

EXECUTIVE

18 April 2017

- * Councillor Paul Spooner (Chairman)
- * Councillor Matt Furniss (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor David Bilbé | * Councillor Michael Illman |
| * Councillor Richard Billington | Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith |
| * Councillor Geoff Davis | * Councillor Iseult Roche |
| * Councillor Graham Ellwood | * Councillor Tony Rooth |

*Present

Councillors Susan Parker and Caroline Reeves were also in attendance.

EX82 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith.

EX83 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

EX84 MINUTES

The Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017. The Chairman signed the minutes.

EX85 PROPOSAL TO EXPAND ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

The Executive considered a report on a recent review of a wide range of enforcement activities undertaken by the council and the possible introduction of Joint Enforcement Teams within Surrey.

The review had identified that there were opportunities to improve the way enforcement activities were co-ordinated across the whole Council. The review had also identified external and internal funding sufficient to increase resources with the aim of being more effective at addressing persistent environmental and anti-social behaviour issues that negatively affected the lives of residents and impacted on the provision of services.

These resources were, in effect, an evolution and expansion of the Council's current activity whilst ensuring that this extra resource was targeted to deal with priorities identified by officers and councillors and continually reviewed to measure the success of the team against its targets.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the expansion of existing enforcement activities, as set out in paragraph 3.36 of the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.
- (2) That the expansion be agreed for an initial period of two years with six-monthly reviews of actions and success.

- (3) That the Council accepts funding from, and works with, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey to ensure the expanded team works effectively in partnership with external bodies, including the Police.
- (4) That the Joint Action Group be reviewed and reconstituted to ensure that it is an effective prioritising, task setting and reviewing body for this team.

Reason for Decision:

To expand capacity to address enforcement issues and other anti-social behaviour issues the Council considers important to residents.

EX86 REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Executive considered a report on a draft corporate enforcement policy, which was intended to provide a framework for the way that the Council undertook its regulatory functions.

The proposed policy would apply to all services where the Council can enforce against a person, organisation or company to make them comply with the law, including in respect of those services where the Council has a legal duty or power to ensure compliance. Relevant services included, but were not limited to, environmental health, food safety, noise nuisance, health and safety, licensing, anti-social behaviour, waste offences (including fly tipping), dangerous dogs/dog fouling, planning, and housing. Many of these areas, such as planning, had more detailed service specific enforcement policies within the umbrella of this corporate policy.

Although there was no legal requirement to consult on the draft policy, the Executive agreed that it was good practice to do so. A copy of the policy would be placed on the Council's website, with a facility for respondents to provide feedback over a period of two months.

Having noted that the results of the consultation and a revised draft Policy would be brought back to Executive for further consideration, the Executive

RESOLVED: That the draft Corporate Enforcement Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved for consultation.

Reason for Decision:

To provide a clear framework for the way the Council undertakes its regulatory functions.

EX87 A VISION FOR GUILDFORD BOROUGH'S COUNTRYSIDE SITES 2017-2027

The Executive considered a report on the proposed adoption of the proposed Countryside Vision document as Strategy to deliver a landscape scale approach and partnership working in Countryside management.

The Council owned and managed 52 sites as countryside sites covering an area of 800ha, 2.5% of the Borough's land area. The Council also managed approximately 32km of rural road verges on behalf of Surrey County Council.

Councillors noted that, within the Council's countryside estate, two heathland sites (Bullswater Common and Pirbright Heath) were afforded strong protection through inclusion in the Thames Basin Heath SPA (Special Protection Area) and the Ash to Brookwood Heaths SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). Shalford Water Meadows was included in the Wey Valley Meadows SSSI. The Borough's countryside estate also included five Local Nature Reserves, the highest protection local authorities can designate.

The Countryside Vision stated the Council's ambition to deliver a long-term sustainable network of Countryside sites that provided safe access for recreation as well as a network of wildlife habitat that future generations could access and enjoy.

