

COUNCIL MEETING

21 February 2024

ADDENDUM TO THE COUNCIL MINUTE BOOK

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| 3. | Executive - 13 February 2024 | (Pages 3 - 12) |
| 11. | Licensing Committee - 7 February 2024 | (Pages 13 - 18) |

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held on 13 February 2024**

+ Cllr Shaun Macdonald (Chair)

* Cllr Alan Ashbery	+ Cllr Morgan Rise
+ Cllr Kel Finan-Cooke	+ Cllr John Skipper
+ Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke	+ Cllr Helen Whitcroft
+ Cllr Leanne MacIntyre	

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

* In attendance virtually but did not vote

In Attendance: Cllr Cliff Betton, Cllr Jonny Cope, Cllr Shaun Garrett, Cllr Mary Glauert, Cllr Julie Hoad, Cllr Nirmal Kang, Cllr Sarbie Kang, Cllr Rob Lee, Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath, Cllr Lewis Mears, Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam, Cllr Liz Noble, Cllr David O'Mahoney, Cllr Murray Rowlands, Cllr Pat Tedder, Cllr Kevin Thompson, Cllr David Whitcroft, Cllr Valerie White and Cllr Richard Wilson

71/E Moment of Silence

A minute's silence was held in memory of residents of the borough affected by a fatal car accident earlier that week.

72/E Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

73/E Questions by Members

The Inclusion & Housing Portfolio Holder, Councillor Lisa Finan-Cooke, responded to a question from Councillor Richard Wilson confirming the Council's support for transgender residents of the borough in light of the recent release of information concerning the murder of Brianna Ghey. She also extended the Council's sympathies to Brianna's family.

Councillor Alan Ashbery, the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Transport & Planning, responded to a question from Councillor Shaun Garrett about the potential for accidents to be caused due to bad parking near the shops in Old Dean. It was advised that contacts would be made at both Member and Officer levels to ask Surrey County Council to increase parking enforcement patrols in the area.

In response to a question from Councillor Richard Wilson about replacing the playground at Whitmoor Road, Bagshot, the Leisure & Culture Portfolio Holder, Councillor John Skipper, informed Members that this Council would proceed with a replacement play park once the necessary processes with Surrey County Council were complete.

Following a question from Councillor Shaun Garrett, the borough's recycling figures were noted and thanks were extended to those who had been involved in helping the targets to be achieved.

The Net Zero, Wellbeing & Environment Portfolio Holder, Councillor Morgan Rise, responded to a question from Councillor Richard Wilson by updating the meeting on enforcement of fly tipping.

74/E Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Executive considered a report setting out the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the revenue budgets estimates for the 2024/25 financial year, and the indicative estimates for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28. The MTFS also incorporated a 4-year capital strategy and programme, plus a Treasury Management Strategy. It was noted that the budget reflected a proposal for the Council's element of the annual council tax precept to be increased by 2.99% across all Council Tax Bands.

Members were reminded that, over the past few years the Council had applied some of its reserve balances to support regeneration and delivery of services to the local residents and businesses; however, this was not sustainable in perpetuity and as such the MTFS contained a savings and efficiencies target to balance the budget by keeping within the financing resources available. These targets would be met from a combination of further service efficiencies, looking at ways of increasing income, and potential non-statutory service reductions.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the Medium Term Financial Strategy and associated Revenue Budget Estimates covering the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 as set out at the updated Annex A to the agenda report and its appendices, be agreed, including:

- (i) approving the Revenue Budget Estimates covering the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 by:**
 - a. agreeing the 2024/25 budget estimates giving a net cost of services revenue budget for the Council of £17.347 million as shown in Appendix 1 to the Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
 - b. agreeing the unavoidable service pressures and budget growth of £4.723 million shown in Appendix 1 and in more detail in Appendix 1-1 to the Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
 - c. agreeing the revenue efficiencies of £4.525 million shown in Appendix 1 and in more detail in Appendix 1-2 to the Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
 - d. approving the recommendation by the Strategic Director Finance and Customer Services (the Council's Section 151 Officer) that a sum of**

up to £2.500 million of the interest equalisation earmarked reserve be drawn to support the revenue budget over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and provide a sustainable budget for the Council;

- e. agreeing that the Surrey Heath Borough Council element of the annual council tax precept be increased by 2.99% across all Council Tax Bands;

(ii) agreeing the Capital Strategy, as set out at Appendix 2 to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and associated Capital Programme (appendix 2-1) covering the period 2024/25 to 2027/28, including:

- f. agreeing the new capital bids for £9.539 million in Appendix 2 to the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 be approved, and that they be incorporated into the Capital Programme;
- g. reprofiling previous budgets into 2024/25 to 2027/28 as detailed in Appendix 2-1 amounting to £1.118 million in 2024/25;
- h. approving the Prudential Indicators summarised below and explained in Appendix 2 for 2024/25 to 2026/27 in accordance with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities 2011:

Prudential Indicator	2024/25 Proposed £m	2025/26 Estimated £m	2026/27 Estimated £m	2027/28 Estimated £m
Capital Expenditure	10.871	4.292	2.280	2.450
Capital Financing Requirement	209.7	210.2	210.7	211.2
Ratio of net financing costs to net revenue stream	0.57	0.62	0.61	0.62
Financing Costs	8.42	8.50	8.52	8.54
Operational	230	230	230	230

Boundary				
Authorised Limit	237	237	237	237

(iii) The Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 shown at Appendix 3, Annex A to the Medium Term Financial Strategy be agreed, including;

- i. the Treasury Management Indicators for 2024/25 at Appendix 3, Annex C to the Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
- j. the Minimum Revenue Provision policy statement and estimated minimum revenue provision payment table at Appendix 3, Annex F to the Medium Term Financial Strategy; and**
- k. the Treasury Management Policy Statement at Appendix 3, Annex G to the Medium Term Financial Strategy.**

RESOLVED to note:

- (i) the forecast level of reserve balances shown at Appendix 4 to the Medium Term Financial Strategy; it should further be noted that these will be subject to confirmation once the outturn position for the current financial year (2023/24) is known and this will be reported in the revenue outturn report early in the new financial year;**
- (ii) the Council Tax base for Surrey Heath Borough Council is 39,749.5 as set at the Executive meeting on 5 December 2023;**
- (iii) the Medium Term Financial Strategy contains a savings target of £0.600 million over the period of the strategy which will be achieved through a combination of further services efficiencies, increases in income and potentially service reductions to be identified through a output-based budget review for all services of the Council and subject to a base budget review that will commence in the summer of 2024; and**
- (iv) the statement of the Chief Financial Officer (Strategic Director Finance and Customer Services) on the robustness of estimates and sustainability of balances; and**
- (v) the finance settlement from the Government was finalised through the House of Commons on 5 February 2024.**

Note: it was noted for the record that,

- (i) in relation to the capital grants set out in the Capital Programme, Councillor Shaun Garrett declared that he was a member of the Old Dean Bowling Club; and
- (ii) in relation to funding for clubs and bodies, Councillor Murray Rowlands declared that he was an Executive member of Camberley Job Club.

75/E Council Strategy

The Executive considered a new draft Council Strategy for 2024 – 2028. The Strategy sought to build on the objectives in the previous Five Year Strategy.

The five priorities identified in the new draft Strategy were:

- Protect our Environment
- Promote Healthier and More Inclusive Communities
- Support a Strong Economy and Create More Homes
- Campaign for Residents
- Deliver Effective Services with Sustainable Finances

The Strategy would be delivered each year through a set of more detailed actions and targets agreed in the Annual Plan.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the Council Strategy 2024 – 2028 at Annex A to the agenda report be adopted.

76/E Draft Annual Plan 2024/25

The Executive considered the proposed Annual Plan for 2024/25, which set out the key projects and performance indicator targets for the next financial year. The Annual Plan was the main delivery vehicle for ensuring that the ambitions in the Council's overarching strategy are delivered for residents and the borough. The draft plan had been considered by the Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in January and its comments had been incorporated.

RESOLVED that the Annual Plan for 2024/25, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, be agreed, subject to the approval of the annual budget 2024/25 at Full Council on 21 February 2024.

77/E Parking Strategy

The Executive was reminded that, in September 2023 it had determined that prior to any commitment to increase parking tariffs, a Car Parking Strategy would be developed to set out the Council's aspirations for its car parks and determine where improvements could be made to enhance customer experience. The Parking Strategy was intended to bring about a more strategic and rounded review of the Council's car parks looking at income, tariff structures, levels of usage, future technology, maintenance and required levels of future investment.

Members were informed that one of the core principles of the Strategy was that across the borough as a whole, the portfolio of car parks should be financially

sustainable, therefore self-funding and avoiding the need for Council subsidy. Changes to the tariffs were intended to fund the investment required to address any necessary maintenance and introduce Preventative Planned Maintenance plans. In addition, the Strategy set out plans for safer, cleaner, car parks with better signage and marking and easier contactless payments.

The schedule of proposed changes to tariffs was noted, including a reduction from one hour to 30 minutes free parking in Pay on Foot car parks, excluding Chobham due to it providing parking for Chobham Water Meadows Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. It was also proposed to introduce car parking tariffs in Wilton Road car park.

The Strategy had been considered by the Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee in January 2024 and the revisions made following the meeting, including correcting inconsistency regarding Sunday charges, were noted.

Members discussed the proposals and the results of the consultation that had been conducted. It was noted that two petitions concerning elements of the Strategy had recently been made live for signing on the Council's website. Feedback reported by residents was also shared, including concerns about the impact of the proposed reduction to 30 minutes free parking in pay on foot car parks.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Parking Strategy, as set out in Annex 1 to the agenda report, be adopted;**

- (ii) the amendments to the parking tariffs for existing car parks, as set out in page 25 of Annex 1 to the agenda report, be approved with effect from 1st April 2024;**

- (iii) the proposed introduction of car parking tariffs in Wilton Road car park be introduced from 1st July 2024 following the completion of the statutory Traffic Regulatory Order process and after review and consideration of any feedback received; and**

- (iv) the final implementation of these proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director for Environment and Community in consultation with the Resident & Community Services Portfolio Holder, following the completion of the necessary statutory processes.**

78/E Review of Grant Schemes

The Executive was reminded that, at its meeting on 16 January 2024, it had agreed to award several revenue grants, along with transitional funding to end the provision of two revenue grants, for a range of organisations, based on proposed changes to the Ward Councillor Grant and Community Fund Grant being approved at a future date.

Members considered a report containing proposals to review and amend the criteria of the Council's Lottery Grant, Ward Councillor Grant, and Community Fund Grant. It was noted that the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme budget would be reduced from £52,500 to £35,000 per annum, with the £17,500 reallocated to support the annual Revenue Grants. As a result, each councillor would have £1,000 per year to allocate in line with the Scheme.

RESOLVED that the grant policy and criteria of the three grant schemes be amended as set out at paragraph 2 of the agenda report.

79/E Review of Planning Services Fee Charges 2024/25

The Executive considered a report setting out proposed increases to fees for the Planning and Building Control services. The proposals included continuing the fast-track planning application service and expanding it to include minor developments. It also introduced fees for general enquiries and administrative fees for paper handling and invalid applications. New Building Control administrative fees would be introduced for archive records, Demolition Notices and Exempt Building Work Certificates. These changes would be applied from 1 April 2024.

Members were advised that the changes had been proposed to ensure that the department continued to deliver the best possible customer service with clear expectations for the public. Income generation as a result of these changes would enable the service to reinvest the resource and support the wider council objectives.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The pre-application charging schedule be increased by 25% for non-major proposals and 35% for major proposals and takes effect from 1 April 2024;**
- (ii) The existing fast-track planning application service continues and, subject to piloting, from 1 April 2024 is expanded to include minor developments;**
- (iii) General enquiries fees and administrative fees for paper handling and invalid planning applications be introduced and take effect from 1 April 2024;**

- (iv) Planning performance agreements are standardised and better promoted with a clear fee structure, template agreement and improved web content;**
- (v) Building Control fees be increased by 53% to take effect from 1 April 2024; and**
- (vi) Building Control administrative fees are introduced for archive records, Demolition Notices and Exempt Building Work Certificates.**

80/E ANPR Procurement

The Executive was informed that the current automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) car park control and management system for Main Square and Knoll Road car parks had been installed on 2 June 2014, with a maximum contract for maintenance and software support of 10 years. A procurement exercise had been undertaken to procure a new system and approval was sought to award the Car Park Management System contract to the successful tenderer.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the issue of intention to award the contract to tenderer 2 for a period of ten years commencing on 3 June 2024 with the option for the council to extend for a further two years be approved; and**
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Strategic Director for Environment and Community in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resident & Community Services to award the contract following the 10-day statutory standstill period.**

81/E 43-57 Park Street (the House of Fraser building), Camberley

The Executive considered a report seeking approval to progress the removal of asbestos in the former House of Fraser building at 43-57 Park Street, Camberley, which was owned by the Council.

It was advised that the removal of asbestos by specialist contractors would be required regardless of the future use of the building. Furthermore, the assessment of the future use of the building was inhibited by the presence of asbestos as surveyors would not undertake detailed building condition, mechanical and electrical and measured surveys until it had been removed due to the health and safety risk. Therefore, in order to present more robust costs associated with different options for future use of the building, the removal of asbestos and undertaking of the surveys was necessary.

The proposed works comprised the removal of asbestos from all vacant areas and the potential selective repair or full replacement of the roof. A decision on whether to replace the roof would be made once the asbestos had been removed, survey work undertaken on its condition, and financial analysis of the selected options updated.

RESOLVED that, subject to the agreement of the budget by the Full Council

- (i) authority be delegated to the Head of Property and Economic Development in consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Finance and the Strategic Director Finance and Customer Services (Chief Finance Officer) to:**
 - a) enter into a contract for the necessary work to remove asbestos from 43-57 Park Street, Camberley, and necessary associated works, including contract award for the procured supplier;**
 - b) Following removal of the asbestos, instruct appropriate physical survey and assessment of the roof and other areas to enable procurement of updated cost plans for the re-use of the building;**
 - c) As deemed appropriate following detailed surveys and cost estimations, instruct the appropriate repair and replacement works to keep the building wind and watertight, particularly the roof;**
 - d) Control the release of all contingency amounts allocated to the project; and**
- (ii) officers report back to the Executive on the proposed future use of the building, once the asbestos has been removed and survey work undertaken allowing assessment, with more accurate cost estimates for the feasible options for the re-use of the building.**

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that a new capital bid of £3.5M be approved to

- (i) Undertake enabling works including asbestos removal, and potentially roof repairs or replacement to 43-57 Park Street, Camberley; and**
- (ii) Progress with further physical surveys, once the asbestos has been removed, and update the plans for the shortlisted options with more robust cost estimates.**

Chair

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**Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing
Committee held at Council Chamber,
Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road,
Camberley, GU15 3HD on 7 February
2024**

- + Cllr Valerie White (Chair)
- Cllr Ying Perrett (Vice Chair)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Cllr Alan Ashbery | + Cllr Jacques Olmo |
| + Cllr Kel Finan-Cooke | + Cllr Jonathan Quin |
| + Cllr Mark Gordon | + Cllr Bob Raikes |
| + Cllr Julie Hoad | + Cllr Pat Tedder |
| + Cllr Nirmal Kang | * Cllr Richard Wilson |
| * Cllr Sarbie Kang | |

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented
- * In attendance virtually but did not vote

In Attendance: Frances Soper, Paula Barnshaw, Nick Steevens, James Hall and Rachel Whillis.

29/L Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023 circulated as a part of the agenda contained errors in reflecting the attendees of the meeting. The Chair confirmed that the errors had been spotted and that a corrected version of the minutes was to be signed.

The corrected minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

30/L Public Question Time

No questions from the public had been received ahead of the meeting.

31/L Cumulative Impact Assessment Response to Consultation

Members were updated on the response to a public consultation regarding the Cumulative Impact Assessment. As a part of the Licensing Policy approved by the Committee on 07 April 2021, a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) for a defined area of Camberley was necessary to promote licensing objectives, in light of evidence provided by the Police in relation to crime and disorder in Camberley town centre. As required by the statutory licensing guidance, a three yearly review was carried out.

The review included an extensive public consultation with 1,100 letters and emails issued and the consultation being promoted on social media and the councils website. 6 responses were received and no further evidence in support of the retention of the CIA was received from the police. It was the recommendation of

Officers that a statement was to be released that would confirm following the statutory consultation, there was no longer a need for a CIA.

If the CIA was to be removed then future applications would continue to be determined on their own merits and must demonstrate no adverse impact on the licensing objectives to be granted. The Licensing Team would continue to monitor compliance with licence conditions, and other measures remained to control drinking in the town centre, including the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which would be enforced by the police.

A question was asked regarding why the CIA was established in the first place. It was confirmed that the police had requested the CIA be established following evidence provided to the Committee of alcohol related crimes in Camberley Town Centre, for 24 hours of the day not just for the night time economy. Several members voiced concern that only 6 responses had been received in the public consultation.

Members noted that no alternative option was provided and that the only recommendation was to end the CIA. It was confirmed that without any evidence received from the Police that such a measure was required, there was no legal basis to continue the CIA. It was recognised that the lack of evidence was due to both a reduced issue of alcohol related crime in the town centre and under resourcing within the police. It was also confirmed that the police still had the opportunity to comment or object to any applications received outside of the CIA.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Council as licensing authority publishes a statement that having consulted with the statutory list of consultees and wider, that it is no longer of the opinion that there is a need for a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) in the Surrey Heath BC Licensing Policy (2021); and**
- (ii) The CIA cease to apply from the end of the 3-year life of the assessment on 6 April 2024.**

32/L Pavement Licence Update

The Committee was updated on the impacts of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 on the Business and Planning Act 2020 and the resulting effect on pavement licences. The Act had made the temporary pavement licence provision introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic a permanent borough council function.

Officers were seeking approval for setting the fees for new pavement licence applications at £500 and renewals at £350 to ensure full cost recovery. It was also requested that the licence duration be increased from 1 year to 2 years.

It was recognised that, at its previous meeting, the Committee had established exemptions for charities or community interest groups seeking a pavement licence. It was confirmed that no such organisations had yet applied for a pavement licence.

A question was asked if the cost of the licence could be paid on a monthly or quarterly basis. It was confirmed that the legislation required the fee to be paid upfront. It was also recognised that such a licence would effectively double trading space which would double the potential income received. A follow up question raised concern at unsuccessful applications losing the money paid upfront if rejected, but officers clarified that engagement is had with any applicant to ensure the application is fit for purpose. No application for a pavement licence had been rejected since 2020.

RESOLVED that the fee for applications for a Pavement Licence be increased under the provisions of the Business and Planning Act 2020 (as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Schedule 22)), from 1 October 2024 and the licence period increase to 2 years.

Note: Councillor Mark Gordon declared that a business opposite his own had been granted a pavement licence, which would have had an impact on the level of trade his business saw.

33/L Licensing and Environmental Health Team Annual Verbal Update

The Committee received the annual update on work undertaken by the Licensing and Environmental Health teams over the last year. This work related to a variety of statutory functions aimed at protecting public health and safety, environmental control, prevention of crime and disorder and protecting the vulnerable.

Multi-agency enforcement initiatives were completed with the Police, Fire Service and Trading Standards, with six undertaken in 2023. These targeted non-compliance with taxi driver and vehicle licensing requirements and underage sale of alcohol. One Hackney Carriage licence was revoked due to an altercation with another driver in the town centre with no appeal against the decision received.

The Licensing Sub Committee had met in July 2023 to review a premises licence for a club in the Old Dean at the request of the Police, following a serious violent incident. The Sub Committee had suspended the club premises certificate for 28 days and required the club to improve staff training and review club policies. Enhanced conditions were added to the licence regarding alcohol sales, CCTV, door staff, Pubwatch membership and closer control of guests at the club.

As discussed earlier in the meeting, a review of the Cumulative Impact Assessment had been undertaken in the year, as well as a review of the Pavement Licence. The annual Food Safety and Health & Safety Service Plan would be presented to the committee in June 2024, with the priorities in the plan concentrating on the greatest risks in the field.

The Council's Proactive Food Inspection Programme and the Health and Safety Intervention Programme are in line with the Food Standard Agency and Health and Safety Executive requirements. 700 food businesses operate in the borough and 97.5% held a rating of 'satisfactory' or higher. Of the businesses who received

food and safety visits from officers, 100% reported that they felt they had been treated fairly and that the officer visiting was polite, helpful and knowledgeable.

When contraventions of food legislation were identified a graduated approach was adopted, with formal action taken as a last resort. 2023 saw a voluntary closure of a business in Windlesham due to a mouse infestation. Four businesses were served hygiene and improvement notices due to poor staff training and pest proofing, inadequate food safety management systems, poor cleanliness and damaged food preparation services.

An emergency closure of a restaurant in Bagshot took place in 2022 which led to a successful prosecution in 2023 for food and hygiene offences. The business was fined £25,000 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £2,000 and costs of £14,000. The premises was closely monitored following the incident and the business is now under new ownership and compliant with required standards.

The Food Safety team carried out a proactive programme of food sampling in line with the UK Health Security Agency national food sampling programmes. Following the successful application of grant funding from the Food Standard Agency the team has undertaken a program of imported food sampling. The team was engaged in 11 Primary Authority Partnership schemes, where an authority works with a company with outlets across the country. 2023 saw the introduction of a charge service to provide food export certificate attestation at the request of a food exporter based in the borough, which has increased income generation for the council.

The Food team had also worked with the Surrey County Council Public Health team to pilot an 'Eat Out Eat Well' award for businesses offering healthier options on their menus. The first two awards had been made to Frimley Lodge Park Café and the Lightwater Country Park Café which helped to contribute to the Council's ongoing Whole Systems Approach to Obesity work.

The Health and Safety team had been involved in a major electrical safety project to improve electrical safety in the outside seating areas of local hospitality premises. 80 local pubs, restaurants and cafes were contacted asking to ensure outdoor equipment was appropriate for outdoor use, installed by a competent person and subject to regular checks. Businesses were asked to provide a copy of their electrical installation condition report and Officers were in the process of visiting those who had not complied with that request. The team had also been involved in the safe delivery of public events such as the Camberley Car Show, Frimley Green Carnival and various coronation events, with multi-agency safety advisory groups being convened accordingly.

The Environmental Health team served five formal notices in year following resident complaints, regarding construction site noise complaints and pest problems. The team oversaw air quality monitoring with diffusion tubes at 51 sites across the borough measuring nitrogen dioxide. Following a successful Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) grant application a portable air quality monitor was purchased which has been deployed at sites to raise issues of air quality in the borough.

The Environmental Control Team provided a number of services in the borough including the permitting of prescribed pollutant processes, responses to land search enquiries, responses to planning, licensing and vehicle operator consultations, assessing the health implications of contaminated land sites, stray dog collection kennelling and pest control treatments to residents. The team oversaw a contract to provide an out of hours noise service, but this service contract was to end in March 2024 following the base budget review as the service was subject to low use.

A question was raised, asking where responsibility lay for 'dark kitchens', kitchens not operating in a restaurant but presenting as a restaurant on online food delivery platforms. The concern was that such kitchens operating outside of the borough that could deliver food into Surrey Heath and it was asked if the committee had any grounds to combat this. It was confirmed that premises outside the borough would be the responsibility of the relevant external local authority, but that any establishment needed to be compliant with regulations and that complaints raised by customers would be taken seriously. It was also recognised that online platforms require takeaways to hold at least a 'satisfactory' rating which has led to an increase of ratings in the sector.

A follow up question was asked, if businesses who were rated as 'satisfactory' for food hygiene were encouraged to improve upon this rating. The Committee was informed that the scheme did not seek to push premises beyond being compliant but that many businesses sought to have a higher rating to appeal to customers and that a re-rating scheme was in place for businesses looking to move up the scale and advice given by officers on how to achieve a higher rating.

The Committee noted the update.

34/L Licensing Sub Committee Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 04 July 2023 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

35/L Licensing Act 2003 - Summary of Decisions

The Committee received details of the decisions taken under delegated powers in respect of licence applications where no representations had been received from the responsible authorities or any other persons.

It was confirmed to the Committee that licences related to alcohol and the consumption of alcohol would not apply to a premises selling methanol in a hardware store. It was also confirmed that the storage of flammable liquids is not a safety measure assessed by the Committee.

The Committee noted the summary.

36/L Work Programme

Members noted the work programme.

Chairman