

BOROUGH, ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

14 November 2016

* Councillor Jenny Wicks (Chairman)
Councillor Liz Hogger (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor Philip Brooker | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| * Councillor Nils Christiansen | * Councillor Bob McShee |
| Councillor Andrew Gomm | * Councillor Mike Parsons |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | * Councillor Mike Piper |
| Councillor Nigel Kears | * Councillor Matthew Sarti |

*Present

The Lead Councillor for Economic Development, Tourism and Climate Change, Councillor David Bilbé, the Lead Councillor for Rural Economy, Countryside, Parks and Leisure, Councillor Richard Billington, the Lead Councillor for Internal Business Systems, Heritage and the Arts, Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith, and Councillor Caroline Reeves, representing the Public Art Advisory Group (PAAG), were also in attendance.

BEI41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillors Andrew Gomm, Liz Hogger (Vice Chairman) and Nigel Kears submitted apologies for absence.

In accordance with procedure rule 23(j) Councillor David Wright attended on behalf of Councillor Nigel Kears.

BEI42 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

BEI43 MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Advisory Board meeting held on 31 October 2016 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

BEI44 PUBLIC ARTS STRATEGY

It was explained that the Public Art Strategy and the Arts Development Strategy were both due for renewal. A paper discussing a new Arts Development Strategy had been submitted to the Society, Environment and Council Development Executive Advisory Board in July 2016. This paper submitted to the Borough, Economy and Infrastructure Board concerned a new Public Art Strategy, which related to the installation of public art projects.

The Board received a presentation from the Arts Officers, which set out the reasons why there was a need for two separate strategies and the differences between the two pieces of work. Notably, public art commissions tended to be capital projects, had different funding streams and involved different stakeholders and areas of expertise. Arts development focussed on the process of taking part and received an annual revenue budget of £10,000 from the council. The presentation set out the benefits of public art, the limitations of the existing strategy and the approach and timescales for renewal. The approach to the renewal of the strategy included public consultation, engaging an external arts consultant and a review of the existing Public Art Advisory Group (PAAG).

It was noted that one of the sources for public art commissions was developer contributions known as Section 106 funds through planning. Historically, this funding had been tied to the general geographic area close to the development itself and thus restricted the place in which art could be located. New planning rules for developer contributions, called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is, yet to be implemented by this Council, has the potential to open up the expenditure of developer funding beyond a specific development. This change in the rules means that public art commissions placed anywhere in the borough might draw down from CIL funds. Through the production of the new Public Art Strategy, the feasibility of Section 106, CIL and other means of funding public art will be explored.

The Board was asked to consider the outline process of the consultation, which consultation groups should be involved; what should be the skill-set of the PAAG; what opportunities were there for promoting public art and raising the profile of its benefits. In addition, the Chairman suggested the Board might also consider if a Public Art Strategy were needed; if the answer was yes, to consider other sources of funding; if it were proper that funding should be raised through the planning budget; and if the recruitment of a consultant was the best approach.

In noting that public art might not just be sculptural or iconic, but could have a functional purpose including lighting, landscaping, road-calming or street furniture the Board made the following comments;

- Generally, the Board was in favour of public art commissions and the need to have a separate strategic approach from arts development. There were a variety of views and opinions put forward on the type and location of existing and future commissions.
- Although the Board acknowledged that there were many differing views about the value of public art commissions, there was concern that the public may not consider it a good use of taxpayers money. It was proposed that before CIL were utilised there should be a demonstrable effort made to source additional contributions. It was suggested additional or alternative contributions could come from private donors, business sponsorship, Government grants, Project Aspire or crowdfunding.
- The consultation should be across communities and age groups. Young people should be very much involved in the consultation.
- The strategy would be borough-wide and for that reason there should be consultation within the rural areas and with parish councils.
- There was concern over value for money from recruiting a consultant and argued could not ideas be drawn from other councils strategies. The Board heard that the consultant will be asked to map public art in the borough, explore opportunities for funding, review internal strategies, policy and procedures linking to public art and bring an external proven record of delivering public art strategies to the borough and so the recommendations from this piece of work would be particular and unique to Guildford and demonstrate value for money.
- It was suggested public art could be sensory as well as visual for those with visual impairment.

