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Contact Officer:

John Armstrong, Democratic Services &
Elections Manager

9 April 2020

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a remote meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** to be held on **TUESDAY, 21 APRIL 2020** at 7.00 pm. The meeting can be accessed remotely via Microsoft Teams in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Yours faithfully

James Whiteman
Managing Director

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)

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting will be recorded for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website in accordance with the Council's capacity in performing a task in the public interest and in line with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for six months.

If you have any queries regarding webcasting of meetings, please contact Committee Services.

QUORUM 3

THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Vision – for the borough

For Guildford to be a town and rural borough that is the most desirable place to live, work and visit in South East England. A centre for education, healthcare, innovative cutting-edge businesses, high quality retail and wellbeing. A county town set in a vibrant rural environment, which balances the needs of urban and rural communities alike. Known for our outstanding urban planning and design, and with infrastructure that will properly cope with our needs.

Three fundamental themes and nine strategic priorities that support our vision:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Place-making | Delivering the Guildford Borough Local Plan and providing the range of housing that people need, particularly affordable homes |
| | Making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier |
| | Regenerating and improving Guildford town centre and other urban areas |
| Community | Supporting older, more vulnerable and less advantaged people in our community |
| | Protecting our environment |
| | Enhancing sporting, cultural, community, and recreational facilities |
| Innovation | Encouraging sustainable and proportionate economic growth to help provide the prosperity and employment that people need |
| | Creating smart places infrastructure across Guildford |
| | Using innovation, technology and new ways of working to improve value for money and efficiency in Council services |

Values for our residents

- We will strive to be the best Council.
- We will deliver quality and value for money services.
- We will help the vulnerable members of our community.
- We will be open and accountable.
- We will deliver improvements and enable change across the borough.



AGENDA

**ITEM
NO.**

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

In accordance with the local Code of Conduct, a councillor is required to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) that they may have in respect of any matter for consideration on this agenda. Any councillor with a DPI must not participate in any discussion or vote regarding that matter and they must also withdraw from the meeting immediately before consideration of the matter.

If that DPI has not been registered, the councillor must notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of the DPI within 28 days of the date of the meeting.

Councillors are further invited to disclose any non-pecuniary interest which may be relevant to any matter on this agenda, in the interests of transparency, and to confirm that it will not affect their objectivity in relation to that matter.

3 DECISIONS (Pages 5 - 14)

To confirm the decisions taken by the Leader of the Council on 24 March 2020.

4 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5 REVOCATION OF THE TAXI RANK, GUILDFORD PARK ROAD (Pages 15 - 20)

6 COVID19 EMERGENCY BUDGET (Pages 21 - 32)

Key Decisions:

Any item on this agenda that is marked with an asterisk is a key decision. The Council's Constitution defines a key decision as an executive decision which is likely to result in expenditure or savings of at least £200,000 or which is likely to have a significant impact on two or more wards within the Borough.

Under Regulation 9 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, whenever the Executive intends to take a key decision, a document setting out prescribed information about the key decision including:

- the date on which it is to be made,
- details of the decision makers,
- a list of the documents to be submitted to the Executive in relation to the matter,
- how copies of such documents may be obtained

must be available for inspection by the public on the Council's website at least 28 clear days before the key decision is to be made. The relevant notice in respect of the key decisions to be taken at this meeting was published as part of the Forward Plan on 24 March 2020.



STATEMENT OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Tuesday 24 March 2020

The matters referred to below were due to be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 24 March 2020. Due to the coronavirus crisis, the meeting was cancelled. Under Section 9E (2) (a) of the Local Government Act 2000, the Leader of the Council may take executive decisions.

The decisions summarised below were taken by the Leader of the Council on 24 March 2020 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 date on which this statement was published. Details of any recommendations to Council are also included for completeness.

Other members of the Executive, councillors and members of the public were invited to submit any representations in writing that they would have made at the meeting, which the Leader took into account when making these decisions.

**Agenda
Item No.**

**Officer(s) to
action Item**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Not applicable.

2. LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by the Leader.

3. MINUTES

Not applicable.

4. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Not applicable.

5. FUTURE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF CHANTRY WOOD CAMPSITE

Decision:

(1) That the Chantry Wood Campsite continues in its current form with increased fees as set out in "Option B2" of the report submitted to the Executive.

Hendryk Jurk

(2) That the Council continues to engage with forest school operators

to explore options to increase outdoor education whilst maintaining a camping facility.

Reason:

To implement arrangements at the campsite that respond to the views expressed during the consultation that protects the natural environment and reduces the operational cost to the Council.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

Option B1 Basic facilities run by GBC
Option B3 Basic Facilities – run by volunteers
Option B4 Basic facilities – run by forest school

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

None

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors, public or officers:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

Given the latest strictures from HMG over the last few days, I don't feel it appropriate to take any decision at this current point in time.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

EAB asked for the possibility of providing improved disabled facilities be investigated. Whilst the consultation had not revealed a great demand, that may be because respondents were self-selecting and it does not appear any attempt was made to ask disabled people if they were interested in using the site or what they would need to be able to do so. It may well be that any adaptations necessary would go far beyond 'reasonable adjustment' and hence be unachievable/ affordable. However, it would be good to see this point considered.

Leader's response:

We are deferring consideration of access improvements as the camp site can't be booked now and we will look at this when we are in a position to use it, when we know if the Forest School are interested and we will also review the booking system when the IT is in place.

Cllr George Potter (non-Exec member):

An issue that residents have raised with me is that the booking system for the campsite is likely to be a major contributory factor to its low usage.

At present all bookings must be made a year in advance and there is no online calendar to show the availability of the campsite. There is also no deposit required for making a booking. This effectively encourages people to make speculative bookings well in advance and then to simply cancel, or not show up, for bookings that they no longer want or need. The resultant booking vacancies aren't filled, however, because others who wish to book the site have no way of knowing that these vacancies exist.

Indeed, residents have told me that when calling to make booking

enquiries staff have declined to tell them what dates are available and instead residents have resorted to asking about each calendar date in turn until they get to one to which the answer is "it's available".

If charges are going to increase then a priority must be to get a better booking system that encourages, rather than discourages, use of the campsite.

Additionally, I would strongly support the prioritisation of rebuild/ adaptations to the toilet blocks to make them more disabled accessible. This should be prioritised ahead of works such as the refurbishment of the barn interior as, at present, the interior is predominantly used by the parks department for storage and is rarely used by public bookings.

Finally, residents have reported a belief that the campsite appears to periodically be used for internal corporate bookings by GBC. If this is indeed the case it should be the case that these bookings are cross-charged appropriately so that this usage is accurately recorded in figures which purport to show the usage of the campsite.

Leader's response:

- a) Corona Virus:
The campsite is currently shut due to Corona Virus as we cannot provide basic sanitation and gatherings are discouraged as per government advice.
- b) The Booking system:
A new online booking system is planned as part of the Future Guildford project. This could show a bookings calendar and include a deposit payment.
- c) Level of usage:
The level of usage is determined by the single party booking, not the booking system. This is due to the current toilet system. The water infrastructure in the area would require upgrading in order to address this. This was considered in the Executive Report in 8 January 2019. The public consultation established that there is no public support for this scale of investment.
- d) Staff not being able to say what vacancies are available:
In the winter we have maintained a waiting list as booking dates were not confirmed pending this decision on the future operation. In order to avoid any confusion, we neither offered nor confirmed that bookings on specific dates are available.
- e) More accessible toilets:
Full disabled access cannot be achieved, as this would depend on water pressure availability. The water infrastructure in the area would require upgrading in order to address this. The public consultation established that there is no public support for this scale of investment. Some improvements can be delivered. The scope would determine the time required to address Green Belt/ Building regulations. Due to the nature of the surrounding site the current requirement for disabled access is low. A balance would need to be struck between effort and outcome, as the measures that are possible to be delivered within the current constraints may not be sufficient to provide greater accessibility.
- f) It is correct the campsite is occasionally booked for internal use. Cross charging would impact on the cost of other Council

services, for example the Play Rangers.

6. BURCHATTS FARM BARN CAR PARK, STOKE PARK

Decision:

To defer the decision until a later date.

Sally Astles

Reason(s):

The parking assessment will be redone and so this was not an urgent piece of work to be undertaken at this point in time.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

To proceed with the project by transferring monies from the provisional to approved capital programme.

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

None

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors or public:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

Given the latest strictures from HMG over the last few days, I feel we should postpone this decision until the HMG has made its decision regarding infrastructure developments /building works clearer.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

Agreed in principle. However, I have 3 points:

1. Should we re-prioritise the capital programme in view of current unprecedented circumstances?
2. If/ when the works go ahead, priority should be given to maintaining spaces for use by Disability challengers during the works. Others can walk.
3. Only 3 cycle stands are mentioned in section 3.10. Given we are trying to increase sustainable travel, we should be making it easier for people to cycle, especially urban saints, Guildfordians etc.

Leader's response:

We will review the whole proposal because officers have informed us the parking assessment will have to be redone before we are able to start the work. Cycling can be reviewed then.

Cllr John Redpath (non-Exec member):

I am concerned about the charges for surfacing Burchatts car park. This is a huge amount of money for this area. Has it been properly tendered and is it for all the currently unsurfaced areas such as Challengers, the Barn demise etc?

Even then it's excessive.

Leader's response:

- It is an estimate to allow the formal tendering process to be undertaken. We cannot go through a tendering process without first getting authority to spend the money. Our engineers have

allowed for a generous contingency of 15%, so there is a good chance the final cost will be less. We do not want to underestimate the final cost in case we do not have enough funds and end up having to go back to the Executive.

- Our engineers have based the cost on current contractor rates and these rates are from contractors on the cheaper end of the scale. The cost includes the following:
 - Preliminaries, restrictive working, traffic management
 - SUDS drainage works
 - Earthworks
 - Block paving construction
 - Tarmac construction
 - Kerbs, edgings
 - Consultants: CDM, QS and Engineering design time
 - Contingencies, 15% of works.

7. PROPERTY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Decision:

To defer the decision to a future meeting of the Executive.

Melissa
Bromham

Reason(s):

To reconsider when there can be a full discussion with members of the Executive and where the confidential Appendix 3 can be considered which it had been intended to circulate with a Late Sheet prior to the meeting being cancelled.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

1. To approve the Property Investment Strategy.
2. To approve the delegation of authority to the Head of Asset Management in consultation with the Director of Strategic Services, the Chief Financial Officer and the Lead Member for Finance, Asset Management and Customer Services, to acquire property within the set parameters of the strategy.

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

None.

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors or public:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

Given the latest strictures from HMG over the last few days, I don't feel it appropriate to take any decision at this current point in time.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

Does this need reappraising in the light of the current circumstances? It is extremely difficult to discern what is going to be a good investment at this time but perhaps green energy projects provide more certainty. I attended the big energy summit and am in the course of writing a note on this topic.

Leader's response:

This isn't making it a priority to spend on property, current events will change all sorts of investment portfolios and all this does is allow for an action if deemed necessary.

8. GUILDFORD BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2020

Decision:

That the Local Development Scheme, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive be adopted with effect from 1 April 2020.

Stuart
Harrison,

Reason:

To progress the new Guildford borough Local Plan: development management policies by having a Local Development Scheme (LDS) with an up to date timetable for the Local Plan.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

None.

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

None.

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors or public:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

This is probably inappropriate at this time.

Leader response:

This is not a radical decision that might be impacted by the Covid-19 situation and is required in order to move forward with the proposed consultation on the Development Management Policies approval of which will be required from Full Council.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

Agrees with recommendation

9. REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION ON LOCAL PLAN: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Recommendation to Council:

- (1) That the draft Local Plan: Development Management Policies document, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report submitted to the Executive, be put before Full Council on 7 April 2020 for approval for Regulation 18 public consultation and to approve a seven-week period of consultation beginning on 20 April 2020.
- (2) That the Planning Policy Manager be authorised to make such minor alterations to improve the clarity of the document as he may

Stuart
Harrison,

determine in consultation with the Lead Councillor.

Reason(s):

Undertaking a public consultation on the draft Local Plan is a statutory requirement placed on Local Planning Authorities under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and will enable the Council to move closer to adopting the second part of the Local Plan.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

None.

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

None.

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors or public:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

I can see little point recommendation to the Full Council Meeting that seems highly unlikely to occur.

Leader's response:

We can move this item through to Full Council whilst we await guidance from Government on how we will be able to progress business during this challenging time.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

Overall, I am supportive of this document and appreciate the work that has gone into it. However, I and other councillors participated in the EAB which considered this document on 17th Feb. We have also made written submissions. Whilst the document summarises EAB comments, short of going through the document for that meeting and the current document, it is difficult to ascertain what changes have been made as a result of any councillor written representations etc. It does not feel like the officers really pay much attention.

Leader's response:

I will ask the Planning Policy Manager to comment on and perhaps highlight specifically in the report to Council any changes made to the document as a result of councillors' written representations.

10. TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Decision:

- (1) That a Town Centre Masterplan Programme Board be established and chaired by Councillor John Rigg.
- (2) That a procurement specialist be appointed for the purpose of a delivery led town centre project who will advise the Council on the recruitment of a team of specialists, including planners, to lead on the delivery of a portfolio of projects that will together contribute to the comprehensive regeneration of Guildford town centre, and be

Andrew
Tyldesley

responsible for delivering the projects that are identified as supporting the future of the Town Centre as well as the evidence base that will inform an aspirational document to explore the development potential of the Town Centre.

Reason:

To support the implementation of the resolution in Council minute C029.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

To not approve the recommendation thereby delaying the delivery of a strategy for the improvement of Guildford Town Centre.

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

None.

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors or public:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

I am happy to support this proposal.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

Agree with the recommendation.

11. PAPERLESS MEETINGS

Decision:

That Option B, as set out below, be implemented:

John
Armstrong

To adopt a “paper-light” approach to meetings, which would have paperless meetings as an aspiration, but recognise that councillors should still have a choice between using their devices and the functionality of the Modern.Gov app or continuing to receive paper copy agendas; and in respect of the latter, the basis upon which paper copies will be provided will be as follows:

- Paper copy Council agendas and order papers will only be provided to councillors who ‘opt in’ to receive them and, similarly, paper copy committee agendas and supplementary information (late) sheets will only be provided to members of a committee and substitutes who ‘opt in’ to receive them
- Paper copy agendas will be placed in councillors’ pigeon-holes unless they ‘opt in’ to have them sent by first class post
- The ‘opt in’ requirements to also apply in respect of agendas for working groups, task groups, and task and finish groups involving councillors

Reason(s):

To work towards delivering on the Council’s commitments to secure ongoing savings in its revenue budget and to assist in achieving the Council’s corporate aspirations to reduce its carbon footprint, whilst still complying with legislation requiring the provision of copy agendas for

inspection by the public.

Options considered and rejected by the Leader of the Council:

Option A – confirm original decision taken by Executive on 18 February 2020.

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

None.

Details of any written submissions received and considered by the Leader from other members of the Executive, councillors or public:

Cllr Patrick Sheard (non-Exec member):

I'm happy with this proposal, though I see little point in having paper agendas in pigeon-holes / via post unless there is a further choice to not having them at all (Or some procedural / legal requirement for these to be distributed)

Leader's response:

Option B emphasises that there is an initial presumption of paperless meetings, subject to the "opt in" provisions outlined above. Councillors not wishing to have agendas should not therefore opt in.

Cllr Deborah Seabrook (non-Exec member):

Agrees with the recommendation.

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 Councilmay 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.

Agenda item number: 3

- (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.

Executive Report

Ward(s) affected: Friary and St Nicolas

Report of Licensing Team Leader

Author: Mike Smith, Licensing Team Leader

Tel: 01483 444387

Email: mike.smith@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: David Goodwin

Tel: 01483 824616

Email: david.goodwin@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 21 April 2020

Revocation of Hackney Carriage Stand at Guildford Park Road

Executive Summary

The report seeks a decision from Executive on the proposed removal of the Hackney Carriage Stand (Taxi Rank) on Guildford Park Road, outside the rear entrance to Guildford Station following the completion of the required statutory consultation as part of the wider Sustainable Movement Corridor works.

Recommendation to Executive

That, subject to consideration of the single objection received to the proposal, the Executive is asked to consider the approval of the revocation of the rank.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

This proposal is part of the wider Sustainable Movement Corridor, which identifies a series of improvements for all modes of transport between the rail station, the University, Hospital and the Research Park. At the southern end of the corridor is Guildford Park Road. The removal of the taxi rank is part of a series of improvements proposed along Guildford Park Road.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication?

No

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Executive approval for removal of the current taxi rank on Guildford Park Road, outside Guildford Station following the completion of the statutory consultation process.

- 1.2 The removal will be achieved through the process prescribed under section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (“the Act”) to appoint or revoke ranks.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The removal of the rank will contribute to our fundamental themes as follows:

- **Place making** – making travel in Guildford and across the Borough easier.

3. Background

- 3.1 Taxi ranks are an important part of the Nation’s transport network. Ranks are a common feature in many towns and cities and provide a location where licensed taxis can legally park to wait for a customer who wishes to use a taxi, rather than drive around town centre streets waiting to be hailed.
- 3.2 Similarly having well defined and managed rank locations improves public safety through allowing customers to easily obtain a licensed taxi service and reduces the risks associated with touting and inconvenience to customers searching the streets for a service.
- 3.3 A local authority can appoint areas on streets or private land as taxi ranks for either continual or part-time use under section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The creation of a taxi rank is not a straightforward process; the local authority must obtain the permission of the Highways Authority, give notice to the Police, publish a public advertisement in a local paper and take into account any objections or representations received within 28 days of publication, before a rank is appointed.
- 3.4 The Act states that the same procedure must be followed to revoke or alter a rank.
- 3.5 Following a review of rank provision, in 2016 the Executive agreed to appoint approximately 30 new rank spaces across town to complement current provision at North Street (outside the Friary Centre and Marks and Spencer) and Guildford Park Road.
- 3.5 There are also ranks provided by the railway company, for which an additional fee is payable for the use of the rank, at:
 - Guildford Railway Station (approx. 10 spaces)
 - Guildford London Road Station (3 spaces)
- 3.6 As part of the planned Sustainable Movement Corridor there are a number of proposed improvements along Guildford Park Road. The specific proposal in terms of the taxi rank is to remove the rank so that the bus stop is relocated nearer to the station entrance.
- 3.7 It is a very constrained area with many vehicles, pedestrians, cycles and the total daily 2-way flows at about 11,000vpd. A video survey was carried out to clarify

the extent of the complex travel movements in the area that included buses stopping, taxis waiting and dropping off, parking durations and pedestrians crossing. In working up the scheme there have been extensive consultations with Surrey County Council highways and passenger transport.

- 3.8 The Table below summarises the drop off and pick up flows outside the railway station on Tuesday 4 and Wednesday 5 December 2018 over 18 hours on each day. It shows low volumes of taxis and many more private hire and cars carrying out the act. By contrast the volumes of bus passengers averaged per day over the same 2 days are much higher, with westbound flows surveyed at 503 passengers and eastbound 377. It is these eastbound passengers that are planned to have a stop closer to the rail station entrance.

Row Labels	Count of Drop Off Amount	Sum of Drop Off Amount2	Count of Pick Up Amount	Sum of Pick Up Amount2	Sum of (hh:mm:ss)
Car	185		203	81	07:25:00
LGV	6		7	2	00:47:07
Private Hire Taxi	15		18	10	01:13:39
Taxi	2		3		00:04:00
Bus	7		41		00:02:18
Grand Total	215		272	93	108

Table 1: Guildford Park Road Drop Off & Pick Up Survey & Duration by Mode

4. Consultations

- 4.1 The removal of the rank was considered by the Licensing Committee on 27 November 2019, with Licensing Committee recommending Executive approve the removal of the rank, subject to the necessary consultation process.
- 4.2 The process also requires the consent of the Highways Authority, in this case through the Guildford Joint Committee. Although the meeting of the Joint Committee on 18 March 2020 was cancelled due to the Coronavirus crisis, contingency arrangements were put in place by Surrey County Council to deal with the business on that agenda, and members of the Joint Committee were asked individually by email whether they had any objection to the proposal. The deadline for responding to this was 13 April 2020, after publication of the agenda for this meeting. The Executive will be advised if any objections were received.
- 4.3 Before ranks are adopted (or removed), legislation requires that the locations are subject to a period of consultation with the Police and the public. This is achieved by serving a notice on the Chief of Police and by publishing an advertisement in a locally distributed newspaper, allowing for a period of 28 days from the date of first publication for comments or objections to the proposals.
- 4.4 The required notice was served upon Surrey Police, and a public notice appeared in the Surrey Advertiser on 17 January 2020 and in the Council's reception. In addition, a site notice was erected and the wider taxi trade were informed of the proposal at December's TAG meeting and of the consultation via our Taxi newsletter.

- 4.5 One response to the consultation was received from a Mr Nabi, a Hackney Carriage driver on 13 February 2020 which stated:

“Please can you consider my request to keep this rank by the back of the station. I use this rank quite a lot during peak hours as well as many other drivers. We get a lot of university students and customers from the research park and hospital coming to the rank by the back of the station. If there is no rank by this side, fares will increase and we may lose customers. There are limited spaces by the front of the station so keeping this rank accessible will be quite beneficial for drivers during peak hours when there is a lot of traffic around the station as having the rank will allow us to wait here and be on time for pick-ups. When renovations for the train station will begin, it will be a lot more difficult as there will be fewer spots available by the front of the station so having the rank at the back will allow more drivers to wait. There's also been an increase in taxi drivers in Guildford so we are already short on spaces at the rank. Not only will this rank be beneficial for the taxi drivers, it will also be beneficial to public travelling, as it will decrease fares and waiting times for customers.

*Many Thanks,
Mohammed Y Nabi
HCD Plate 77”*

- 4.6 In respect of the comments raised in the objection, Officers would advise as follows:

The rank is not well used and there are planned improvements to travel across Guildford as part of the wider Sustainable Movement Corridor which will deliver potential benefit to a greater number of customers. Directional signage within the station directs customers wishing to get a taxi to the front of the station. Customers are still able to hail or book a taxi in advance from the back of the station, with Table 1 above showing a number of pick-ups from this area but limited immediate hires. Taxi rank provision was comprehensively reviewed in 2016 where approximately 30 new rank spaces were appointed. Since this time, the number of licensed vehicles has not increased, but in fact fallen.

5. Key Risks

- 5.1 There are no key risks associated with this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The cost of removing a taxi rank includes legal advertisement costs associated with the statutory process, together with the costs of removing the road markings.
- 6.2 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows Guildford Borough Council to recover the costs of providing taxi ranks through licence fees charged to licence holders. However it has been agreed that Major Projects will cover the cost of advertising and implementation of these works.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 A local authority can adopt areas on streets or private land as taxi ranks for either continual or part-time use under section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The statutory process provides that the local authority must obtain the permission of the Highways Authority, give notice to the Police, publish a public advertisement in a local paper and consider any objections or representations received within 28 days of publication before a rank is appointed. The Council's Executive has the authority to appoint a rank after the necessary approvals and consultation.

7.2 Section 63(5) of the Act states that the power to appoint ranks includes the power to revoke such appointment and requires the same statutory process to be followed.

8. Human Resource Implications

8.1 There are no Human Resource implications.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

9.1 Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

9.2 The protected grounds covered by the equality duty are: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. The equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.

9.3 The law requires that this duty to have due regard be demonstrated in decision making processes. Assessing the potential impact on equality of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is one of the key ways in which public authorities can demonstrate that they have had due regard to the aims of equality duty.

9.4 The proposed removal of the rank to accommodate a bus stop nearer to the station entrance will improve access to the Station for a greater number of members of the public, including those with protected characteristics.

10. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

10.1 The removal of the taxi rank is part of the Sustainable Movement Corridor works intended to improve environmentally friendly and public transport in Guildford.

11. Summary of Options

11.1 Following the statutory consultation Executive may either:

- Decide to remove the rank, or
- Decide not to remove the rank

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 Removing the taxi rank and relocating the bus stop to outside the station would improve access to the Station for a greater number of members of the public. The current rank is not well used. The Licensing Committee support these proposals.

13. Background Papers

[Minutes of Licensing Committee Meeting held 27 November 2019](#)

14. Appendices

None

Council Report

Wards affected: All

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Author: Claire Morris

Tel: 01483 444827

Email: claire.morris@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: Joss Bigmore

Tel: 07974 979369

Email: joss.bigmore@guildford.gov.uk

Date: Exec: 21 April 2020, Council 5 May 2020

COVID19: Emergency Budget

Executive Summary

Guildford Borough Council is a category 1 responder to civil emergencies under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This means that the Council has a vitally important role in responding locally to COVID19, to save lives, protect the NHS, and ensure our residents are protected wherever possible. We also have a duty to ensure that crucial council services continue to operate in these unprecedented times. The situation is changing rapidly. The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's response so far to COVID-19, the impact on our services and seeks approval of an emergency budget to support the Council's response. The Council's response to the pandemic has been intense and wide ranging across a number of critical services as set out in section 4 of the report. It is worth mentioning that these are extraordinary times, COVID19 is a world- wide pandemic which has resulted in severe measures to contain the virus both in the UK and nearly 200 other countries . ***It is unprecedented to stand up our National Emergency Plans, Surrey Major Incident emergency response and business continuity plans simultaneously on a protracted scale.***

Section 5 of the report sets out that Officers predict a range of financial implications for the Council depending on how long the government restrictions are in place. The financial implications could be between £5million and £15million (11% to 31% of the Council's Net budget requirement). Whilst further government grant support is anticipated, the amount and timing of that support is currently uncertain. As a result, officers recommend that the Council puts in place an emergency budget of up to £15million funded from reserves to cover both the costs being incurred and the potential loss of income from the COVID19 Pandemic.

Section 9 sets out the Council's response to redeploying staff from non-critical services into critical services to ensure that we can continue to meet the challenge. This has and will mean that in some non-critical services, ordinary council work is being put on hold or suspended for a period of time. The Council is extremely proud of how our staff have responded to this challenging and worrying situation. Many of these public servants are working on the front line delivering critical services and have demonstrated a real commitment in continuing with their work, whilst many others have joined them to provide

additional resource where it is most needed.

The Executive is asked to consider the recommendation to Council set out below.

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.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's duties as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in responding to the COVID19 Pandemic Emergency and provide an update on the response so far.
- 1.2 Council Constitution Part 3 Delegation to Officers, Managing Director, paragraph 2 states that the Managing Director can, in consultation with the Leader where practicable and the Monitoring Officer, act in an emergency or in relation to matters of urgency in relation to any functions of the Council, subject to the use of this power being reported to the next meeting of the Council, Executive or committee concerned.
- 1.3 Many of the actions the Council has taken so far have involved incurring emergency expenditure that was not included in the Council's 2020-21 Budget approved by Council on 5 February 2020. This report therefore seeks approval of a supplementary estimate for the general fund revenue account and the housing revenue account to deal with the financial impact of the COVID19 Pandemic Emergency.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The budget underpins the Council's strategic framework and delivery of the Corporate Plan.

3. Background

- 3.1 Councils, like Guildford Borough Council, are category one responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which sets out the legislative framework for responding to emergencies such as the COVID-19 outbreak. As part of the local resilience forum (LRF), councils work with local partner organisations to plan and activate their emergency responses, and there are established officer-led processes for leading the strategic (gold), tactical (silver) and operational (bronze) responses to emergencies under the 2004 Act. LRFs are based on police areas and so Guildford, along with all the other District and Borough Councils, Surrey County Council, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and local NHS bodies are all category 1 members of the Surrey Local Resilience Forum (SLRF). Category 2 responders, such as utility and infrastructure companies are also part of the SLRF. Surrey County Council leads the SLRF.
- 3.2 A Major incident was declared in Surrey on Thursday 19 March due to the Covid-19 pandemic affecting Surrey. The Surrey Strategic Coordinating Group (gold) was established at Mount Browne on 20 March, with meetings happening in person and virtually. The SCG is working with all partners and agencies across Surrey to provide a co-ordinated response, with the main aims to:
- support colleagues in health to ensure that we reduce pressure on the health system;
 - delay the spread of the virus and save lives;
 - support communities and protect our most vulnerable residents.
- 3.3 A number of SCG tactical subgroups (silver) were set up from Friday 20 March onwards to co-ordinate activity across the system to address the impact of COVID19 on individuals, communities and services. Various Guildford Borough Council Officers are playing an active role in all sub-groups.
- 3.4 At Guildford Borough Council, our initial COVID19 working group had been operating twice weekly since the beginning of March when the first COVID19 cases were announced in Surrey. Initial work focussed on the review and update of our Business Continuity Plans, risk assessments and other preparation work to ensure the continuity of Council services.
- 3.5 The initial working group was expanded to form the Guildford Operational COVID19 response group (bronze) when the major incident was declared. The Guildford COVID19 response group meets daily and consist of 19 officers (the Managing Director, Directors, 6 Senior Leaders, and other specific officers), the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and representatives from Applied Resilience, the Council's Emergency Planning Consultants. The role of the group is to ensure the continued operation of the Council's critical services and ensure the operational implementation of instructions received from Government or Surrey SCG in responding to the emergency.

- 3.6 It is worth mentioning that these are extraordinary times, COVID19 is a world- wide pandemic which has resulted in severe measures to contain the virus both in the UK and nearly 200 other countries . ***It is unprecedented to stand up our National Emergency Plans, Surrey Major Incident emergency response and business continuity plans simultaneously on a protracted scale.***

4. Council response so far

- 4.1 As stated above, Guildford Borough Council has activated both its Borough Emergency Plan (as part of the declaration of a Major Incident in Surrey) and its business continuity plan to ensure we can continue to deliver critical front-line services. Our critical front-line services are:

- Housing & Homelessness Services,
- Waste, Refuse & Recycling,
- Street Cleaning,
- On-street parking management for Highways
- CCTV
- Bereavement Services,
- Emergency Licensing, Food Safety and Pest Control,
- Business Rates, Council Tax and Benefits,
- Emergency planning and response,
- Customers services and communications.

In addition, support services such as HR, Finance and ICT are also required to enable the provision of critical front-line services.

- 4.2 From an emergency plan perspective our key priorities are to support our NHS colleagues and supporting vulnerable individuals and communities in Surrey, with a particular focus on those in Guildford. Specific immediate steps have been taken to support the most vulnerable individuals and communities and to respond to the pandemic emergency. This has included:

- Establishing a Surrey wide Community Hub at Spectrum leisure centre to coordinate measures to support the approx. 15,000 most vulnerable people in Surrey and 'shield' them from COVID-19,
- Establishing 'Locality Hubs' at Park Barn and Shawfield Day Centres to support our day centre, meals on wheels, sheltered and supported housing clients, and other people self-referred to us as needing help, with food parcels, meals on wheels and welfare calls
- Procuring and placing homeless households and rough sleepers in hotel accommodation and providing meals and food parcels to them
- Procuring and placing people discharged from hospital in suitable accommodation and ensuring they have support and food
- Procuring and placing people discharged from the probation service and prison in suitable accommodation and ensuring they have support and food
- Playing our part in the Surrey wide 'surge planning' to put plans in place for a potential significant escalation of COVID19 cases requiring hospital care
- Scaling operations at the Crematorium to deal with Excess Deaths
- Providing business rate relief and grants prescribed by the government to affected businesses
- Providing hardship funding for Council tax and administering an increase in claimants for the local council tax support scheme

- Providing general advice to the public and specific advice to individuals suffering hardship as a result of COVID19
- Playing our part in recovery planning

4.3 From a Business Continuity perspective, the Council, like many other organisations, has had to rapidly enable officers and Councillors to work from home on a large scale. A significant proportion of the Council's officers are classed as Key Workers and so are expected to attend their normal places of work and carry out their roles if it is not possible to carry out their jobs from home. However, in order to ensure the safety and health of our staff, we have taken as many precautionary steps as possible to reduce the risk to their health of carrying out their roles. This has included closing our offices and enabling officers to work from home en-masse where possible. We have also taken steps to ensure that where staff have to attend a place of work or are providing frontline services to the public, that we are able to implement, as far as possible, social distancing and provide appropriate personal protective equipment where risk assessments have identified a need to do so.

4.4 The Council was in a very good position to do this, having just completed its ICT refresh project. As part of the project we had started the migration of services to cloud technology and rolled out laptops to over 700 staff to enable them to work in an agile way. However, allowing working from home en-masse required the following:

- Additional licences for the Council's Virtual Private Network (VPN)
- Additional licences to MS Teams to allow guest and dial-in access
- Additional soft phone licences from Mitel to enable officers who need to, to take calls from members of the public at home on their office phone numbers. This included the roll out of soft phone technology to our customer service centre, housing, business rate, council tax and benefits teams all of whom have played a significant part in responding to the emergency.
- Additional works to enable virtual committee and live streaming of meetings

5. Financial implications

5.1 Section 4 outlines the significant work that the Council is doing in responding to the COVID19 pandemic emergency. Many of the actions taken to date, and which need to be undertaken in the next few months, were not included in the Council's budget for 2020-21 when it was approved on 5 February 2020.

5.2 It is currently uncertain as to how long the current restrictions or 'lockdown' is likely to last. We have modelled a number of scenarios, based on various different government announcements, as follows:-

- best case scenario – current restrictions will last for 1 month
- mid-case scenario - restrictions will last for 3 months
- worst case scenario - restrictions will be in place for up to 6 months.

5.3 An estimate of likely costs to be incurred under each scenario are as follows:

Agenda item number: 6

Covid19 Additional Expenditure			
Service	Best	Mid	Worst
Revenues and Benefits - Software costs for COVID19 grants and reliefs	9,150.00	9,150.00	9,150.00
ICT - Softphones to enable call centre staff to work from home	1,889.00	1,889.00	1,889.00
ICT - Microsoft Teams Licences x 40	1,480.00	1,480.00	1,480.00
Crematorium - additional coffin storage capacity	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Project Aspire - food parcels and grants	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
Spectrum Leisure Centre: operator support costs & use as food distribution hub	264,220.00	792,660.00	1,585,320.00
Homelessness - additional accommodation	71,972.50	224,160.00	448,320.00
Glive Theatre - business continuity costs	18,109.00	54,327.00	108,654.00
Recovery action	500,000.00	500,000.00	500,000.00
Corporate Finance - short term borrowing for cash flow purposes	9,342.47	28,027.41	56,054.82
	932,162.97	1,667,693.41	2,766,867.82

5.4 In addition to the costs being incurred, like many other organisations, the Council is witnessing a significant reduction, and in some cases, total loss, of some of its service income streams. The main areas are listed below:

- On 27 March 2020, the UK government announced that councils were required to make parking free to key workers. However, car park usage and income had fallen so significantly following the 'lockdown' announced on 24 March that the Council, in line with many others across the UK, suspended all parking charges until further notice. As a result, a total loss of income for a period of time has been predicted.
- Commercial rental income – in line with government guidance to landlords the Council has deferred rental payments to some tenants; however it is anticipated that even with the deferment and various government support to business that some businesses will still fall into liquidation. Estimates have therefore been made for the level of potential default of rent payment across our investment property portfolio due to increased tenant bankruptcy.
- Tourism, Sport & Leisure income – this income stream has suffered a total loss since the government announced the closure of all sites for the foreseeable future.
- Trade refuse – due to significant business closures and other businesses asking staff to work from home, this income stream is also experiencing significant reductions.
- Garden Waste – withdrawal of service in order to focus on core refuse, food and recycling waste collection service

A risk analysis of the potential income reduction against 2020-21 budgeted levels is shown in the table below based on the scenarios outlined in paragraph 5.2, along with a total combined cost and loss of income.

Covid19 Potential Loss of Income			
Service	Best	Mid	Worst
Car Parking Income	£ 2,965,137	£ 4,797,753	£ 7,750,844
Commercial Rent defaults	£ 179,134	£ 341,108	£ 892,558
Tourism	£ 126,996	£ 291,104	£ 372,382
Sports and Leisure	£ 41,454	£ 311,078	£ 649,060
Other (eg, planning, trade refuse etc)	£ 647,590	£ 996,292	£ 1,992,583
HRA Rent Arrears / defaults	£ 17,336	£ 52,008	£ 86,681
Future Guildford Transformation Project benefits realisation delay	£ 230,938	£ 317,198	£ 437,769
	£ 4,208,585	£ 7,106,541	£ 12,181,877
Total combined costs and loss of income (excl HRA)	£ 5,123,412	£ 8,722,225	£ 14,862,065
% Core spending Power	37%	62%	106%
% Net Budget requirement	11%	18%	31%

- 5.5 It is, sadly, inevitable that there will be additional income from Cremation fees and memorabilia that may offset some of the above income loss however, what that may be is difficult to predict at present. Obviously, we hope this amount is not significant.
- 5.6 The potential combined loss of income and additional costs being incurred are material to the Council's budget and financial position. The Council's Net Budget requirement for 2020-21 is £48.7 million. As a percentage of the net budget requirement the potential combined loss of income and additional costs could be between 11% and 31%. The Government expresses local authority spending in a term known as 'core spending power' which represents the government's settlement funding assessment, council tax income and new homes bonus income. The Council's core spending power for 2020-21 is £14million therefore the impact of the COVID19 pandemic ranges from 37% to 106% core spending power.
- 5.7 The costs above include a budget of £0.5million for potential costs of recovery operations. This is a high level estimate, as at present it is too early to know what activities and costs may be involved. A further report may be needed on this at a later date.

Council Tax, Local Council Tax Support and Business Rates

- 5.8 In addition to the direct impact on the Council's General Fund and HRA budget, the Council is likely to see a reduction in Council Tax income over time due to a potential significant increase in people requiring support from the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS). Individuals who have lost their job or seen a significant reduction in their salary may be eligible to receive LCTS. It is likely that most people will qualify if they qualify for Universal Credit. It is not possible to estimate the full impact of this at the moment as it is early days; however, over the last week or two we have seen a five-fold increase in the number of weekly applications for LCTS compared to normal and expect that trend to continue. The loss of council tax income will initially hit the Council's collection fund in 2020-21 rather than the general fund, however, if the loss of income results in a significant deficit on the collection fund then the Council's share of the deficit will need to be charged to the general fund in 2021-22.

- 5.9 The government has announced a hardship fund for those households that are struggling financially as a result of COVID19. Those households that are already on LCTS but still pay a contribution towards their Council Tax will be provided with an additional £150 of support. This will be applied automatically to individual accounts so that the adjusted amounts were included in the April direct debit instalments. Revised bills will be sent to individual households in due course reflecting the lower amounts due. In addition, funding has also been provided to make short term discretionary payments to those that are affected by the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and are struggling financially. This funding is being distributed on a case by case basis as people contact us with their difficulties.
- 5.10 The government has also announced a range of support through business rates relief and grants to small medium enterprises and those businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure industry. Grants of £10,000 are available to small businesses who have a rateable value under £15,000 and grants of £25,000 are available for those businesses whose rateable value is between £15,001 and £51,000 who qualified for small business rate relief or rural business rate relief. This scheme was also extended to cover businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure industry. Initial indications are that 1,869 businesses will qualify for the relevant grants which may total around £24million. We have received £21 million as an advanced payment from the Government for distributing under the scheme.
- 5.11 The government has now provided the Council with the guidance necessary to deliver the grants to businesses and we expect to start identifying the businesses that qualify and make payments from 6 April. We aim to have paid all grants by the end of April at the latest.
- 5.12 In addition to the grants, businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure have been awarded 100% relief from business rates for 12 months by the government. We have identified around 930 businesses who qualify for this 100% relief totalling £41.5million. The collectible rates for Guildford Borough for 2020-21 was £86.773million (as reported on our NNDR1 form), therefore the reliefs awarded as a result of COVID19 pandemic represent 48% of our business rates. We have already applied the relief to the business rate accounts so that their business rate bills were reduced ahead of the normal 2 April direct debit run. As a result, the businesses have already started to benefit from this relief.
- 5.13 It is possible that even with the support available to both business and individuals that the Council will see a reduction in overall collection rates for both council tax and business rates due to a potential increase in bankruptcy. The loss of income will initially hit the Council's collection fund in 2020-21 rather than the general fund, however, if the loss of income results in a significant deficit on the collection fund then the Council's share of the deficit will need to be charged to the general fund in 2021-22.
- 5.14 The administration of the various grants and reliefs provided by government for businesses and individuals has caused a significant increase in workload for the teams involved who are working hard to ensure that the financial support is paid to those who need it as quickly as possible.

Government grants

- 5.15 Government has stated that it intends to fully compensate councils for the impact of COVID19. It is currently unclear whether this promise is just in relation to costs incurred or whether it would cover loss of income also. To help with the costs and loss of income the government has so far awarded the Council a £12,000 rough sleepers grant, and a general non-ringfenced grant of £51,000 to cover the impact of the pandemic across all services. As set out in section 5, the costs and loss of income are significantly in excess of the grant awarded so far.
- 5.16 Government has also stated that the funding was an initial tranche of funding and that further funding would be forthcoming. In that respect it has asked for feedback from local authorities via Chief Finance Officer networks as to what the impact on local authorities is and the potential scale of the impact. The Director of Resources has provided this information, which as far as possible is set out in section 5 of this report, to the Society of District Council Treasurers for discussion with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Following the initial request, MHCLG have sent all authorities a data collection template to complete monthly to capture the costs and potential loss of income. Officers will complete and return the data as requested.
- 5.17 The Council has already received the following funding from government:
- (a) £469,000 for the payment of the council tax hardship fund (paragraph 5.7)
 - (b) £21million upfront payment for the business rates grants (paragraph 5.10)
 - (c) An initial £1.2million Section 31 grant for the business rate reliefs
- 5.18 The Council is required to complete a weekly reconciliation for MHCLG on the grants received and those business rate and council tax reliefs and grants paid out to individuals and businesses. From this it is anticipated that further payments on account will be received.

Reserves

- 5.19 When the 2020-21 Budget was reported to Council on 5 February 2020 officers anticipated the level of available general fund reserves to be around £35million. Of this £3.75million is in the unallocated general fund reserve and the remaining £31million is in earmarked reserves. The Council has budgeted to use £13million of earmarked reserves to pump prime its Future Guildford transformation programme leaving a balance of £18million in earmarked reserves and £3.75million in the unallocated reserve.
- 5.20 Although the government has promised further support above the grants that have already been made available, the amount and timing of that support is currently uncertain. It is therefore recommended that the Council allocates an emergency budget of up to £15million funded from earmarked reserves to fund the worst-case scenario potential impact of COVID19 pandemic. The reserves will only be drawn down if the loss of income and expenditure incurred is not offset by further government grant support. In this scenario, Officers will also look for cost savings to partially offset the impact on reserves however, it should be noted that depending on the scale of the shortfall in government funding, it

might be unlikely that sufficient cost savings can be found in year to bring the council's expenditure back in line with its budget.

- 5.21 There is a risk that if further grant funding from government is either not forthcoming or is insufficient to cover the financial impact of the COVID19 pandemic on the Council that the emergency budget will reduce the Council's reserves to a level that the Chief Finance Officer would advise to be insufficient for the operating risks that the Council faces under normal business as usual circumstances. The financial risk register presented to Budget Council on 5 February showed that reserves of around £10million are considered sufficient and sustainable for the Council. If reserves fall to insufficient levels, then the Council will be advised to budget to rebuild the reserves to a sufficient level over its medium term financial plan. It is quite unlikely that sufficient cost savings will be able to be found in any one year, and so it will take a number of years to rebuild reserves.

6. Consultations

- 6.1 Due to the emergency nature of the COVID19 Pandemic it has not been possible to consult the Executive Advisory Boards about this report. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllrs Caroline Reeves and Jan Harwood, are active members of the Council's COVID19 response group and have been consulted about the situation and the Council's response. The Lead Councillor for Finance, Assets and Customer Service, Cllr Joss Bigmore has also been consulted about the financial implications of the emergency situation and the supplementary estimate requested in this report.
- 6.2 The Managing Director has also briefed political group leaders on the emergency situation and the Council's response on a weekly basis.

7. Equality and diversity implications

- 7.1 The outbreak of COVID19 creates a particular issue for some of our most vulnerable residents, particularly those over the age of 70 and with underlying health conditions. The response effort to provide welfare calls, support and food parcels to this group of people is important to ensure that vulnerable residents are not significantly adversely affected and to ensure we are carrying out our duties under the equalities act.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Council is a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and it is deemed that the current Covid 19 pandemic is an 'emergency' under the meaning of the Act.
- 8.2 Part 3 paragraph 2 of the Council's Constitution permits the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader where practicable and the Monitoring Officer, to act in an emergency or in relation to matters of urgency in relation to any functions of the Council, subject to the use of this power being reported to the next meeting of the Council, Executive or committee concerned.

- 8.3 The Coronavirus Act 2020 came into force on 25 March 2020. The Act prevents the eviction of residential tenancies and the forfeiture of commercial leases by reason of non-payment of rent during this emergency period.
- 8.4 The State Aid rules continue to apply currently and legal advice will continue to be provided in relation to any 'aid' being provided to businesses throughout this emergency.
- 8.5 The Chief Finance Officer is required by the Local Government Act 1972 section 151 to ensure that the Council's budgeting meets relevant statutory and professional requirements.
- 8.6 The Local Government Act 2003 section 25 provides that the Council's Chief Finance Officer is required to report to the Council on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

9. Human Resources implications

- 9.1 For those staff that are unable to attend work either through illness, or the need to self-isolate due to members of their household having Covid-19 symptoms, or if they are part of the Shielded Group, we have provided an absence policy that provides them with normal pay during this period. For those staff that have dependent responsibilities we have introduced up to 10 days of paid leave. For other staff who wish to self-isolate and are not able to continue to work we have worked with them to offer a mixture of paid and unpaid leave to accommodate their needs.
- 9.2 All services are required to make contingency plans to maintain essential services during the pandemic and identify those which will be closed. A core element of the contingency planning process is to identify areas of potential staff shortages to which staff can be redeployed. Staff will be asked to use their skills and experience to support the continued delivery of essential public services and this may involve covering a different role and supporting the work of other public services providers. Some staff have already redeployed and many more will be asked to do so in the coming weeks as we increase our response to the pandemic. In addition, a number of staff working in critical services have had to cancel leave and will be required to work overtime to ensure that services can continue to operate over the weekends.
- 9.3 The Council is extremely proud of how our staff have responded to this challenging and worrying situation. Many of these public servants are working on the front line delivering critical services and have demonstrated a real commitment in continuing with their work, whilst many others have joined them to provide additional resource where it is most needed.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Guildford Borough Council is a category 1 responder to civil emergencies under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This means that the Council has a vitally important role in responding locally to COVID19, to save lives, protect the NHS, and ensure our residents are protected wherever possible. We also have a duty

to ensure that crucial council services continue to operate in these unprecedented times.

- 10.2 The Council's response to the pandemic has been intense and wide ranging across a number of critical services. The report sets out that Officers predict a range of financial implications for the Council depending on how long the government restrictions are in place. The financial implications could be between £5million and £15million (11% to 31% of the Council's Net budget requirement). Whilst further government grant support is anticipated, the amount and timing of that support is currently uncertain. As a result, officers recommend that the Council puts in place an emergency budget of up to £15million funded from reserves to cover both the costs being incurred and the potential loss of income from the COVID19 Pandemic.
- 10.3 The Council has redeployed staff from non-critical services into critical services to ensure that we can continue to meet the challenge. This has and will mean that in some non-critical services, ordinary council work is being put on hold or suspended for a period of time. The Council is extremely proud of how our staff have responded to this challenging and worrying situation. Many of these public servants are working on the front line delivering critical services and have demonstrated a real commitment in continuing with their work, whilst many others have joined them to provide additional resource where it is most needed.

11. Background Papers

None

12. Appendices

None