

- 31,851 information leaflets had been delivered to households by staff and volunteers
- 41 homeless people had been placed in accommodation
- 85 staff had been redeployed to welfare hubs and the vulnerable persons helpline
- 40,613 web pages had been viewed on the coronavirus section of the Council's website
- 57,939 public engagements had been recorded with our social media activity
- 441 grants had been paid to local businesses totalling £6.4 million

The Leader thanked the Managing Director and all Council staff for the way in which they had stepped-up during such unprecedented times to protect and care for the most vulnerable people in the community. The strength and importance of local government across the country had been underlined and the Council had been part of that. Although this period was a time of great sadness because of the many lives lost and families bereaved, the Leader expressed pride in the way in which Guildford was playing its part in defeating the virus and the future recovery of the community.

Secondly, the Leader announced changes to be made in the coming weeks to Lead Councillor portfolios.

At the meeting of the Executive held on 18 February 2020, the Leader announced the need to make further changes to Lead Councillor Portfolios so that the political direction of the Council was consistent with the new directorate framework following Phase A of Future Guildford and the themes that were emerging from the new Corporate Plan. The development of portfolios was continuing and the final changes would be announced at the Council meeting on 5 May 2020.

The portfolio titles were likely to be centred around:

- Resources,
- Customer Service
- Economy
- Regeneration
- Climate Change
- Environment
- Housing and Development Control
- Community

5. REVOCATION OF THE TAXI RANK, GUILDFORD PARK ROAD

Decision:

That the single objection received to the proposal be not supported and the revocation of the hackney carriage stand in Guildford Park

Mike Smith

Road, Guildford, as described in the report, be approved.

Reasons:

In support of the improvements for all modes of transport between the rail station, the University, Hospital and the Research Park. The removal of the taxi rank is part of a series of improvements proposed along Guildford Park Road.

Options considered and rejected:

Not to move the taxi rank.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any lead councillor and any dispensation granted:

None

6. COVID19 EMERGENCY BUDGET

Decision:

Claire Morris

The Executive approved the following recommendation to Council (5 May 2020)

That the Council:

- 1) Notes the Council's duties and response so far in dealing with the COVID19 pandemic
- 2) Notes the initial assessment of the impact on Guildford Borough Council's short-term financial position
- 3) Approves a revenue supplementary estimate of £15million to be funded from general fund reserves, such funding to be drawn down only if further government support is not forthcoming or is insufficient to cover the financial impact of COVID19 on the Council and sufficient cost savings cannot be found
- 4) Notes the advice of the Chief Finance Officer in paragraph 5.18 regarding the level of reserves and the potential need to rebuild reserves to a sufficient level if government grant support falls short
- 5) Notes the changes to Local Authority powers and duties introduced by the Coronavirus Act 2020 and delegates to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, authority to amend service provision in accordance with the Council's statutory duties as these may be varied by the Act, regulations and guidance made thereunder.

Reason for Recommendation:

To enable the Council to continue to respond to the COVID19 emergency

Options considered and rejected:

None

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any lead councillor and any dispensation granted:

None

NOTES:

(a) Any decision marked “#” means that the item was deemed by the Managing Director 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 17 (h), such decision takes effect immediately and is therefore *not* subject to the call-in procedure.

(b) 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 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.