Guildford's Countryside Vision would:

- provide a framework to guide long term site management and to communicate the Council's ambitions to residents,
- guide allocation of current resources to prioritise strategic aims and legal obligations across the Countryside Estate, including provision of recreational access,
- provide a landscape scale direction for habitat management that would guide funding strategies,
- support the delivery of the Local Plan through the development of Suitable Alternative Natural Green spaces,
- communicate Guildford Borough's ambitions to partners and stakeholders, provide assurance that external investments were in line with long term sustainable goals and
- align the Council's countryside management with national and regional policy.

Having considered the report, the Executive

RESOLVED: That the strategic policies set out in "A Vision for Guildford Borough's Countryside Sites 2017-2027" (Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive) be adopted.

Reasons for Decision:

Adoption of the Strategy will provide a tool to:

- inform and support landscape scale habitat and access management,
- support targeting of resources, and
- enable partnership work and external funding

EX88 RURAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2017-2022

The Executive considered a report on a proposed new rural economic strategy, which had been shaped by events and policies since the 2016 EU Brexit vote, and followed analysis and review of available statistics, research and sample surveys of companies to identify the predominant business sectors represented in the rural west Surrey wards of Guildford, Waverley and Woking Boroughs. Hampshire County Council's Research and Intelligence Unit had been commissioned to conduct the rural mapping exercise, which included an online survey of local business needs across the three Boroughs.

The rural mapping exercise and business survey led to the early identification of the five policy priorities that were at the heart of this five-year strategy for the local rural economy:

- Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities
- Infrastructure for Enterprise
- Landscape Management and Countryside Vision
- Green Space, Health and Wellbeing for Better Quality of Life
- Energy Policy, Generation and Supply

Sitting under these priorities were ten specific actions to be delivered during the two-year negotiation following the triggering of Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, the mechanism by which the UK would exit from the European Union as a result of the June 2016 Referendum vote. Councillors noted that there could be major implications for parts of the rural economy that had relied heavily on European subsidy and other kinds of regenerative support through grant funding. On top of this economic upheaval, issues such as affordable housing, climate change, increased risk of seasonal flooding, energy needs, food production, land use and transport were all potentially disruptive drivers of political and economic change at national or local level in future.

At its meeting on 14 November 2016, the Borough, Economy, and Infrastructure Executive Advisory Board advised the Executive that affordable housing should be the top rural economic priority. The Rural Economic Strategy complemented Guildford's new Draft Local Plan and was designed to support local communities in their important role of shaping the future of their towns and villages as sustainable places that offered affordable housing, new employment and enterprise opportunities and better local infrastructure whilst preserving the borough's special landscapes and environmental qualities.

As a consequence of the Brexit timetable, delivery of the Strategy would be set against a constantly moving background of related UK Government policy developments. Current public consultations were under way at DEFRA (two Green Papers on Environment, and Food and Farming), DCMS (Housing White Paper *Fixing our broken housing market*) and DBEIS (Green Paper *Building our Industrial Strategy*). Although looking ahead only five years at this stage, the draft Strategy would be sufficiently flexible to adapt to post-Brexit developments at national, regional or local level.

The Executive

RECOMMEND: That the Rural Economic Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be added to the Policy Framework of the Council and adopted formally as Guildford Borough Council policy, confirming the focus on the policy priorities referred to in the report and agreeing the specific delivery actions within those priorities, as set out in Appendices A and B to the Strategy.

Reason for Recommendation:

To adopt the Council's first dedicated Rural Economic Strategy.

EX89 SALE OF BURPHAM COURT FARM BUILDINGS

The Executive considered a report which sought approval to the sale of the Council's freehold interest at Burpham Court Farm buildings. The buildings, which were deemed surplus to the Council's requirements, included the main house, two cottages and range of outbuildings and immediate parcel of land surrounding the buildings) as shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The remaining farmland would be retained by the Council for community use, possibly as a wetland and waterfowl centre.

The proposal would not only bring a number of vacant properties back into use, but generate a capital receipt to support the Council's wider ambitions for the site. To enable this to happen, officers would seek planning permission for residential use for the existing properties and carry out some minor works to facilitate the disposal. The estimated cost of £50,000 would be offset against the capital receipt.

Having considered the proposal, the Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the sale of the farm buildings at Burpham Court Farm, as described in the report submitted to the Executive, be approved and that the Director of Community Services be authorised, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Asset Management, to complete the sale once planning permission is obtained.
- (2) That a virement from the Capital Contingency Fund of £50,000 be approved to fund upfront costs.

Reason for Decision:

To secure the sale of land, rationalise the operational portfolio and realise a capital receipt.

EX90 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The Executive noted that the Corporate Plan (2015-2020) was an essential part of the Council's strategic framework and outlined the Council's vision and strategic themes. The effectiveness of how the Council delivered this vision was determined to a significant extent by the quality of its communications and engagement.

The Executive considered the latest Communications Strategy, which outlined the approach to ensure that communications and engagement activity was the best possible and helped to achieve the Council's vision.

As well as defining how the Council wished to communicate and the key themes, the updated strategy outlined the main aspects of integrated, planned and effective communications and engagement. It also sets out an audience-led campaign approach and prioritisation framework that would help identify and agree priorities to enable greater focus on strategic and other key campaigns and activities. The strategy concluded with the new opportunities and actions for next steps and implementation.

The Communications Strategy would drive both internal and external communications and be supported by individual communications plans for specific campaigns, key projects and initiatives. It was intended to be a flexible, 'living' document that adapted over time and would be updated to reflect changing priorities, innovation and requirements.

The Executive therefore

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Managing Director be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make such minor amendments to the Communications Strategy as may be deemed necessary.
- (2) That, subject to paragraph (1) above, the Communications Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved, together with the actions contained therein.

Reasons for Decision:

- (1) To ensure the Council's communications and engagement is developed in a strategic way that benefits residents, businesses and other audiences and stakeholders.
- (2) To demonstrate the Council's commitment to effective communications and engagement and help shape the proactive work programme of the corporate Communications and PR team.

EX91 GUILDFORD PHILANTHROPY - SUPPORTING CARERS

The Executive was informed that Carers Support Guildford, a local charity providing support to carers within the borough, had to close following the loss of a significant contract to a Surrey-wide carers' support organisation.

In order to maintain ongoing support and respite for people looking after some of the borough's most vulnerable residents and to encourage future donations, officers felt that there would be benefits from working collaboratively as part of Guildford Philanthropy. On this basis, Carers Support Guildford had donated its reserves totalling £55,000 to Guildford Philanthropy. This had been matched by the Council at the usual 50% rate to create a ring-fenced fund of £82,500

to award grants to support carers throughout the borough. Of this overall sum, £5,000 would be available for immediate grants to carers over the next year or so with the remainder being transferred to the endowment fund.

Grants would focus on providing support for carers who need respite breaks from their caring role. A sub-group of Guildford Philanthropy would be established to source and make initial assessments of grant applications, and submit recommendations to the Community Foundation for Surrey and, ultimately, the Guildford Philanthropy Fund Panel for approval.

Although this would result in the Guildford Philanthropy fund criteria being extended to include carers for the ring-fenced amount, a strong focus on building the endowment fund to support the start-up of social enterprise projects would be maintained. However, the creation of a second funding stream for carers was considered to be an opportunity for Guildford Philanthropy to support a high need group in Guildford and offer benefits to some of the borough's most vulnerable residents.

Having considered the report, the Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the establishment of a ring-fenced fund within Guildford Philanthropy to provide support and respite for carers be endorsed.
- (2) That the Managing Director be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree amendments to the existing Guildford Philanthropy Fund Agreement to govern the detailed operation of the ring-fenced fund.

Reason for Decision:

To maintain future funding to support carers in our borough.

The meeting finished at 7.50 pm

Signed

Chairman

Date