- It was suggested that Local expertise could be drawn from the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley, the Guildford Society and the Watts Gallery in Compton. The 'Inspiring Views' project was noted.

The Lead Councillor for Internal Business Systems, Heritage and Arts commented that there would be a full exploration of funding options and that fortunately there were a great many artists interested in working on Commissions in Guildford. She noted the cultural and economic advantages of public art as well as the sense of community-ownership, self-identity and pride of place it generated.

BEI45 RURAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The item had been previously presented to the Board in February of this year. At that point, in time work was at an early stage. The Board had the opportunity to consider and to contribute to the initial scoping and offered advice.

The Local Economy Manager informed the Board that since February the council had created the new post of Rural Economy Officer on a fixed term basis of two years. The purpose of this post was to develop and deliver the new strategy. Recruitment to the post was three months previously and since then work had been ongoing. The item was back before the Board to introduce the new Rural Economy Officer and to provide an opportunity for further comment on work to date. It was intended that the draft strategy would be put before the Executive in March 2017.

The Chairman welcomed Chris Stanton, the new Rural Economy Officer, who delivered a presentation in which was proposed a draft five-year plan for the rural economy.

It was explained that the strategy would be a local document, but it would also respond to national influences and drivers such as the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and 'Brexit'. A rural mapping exercise had been commissioned from Hampshire County Council Research and Intelligence which was underway. In the meantime, early work had identified six strategic interim priorities along with a number of objectives on which the Executive Advisory Board was asked to comment.

The Lead Member for Economic Development, Tourism and Climate Change said the rural economy needed a voice in the council and that the rural picture was multifaceted including farming, business development and tourism. It was essential to create a quantitative map of the rural economic area to understand the true extent of rural business opportunities and needs.

The Board made the following comments:

- It was noted that with a fixed term contract of two years the maximum benefit must be made of having a dedicated officer in post.
- The recognition of the rural areas in the council's strategic thinking was welcomed.
- There were a number of priorities and objectives identified in the paper submitted to the Board. Some were considered to be achievable in a shorter time period than others and some new ideas were proposed:
 - Improve broadband access and download speeds in rural areas
 - Give the Council website a rural dimension
 - Encourage others to create or use alternative energy sources sourced in the area such as wood and water
 - Encourage countryside-focused officers to further develop the Guildford Waverley Woodland Cooperation Agreement.
 - Further develop relationships with our parish councils

- Ensure the council is fully engaged in projects concerning off-road biking routes
 - Ensure the council is fully engaged in projects concerning Newlands Corner
 - Continue to nurture positive relationships with the Surrey Hills partnership groups and projects
 - The Surrey Hills Trust Fund could become a permanent income stream for rural projects and initiatives
- The strategy should address rural deprivation.
 - There should be a clear statement of recognition of the value of the countryside to the wellbeing of Guildford, providing quality of life and its attraction to business.
 - A clear identification of who really needs support in the rural areas.
 - Exert pressure on planners to appreciate the need for appropriate business space in the countryside.
 - There should be clear aims by which progress can be measured, both quantitatively and qualitatively.
 - Ensure the strategic objectives are not duplicated.
 - Affordable housing should be the top priority as there was a critical need.
 - If possible, the Rural Economy Officer should have a role in working with planners and local people as Neighbourhood Plans came together.

The Board noted that the implications of 'Brexit' to the rural economy were difficult to assess at this stage, but there was concern about the loss of grants, funding and subsidies.

The Lead Councillor for Rural Economy, Countryside, Parks and Leisure commented there would certainly be an impact from 'Brexit' and the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) would find greater advantage as a National Park, as this designation offered greater protection of the natural resource and more support for local economic projects. Visitors from outside of the borough made impacts in both negative and positive ways in the countryside and it was important to have sound priorities such as those in the Corporate Plan and the forthcoming Rural Economic Strategy to manage these impacts. He hoped for measurable improvements for, what amounted to, 85% of the borough in two years' time.

BEI46 EAB WORK PROGRAMME

The Executive Advisory Board Work Programme was noted.

BEI47 UPDATE/PROGRESS WITH MATTERS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE BOROUGH, ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE - EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

The update report was noted.

The meeting finished at 9.13 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman