

EXECUTIVE

21 July 2020

- * Councillor Caroline Reeves (Chairman)
- * Councillor Joss Bigmore (Vice-Chairman)

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|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| * Councillor Tim Anderson | * Councillor John Redpath |
| * Councillor Jan Harwood | * Councillor John Rigg |
| * Councillor Julia McShane | * Councillor James Steel |

*Present

Councillors Christopher Barrass, Chris Blow, Dennis Booth, Angela Goodwin, Angela Gunning, Ramsey Nagaty, Susan Parker, George Potter, Maddy Redpath, Deborah Seabrook, Pauline Searle, Paul Spooner and Fiona White were also in attendance.

EX16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

EX17 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

EX18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020 were confirmed as a true record.

EX19 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader announced that Surrey County Council had recently set out plans to seek government approval to create a single unitary authority in Surrey. This move was described by the Leader as extremely disappointing since there had not been discussion with borough and district leaders across the county in spite of detailed discussion with all Surrey MPs. The Leader's understanding, based upon correspondence from the Leader of Surrey County Council, was that a draft business case would be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by the end of September. Whilst the Borough Council had been promised stakeholder engagement, the Leader expressed concern for Guildford residents given that there had yet to be any consultation with district and borough councils, let alone with residents given the very tight timetable that had been proposed.

The Leader agreed that devolution to unitary authorities was the most appropriate way to deal with the serious funding issues that all authorities faced, particularly in the post-pandemic period. The advantages of working or joining with neighbouring authorities were recognised, but there was a serious question to face with regard to the size of a single authority across the whole county. The Leader had particular concern for the impact on Guildford residents of such a large organisation both in terms of service provision and connection with their elected councillors.

The understanding was that unitary status for Surrey would create an authority covering 1.2 million people which was nearly double the size of any English unitary in existence, compared to a government preference for such authorities covering populations of 400,000.

EX20 CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE: ACTIONS FOR ACHIEVING NET-ZERO CARBON

On 23 July 2019, full Council declared a Climate Emergency and approved a series of commitments to reduce carbon. In support of the 2019 declaration the Council had undertaken and completed a significant number of carbon and energy-reducing projects and set up the Climate Change and Innovation Board and Climate Change Fund in order to plan, resource and implement further work and projects.

In support of those commitments the Executive considered a report that presented a high-level action plan with a two-pronged approach simultaneously directed towards achieving net-zero carbon within the Council's own operations and also proposing how the Council could support carbon reductions by working with stakeholders across the borough.

The action plan set out to plug into Council policy wherever possible, seeking renewable or low carbon deliverables in a strategic manner. Progress with partners and external stakeholders was difficult to assess due to a variety of influences and opportunities would become more apparent moving forward. The Executive welcomed the report noting that it was positive to see work moving forward in this area again following delays arising from the Pandemic.

The Executive voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation.

RESOLVED to adopt the draft Action Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive.

Reason

In response to the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration, to adopt a high-level action plan (incorporating the Energy Delivery Framework) for working towards net-zero carbon within the Council's operations and playing our part in delivering more extensive and progressive carbon reductions across the borough.

EX21 PUBLIC HEALTH FUNERAL POLICY

The Executive considered a report recommending adoption of a public health funeral policy. The report set out the Council's roles and responsibilities and the level of funeral provision required to provide a dignified, value for money funeral service. A six-week consultation with in-house services and public and private partner organisations has been undertaken and the draft policy had been updated to reflect the feedback received through this consultation process.

The Lead Councillor for the Environment introduced the report. Members welcomed the new policy and unanimously agreed that it was an appropriate document to support a little known but valuable service that was undertaken by the Council.

RESOLVED to adopt the draft Public Health Funeral Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive.

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

EX22 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (SDF) SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Executive considered a report recommending the adoption of the draft Strategic Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SDF SPD). The SPD provided

further guidance to the Guildford borough Local Plan: strategy and sites (“the Local Plan”) that related to the development of the strategic sites in the borough.

The SPD provided detailed formal guidance to assist future master-planning of the strategic sites as required by Policy D1 (13) which in turn would guide the planning applications for the sites. The SPD was a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals and it would guide planners, developers, urban designers and decision makers on the design principles that underpin the master-planning of the strategic sites.

Initial consultation of the SPD had been carried out through a series of workshops and the comments and issues received through these workshops were all considered in the preparation of the draft initial document. Thereafter, formal consultation was undertaken for 5 weeks in early 2020. The draft SDF SPD was updated in light of the comments received and were included with the Executive report in the Consultation Statement. The Lead Councillor for Climate Change introduced the report.

During the meeting the Executive received compliments regarding the high quality of the SPD document. The committee report included responses to points raised during the consultation process that was welcomed. The Executive heard suggestions that the consultation process could be extended and proposals that it might either be referred to either a meeting of the Joint Executive Advisory Board or onto Full Council for further debate. However, SPD had been sent to Executive Advisory Board members on 4 July and the Executive unanimously agreed that the SPD as a policy guidance document should be adopted.

RESOLVED:

1. To adopt, as a Local Development Document, the Strategic Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive.
2. To authorise the Policy Lead - Planning Policy, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Climate Change, to make such minor alterations to improve the clarity of the adopted Supplementary Planning Document as they may deem necessary.

Reasons

The recommendation under (1) will enable the adoption of the SPD as a Local Development Document and will add weight to this guidance as a material consideration in the assessment of relevant planning applications.

The recommendation under (2) allows for minor modifications to the SPD should they be necessary prior to publication.

EX23 GUILDFORD ECONOMIC REGENERATION PROGRAMME

In July 2019, Full Council resolved to produce a sustainable Town Centre Master Plan Development Plan Document to be delivered within the lifetime of the current administration with an agreement that work should commence immediately and with the appropriate level of officer support.

On 24 March 2020, the Leader of the Council agreed a Masterplan Board should be convened and a specialist advisor appointed to brief and scope an external professional team that would contribute to the delivery of a pro-active strategy for the comprehensive regeneration of Guildford town centre.

The continued retail down-turn would have been extenuated by the COVID19 pandemic and consequent lockdown. The Executive considered a report suggesting a review of the priority

and timing of schemes set out in the adopted Local Plan and recommending adoption of a draft strategy that would achieve a greater overall economic benefit to the town centre.

The Lead Councillor for Regeneration introduced the report and set out the challenges for Guildford. Those challenges included the legacies of the past, responding to changes in modern lifestyle choices and increasing populations as well as immediate priorities such as Covid-19 and the proposed restructure of local government. The recommendations of the committee report were unanimously supported by all councillors.

RESOLVED:

1. To set up a Guildford Economic Regeneration Programme Masterplan Board to be chaired by the Lead Councillor for Regeneration.
2. To adopt the draft Guildford Economic Regeneration Strategy and draft structure organisational plan as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report submitted to the Executive.
3. To appoint an external specialist advisor and professional team with the responsibility to deliver a strategy specifically for the regeneration of Guildford town centre.

Reasons

1. This programme has major benefits for Guildford's community and businesses by delivering a pro-active strategy to address the economic and physical constraints facing the town, including the retail downturn and the impact of the COVID19 situation.
2. To support resolution CO29 of the Council made 23 July 2019.

The meeting finished at 8.50 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman

EXECUTIVE

25 August 2020

- * Councillor Caroline Reeves (Chairman)
- * Councillor Joss Bigmore (Vice-Chairman)

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|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| * Councillor Tim Anderson | * Councillor John Redpath |
| * Councillor Jan Harwood | * Councillor John Rigg |
| * Councillor Julia McShane | * Councillor James Steel |

*Present

Councillors Chris Blow, Angela Goodwin, Angela Gunning, Gordon Jackson, Ramsey Nagaty, Deborah Seabrook, Paul Spooner, Fiona White, Catherine Young, were also in attendance.

EX24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

EX25 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

EX26 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

EX27 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader announced that this August Bank holiday weekend the council would be celebrating with local traders in the town with a special Bank Holiday Sale Bonanza, a weekend of competitions, amazing offers and lots of prizes. It was the last few days of the government 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme, and there would be free parking in the town from 3pm on Saturday, 2pm on Sunday and 4pm on Monday. The Leader reminded everyone that as we all get used to a little more freedom, we must remain mindful of the pandemic and respect social distance.

The Leader referred to the proposal made by Surrey County Council to make the whole of the county into a single unitary authority, effectively removing the whole tier of local government that represents the boroughs and districts. All households had been sent a communication from the County Council leader, Tim Oliver, about his plans of a vision for Surrey. The Leader regretted that this proposal was produced without any consultation with the leaders of the boroughs and districts on the change to the structure and ignored all the work done by the boroughs and districts throughout the pandemic. In response, district and borough leaders across the whole of the county had come together to put a counter proposal to the government. The Leader explained that Guildford Borough Council was working collaboratively to create a single voice whilst ensuring that each individual authority would be able to adopt its own approach to sharing information with residents, businesses, associations and other stakeholders. It was proposed that the eleven boroughs and districts across Surrey would work jointly on all communications with residents and businesses and would engage KPMG to prepare a presentation of an alternative joint approach to be submitted to government.

To share the cost of this joint work across all boroughs and districts the Leader had requested an additional report to feature on the agenda, which proposed that this council should set aside a budget of up to £30,000 to fund its participation in that work.

The next step in the pandemic would be the reopening of local schools. The Leader stressed that Covid-19 was still here and everyone must remain cautious. The number of cases was increasing across the country, but locally numbers were still relatively low. The only way to avoid another lockdown was to remember to stay safe and to look out for each other. Social distancing was still very important and everyone should remain mindful of others.

EX28 NEW CLIMATE CHANGE AND INNOVATION BOARDS

The Executive considered a report recommending the disbanding of the Climate Change and Innovation Board and the creation of two new executive working groups – the Climate Change Board and the Innovation Board.

The Climate Change and Innovation Board had been in operation since August 2019. During that time the business of the Board had expanded and consequently, the Lead Councillor for Climate Change had proposed a separation of the Board into two distinct functions to enable a more focussed working group for each of the two areas which were both of importance to the Council. It was noted that there should continue to be a close interaction between the two new Boards in recognition of their often mutual priorities. Beneficial to that aim was that the Lead Councillor for Climate Change also had portfolio responsibility for innovation.

It was noted that councillor and officer training in Climate Change matters would commence in the near future.

The Executive unanimously

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the existing Climate Change and Innovation Board be disbanded.
- (2) That two new working groups be established, namely the Climate Change Board and the Innovation Board.
- (3) That the terms of reference of each Board, including the respective memberships, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report submitted to the Executive be approved.

Reason

To facilitate a more focussed approach to this important work.

EX29 WEYSIDE URBAN VILLAGE: RELOCATION OF WOKING ROAD DEPOT

The Executive considered a report recommending the relocation of the Council Depot at Woking Road to make way for the construction of the new Weyside Urban Village (WUV). The WUV was a major 41-hectare brownfield regeneration scheme delivering new homes, community and employment space. The new depot would provide a hub for a number of the Council's services including the relocation of the Parks and Countryside service. The preferred option was to relocate the Depot within the northern section of the new site.

Approval was also sought to move a budget of £2.48 million from the provisional to the approved capital programme in order to progress a detailed design for the new Council depot which would then be submitted as a planning application.

It was noted that news had been recently received that the Secretary of State had refused permission to relocate the allotments. The Lead Councillor for Regeneration would be preparing a response.

The Executive unanimously

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the relocation of the Council depot to accommodate administrative and operational functions, as described in the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.
- (2) That the sum of £2.48 million be transferred from the Provisional to the Approved Capital Programme to enable the detailed design of the new Guildford Borough Council depot to be undertaken.

Reason

The budget will enable the detailed design of the new depot site in order to deliver construction, thereby releasing the current depot site as part of the Weyside Urban Village Development.

EX30 DEVOLUTION AND RECOVERY BILL: CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS A JOINT LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CASE FOR CHANGE SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The Executive considered a report submitted as an item of urgent business that sought approval for a financial commitment of up to £30,000 as the Council's contribution towards the joint commissioning by the eleven borough and district councils in Surrey of a business case for structural change to local government in the county, including the cost of any further specialist advice (e.g. communications).

The Executive unanimously

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council commits to contributing up to £30,000 towards the total cost of a submission of a Local Government Reorganisation Case for Change to the MHCLG, to be undertaken by KPMG and commissioned jointly by the 11 Surrey borough and district councils, including the cost of any further specialist advice.
- (2) That the contribution referred to in paragraph (1) above be met from the Corporate Inflation budget.

Reason

To enable a robust business case for structural change, supported by Surrey borough and district councils, to be made to the Secretary of State as expeditiously as possible in response to the Government's anticipated Recovery and Devolution White Paper.

Note: By reason of the special circumstances described below, the chairman considered that this item should be dealt with at this meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Special Circumstances: This matter required a decision by the Executive at this meeting to enable the Council to commit to the commissioning of a joint Case for Change submission, on behalf of the Surrey borough and district councils, as expeditiously as possible.

The meeting finished at 7.45 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman