

EXECUTIVE

* Councillor Julia McShane (Chairman) *
Councillor Joss Bigmore (Vice-Chairman)

* Councillor Tim Anderson
* Councillor Tom Hunt
Councillor George Potter

* Councillor John Redpath
* Councillor John Rigg
* Councillor James Steel*

*Present

Councillor Fiona White was in remote attendance.

EX51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Deputy Leader, Councillor Joss Bigmore, and Councillor George Potter, Lead Councillor for Climate Change.

EX52 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

EX53 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2022 were confirmed as a correct record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

EX54 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader made the following announcements:

A wonderful day was enjoyed last Sunday at the Festive Family Fun Day with its huge programme of free family fun, performances and activities. Thanks were given to everyone who joined to celebrate the start of the festive season. Everyone was directed to social media channels and the Visit Surrey web site for more festivities in Guildford up until 5 January.

Carers' Information Fair at the Hive. There was a free event for Surrey's unpaid family and friend carers this Saturday between 10am and 2pm at The Hive. The event was organised by Action for Carers in Surrey. The event would provide an opportunity for people to celebrate Carers' Rights Week. Unpaid carers registered with Action for Carers could get a 50% discount code for the honey pot café at the hive

White Ribbon Campaign for Domestic Abuse. This year's White Ribbon campaign starts on 25 November. The date is designated by the United Nations as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It would be followed by 16 days of activism, concluding on Human Rights Day on 10 December.

Guildford & Waverley Business Question Time was a free networking event for the local business community. The aim of the evening was to explore immediate concerns in terms of the cost-of-living crisis, energy security, climate change, recruitment, post-Brexit trade and other national and local challenges. The event would be held from 5:00pm on Monday 12 December 2022 at Charterhouse School in Godalming and chaired by local broadcaster, Peter Gordon. The question panel of key business leaders included Strategic Director of Place, Dawn Hudd and places could be reserved via Eventbrite:

[Guildford & Waverley Business Question Time Tickets, Mon 12 Dec 2022 at 17:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Christmas Fair at the Hive on Saturday 10 December between 11am to 2pm would include Christmas stalls, Santa's grotto, chestnuts on the fire, and music from Get Plucky Ukulele Group and Rhythm of Voice Community Choir.

The annual Christmas Bereavement Service at the Crematorium would be held on Tuesday 6 December at 6.30pm. There would be carols, readings and a chance to light a candle in memory of loved one.

The government wanted the UK to be the best place for veterans to live in the world. The Veterans' Survey would gather views from the UK veteran community on how to shape future services. The Council was encouraging UK veterans and their families living in our borough to complete the online survey on the [Office of National Statistics web site](#).

The Council was considering building a trim trail in Shalford Park and would like people's feedback on the style and location. The Shalford survey would run until 8 January 2023. Search Shalford Survey on the Council's [website](#) to complete the online survey

The Farmers Market would return on Tuesday 6 December on the High Street (every first Tuesday of the month)

Finally, Guildford Children's Business Fair had taken place last Saturday. Young entrepreneurs aged 7-17, launched 40 businesses and sold to hundreds of customers. Strategic Director of Place, Dawn Hudd, joined as a judge, touring the stands, and awarding prizes for Best Product, Best Stand and Best Sales Pitch.

EX55 TO CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The intention of the report was to collate and track progress of all recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Executive throughout the year, and to log the Executive decisions on the submitted matters.

The Executive noted the report and that there had been no updates since the previous meeting.

EX56 PARISH COUNCIL'S CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS GRANT AID APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE 2023-24

The Executive considered a report on the Council's concurrent functions grant aid scheme that provided financial assistance to parish councils. Concurrent functions

were services which both the Borough Council and the parish councils were empowered to undertake. The Lead Councillor for Resources introduced the report.

The report was produced in time for the parish councils to put together their budgets for the coming year. The Council had received 28 detailed applications from 14 of the 23 parish councils amounting to a total of £93,663. A panel of officers had evaluated the bids. Of those, 4 bids were subsequently withdrawn or rejected. The bids brought forward for approval totalled £67,305, which was £22,695 under the base budget of £90,000. The remaining budget of £22,695 was to be transferred to the Parish Council Urgent Schemes Reserves. Details were set out in the appendices to the report.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the concurrent functions grant budget for 2023-24 be set at £90,000, subject to final confirmation by the Council, at its budget meeting in February 2023.
- (2) That future years' budget from 2024-25 be reviewed in consultation with parish councils.
- (3) That the parish council requests for grant aid for 2023-24, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

Reason(s):

- To assist parish councils with expenditure on concurrent function schemes in 2023-24.
- To enable parish councils to take account of financial assistance from Guildford Borough Council when calculating their precept requirements for 2023-24.

EX57 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE FOR FUNDS IN RESPECT OF PLANNING APPEALS RELATING TO MEMBER OVERTURN DECISIONS

Appeals against planning decisions were a statutory provision within planning law. An applicant could appeal any decision or a failure to make a decision on a planning application. When an appeal was lodged, the local planning authority should be prepared to make a robust defence of its decision. Most appeals were addressed at officer level incurring a time cost, but for large scale appeals on complex applications there was a necessity to appoint additional counsel and specialist witnesses. There was currently no budget for such appointments and therefore a supplementary budget was sought.

The Executive considered a report that sought a supplementary budget for three appeals which had already been considered (Ash Manor, the Howard of Effingham and Urnfield) and a supplementary estimate to be brought forward at the time an appeal was made to secure agreement for monies to defend the appeal. The report was introduced by the Lead Councillor for Development Management.

It was noted that the funding would be drawn from the revenue budget which was a serious level of cost to the Council and that every care should be taken to ensure that planning refusals were underpinned by policy. The Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor Fiona White was in attendance and commented that Planning Committee members must be able to use their discretion if they understood there to be sound policy reasons for refusal.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the need for a supplementary estimate for the Development Management service of £535,000 to cover the payments required to defend three significant appeals relating to Member overturn decisions which were subsequently heard at either public inquiry or as a hearing, be noted.
- (2) That full Council (6 December 2022) be recommended to note the report and to approve the supplementary estimate.

Reason:

To ensure robust defence of planning appeals resulting from Member overturn decisions.

EX58 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ESTABLISHMENT REVIEW

The Executive noted that the Council had seen an unprecedented number of planning applications submitted during the past two years. This, combined with the effects of the pandemic and the loss of several key staff members, had left the organisation in a position where a significant backlog of applications had built up affecting performance and customer service.

The Executive considered a report that set out a series of mitigations to address the backlog undertaken to date and which proposed a supplementary budget to support several short-term measures to bolster performance and secure longer-term support to ensure that performance returned to pre-pandemic levels. To achieve this there was a requirement to increase the number of establishment roles within the Development Management and Customer Case and Parking services, where key validation tasks were carried out when planning applications were first received. The Lead Councillor for Development Management introduced the report.

The measures set out in the report were considered essential to address the impact on the service over the past two years to improve performance and efficiency and to establish a robust and customer focused service that met all key indicators and reduced the threat of designation.

The Executive agreed that customer service and communications with applicants needed to be improved. Consequently, the Executive

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a supplementary budget for the 2022-23 financial year for the Development Management service of £465,400 and £15,800 for the Customer Case and Parking Service to provide additional resources and support to address the backlog of planning applications and ensure the delivery of a robust service, be approved.
- (2) That additional funding for the 2023-24 financial year for the Development Management service of £387,700 and £100,420 for the Customer Case and Parking Service to provide additional resources and support, be approved.

Reasons:

To ensure the return to a robust and customer focused Development Management function and to ensure that we can meet Key Performance Indicators and reduce the threat of Designation.

EX59 GUILDFORD JOINT COMMITTEE

The Executive considered a report on the future of the Guildford Joint Committee, which had been established in 2018, and had dealt with a range of GBC and SCC executive and non-executive functions.

The report noted that Surrey County Council's Cabinet had decided in February 2022 to transfer all executive highway functions (including on-street parking) from the Guildford Joint Committee, and other Joint Committees and Local Committees in Surrey, to county officers, in consultation with relevant divisional members. Those changes took effect from 1 April 2022. The County Council had also agreed at its Annual Meeting on 24 May 2022 that county councillors elected as chairmen or vice-chairmen of the Local and Joint Committees across the county should hold those offices only until 31 October 2022. On 27 September 2022, the Leader of Surrey County Council had decided to remove the remaining executive functions and advisory functions from all the Local Committees and Joint Committees in the county with effect from 11 October 2022. At the County Council meeting on 11 October 2022, formal approval was given to serve notice of the County Council's intention to withdraw from all of Joint Committees in Surrey (the notice to expire on or before 30 April 2023), and to transfer all non-executive functions relating to Public Rights of Way back to the County's own local governance arrangements.

Given the series of decisions taken by Surrey County Council, the Executive considered a report proposing the transfer the existing executive and advisory functions currently within the remit of the Joint Committee back to Guildford Borough Council. If agreed, full Council would be asked on 6 December 2022, to transfer the existing non-executive functions relating to public rights of way back to Guildford Borough Council. If the Executive and Council agreed to this action, then the Joint Committee would effectively be dissolved as of 6 December (rather than next April) as it would have no functions delegated to it.

The Lead Councillor for Resources introduced the report in the absence of the Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Executive, having considered that the decisions taken by the County Council to be regrettable,

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the transfer of all the Borough Council's executive and advisory functions from the Guildford Joint Committee's remit, as set out in the Joint Committee Constitution, be approved with immediate effect, and that those functions revert back to being delegated to the Executive.
- (2) That full Council, on 6 December 2022, be asked to approve the transfer of all the Borough Council's non-executive functions relating to public rights of way from the Guildford Joint Committee's remit, as set out in the Joint Committee Constitution, and that those functions be delegated back to the Lead Specialist – Legal.

Reason:

To enable the Council to consider its position in light of the withdrawal of all County Council functions from the Guildford Joint Committee.

EX60 SELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR 2023-24

At its meeting on 6 December 2022, the Council would be asked to consider nominations for the Mayoralty and Deputy Mayoralty of the Borough for the municipal year 2023-24. The Council would be requested to consider formally the nomination of the current Deputy Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah for the Mayoralty of the Borough for 2023-24, subject to Councillor Miah’s re-election to the Council on 4 May 2023.

Group leaders had been asked to submit nominations for the Deputy Mayoralty for 2023-24 by no later than 18 November 2022. No nominations had been received.

It was noted in the Supplementary Information Sheet that if no nominations had been received before the Council meeting on 6 December, the Council would be asked to agree to defer consideration of that matter to the meeting of the Council to be held on 8 February 2023.

The Executive

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Council on 6 December 2022:

That, subject to the outcome of the Borough Council elections in May 2023, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah be nominated for the Mayoralty of the Borough for the 2023-24 municipal year.

Reason:

To make early preparations, subject to the outcome of the Borough Council elections in May 2023, for the selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2023-24.

The meeting finished at 7:35pm.

Signed

Date

Chairman