

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held at Surrey Heath House on 5
December 2017**

+ Cllr Moira Gibson (Chairman)

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| + Cllr Richard Brooks | + Cllr Josephine Hawkins |
| + Cllr Mrs Vivienne Chapman | + Cllr Alan McClafferty |
| + Cllr Colin Dougan | + Cllr Charlotte Morley |
| + Cllr Craig Fennell | |

+ Present

In Attendance: Cllr Dan Adams, Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Edward Hawkins, Cllr Paul Ilnicki, Cllr Jonathan Lytle, Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper, Cllr David Mansfield, Cllr Chris Pitt, Cllr Joanne Potter, Cllr Ian Sams and Cllr Valerie White

63/E Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

64/E Questions by Members

No questions were received from Members.

65/E Joint Waste Mobilisation Costs and Garden Waste Collection Services

The Executive was informed that the mobilisation of the Joint Waste Contract would require additional one-off expenditure, which mainly related to marketing and communication costs but also included some Contract Management Office set up costs. It was proposed to fund this cost from the Recycling /Refuse Equalisation Fund.

Members were reminded that the current household waste and street cleansing contractor, Biffa Municipal, operated a subscription based kerbside garden waste service on behalf of the Council. There were currently 11,000 subscribers to the service. The bins were owned by Biffa.

The contract would expire on 5 February 2018, following which a subscription garden waste service would be delivered by the new service supplier, Amey Municipal. Biffa had agreed to sell the bins used by the current subscribers to the Council at a cost of £10 per bin plus VAT. Any new customers thereafter would be provided with a wheeled bin directly from Amey Municipal.

It was estimated that a budget of £110,000 would be required for this purchase, which would be offset by the subscription fees charged to the customers. The proposed charge for a fortnightly garden waste service for a 240 litre wheeled bin had been set at £40 a bin per annum. The fee would include provision and delivery of the bin.

The Executive received exempt information on the legal negotiations in progress in relation to the purchase of the garden waste bins from Biffa Municipal.

RESOLVED to

- (i) approve expenditure from the Recycling/Refuse Equalisation Fund of up to £90,000 as a contribution towards the mobilisation costs for the joint waste contract; and**
- (ii) amend the 2017/2018 fees and charges to introduce a charge of £40 for a fortnightly garden waste collection service from a 240 litre wheeled bin from the kerbside; the fee to include the provision and delivery of a 240 litre wheeled bin.**

RECOMMENDED to Council an amendment to the capital programme for the purchase of garden waste bins at an estimated cost of £110,000; the increased expenditure to be funded from subscription fees charged to the customers.

66/E The Council Tax Base and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme

The Executive received a report on the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2017/18 which reviewed the changes to Council Tax made in 2013/14 and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) introduced in April 2013.

Members noted that there had been an increase in the tax base of 222.58 which would generate an additional income of £39,700 based on the current Band D council tax charge. The Executive received detailed breakdowns of the calculations of the Tax Base for each part of the Borough and a breakdown of the calculation of the Tax Base for the whole area.

Technical changes to Council Tax had been introduced from April 2013 under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 which meant that the Council was empowered to set a number of changes to Council Tax discounts and exemptions, as well as introduce a premium for long term empty properties. Members noted that, in his Autumn Statement, the Chancellor had announced the ability to amend the current empty property premium to a maximum of 100% from the current maximum of 50%. If the Council wished to adopt this measure, it would need to be agreed by the Council at its meeting in February 2018.

On 1 April 2013 the Council had introduced a new Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) to replace Council Tax Benefit, for working age claimants. The new scheme operated as a Council Tax discount and the Council was able to vary the value of discount on Council Tax granted to working age claimants. Pensioner claimants were protected and would continue to receive help towards their Council Tax, based on regulations set by Central Government.

The funding given by Government to fund the new scheme was insufficient to pay the full cost of granting all claimants 100% discount. Members had taken the view, when setting the scheme in January 2013, that the cost of the LCTSS should not fall on local tax payers and so had set the discount level at 70% for working age

claimants, subject to a number of specific exemptions for defined vulnerable groups. Members had also agreed to put £10,000 into a hardship fund for individual cases.

The Council Tax Support Exceptional Hardship fund, as introduced from 1 April 2013 had a requirement that Council Tax Support must be in payment in the week in which an Exceptional Hardship fund award is made, or the applicant must have been in receipt of Council Tax Benefit on 31 March 2013. The current conditions included the criterion that Exceptional Hardship awards could be made to those in receipt of Council Tax Benefit as of 31 March 2013. It was considered that the passage of time has made this reference obsolete.

The Executive was therefore asked to recommend that the wording be amended to: "Council Tax Support must be in payment, or have been in payment, in the financial year which an award is sought, to ensure the Exceptional Hardship awards can be made to those meeting the set criteria."

Members were reminded that in 2017/18 the Revenue Support Grant had been reduced to zero and, therefore, it was reasonable to assume that there would be no governmental support for funding the LCTSS. As a result, it was considered likely that the Scheme may need to be reviewed with a view to increasing the amounts claimants pay from the existing 30%; this, however, would need to be balanced against claimants' ability to pay any additional council tax.

For ease of administration, it was important that there was alignment in respect of treatment of income and calculation of applicable amounts between housing benefit and the local council tax support scheme. Each year the Government made minor changes to its scheme to reflect uprating of benefits etc. In order that the housing benefit and LCTSS remained aligned, it was proposed that the Executive Head of Finance be authorised to make such minor changes as may be necessary to the LCTSS for all types of claimant.

The introduction of the LCTSS in April 2013 had had the effect of reducing the Council Tax base since it operated as a discount rather than a benefit. In order to recognise the effect that this had on parishes, the Government had provided a grant in 2013/14 to give to parishes to ensure they were no worse off because of the introduction of the LCTSS. This had amounted to £22,923. The grant had again been provided in 2014/15 but, as it had not been separately identifiable, the Council had agreed to reduce the parish element by 13% in line with the overall reduction in funding received by the Council. It was proposed that no reduction be made in the current financial year. This would also mean that Parishes would not have to increase their precepts in 2017/18 just to cover any grant reduction.

RESOLVED

- (i) to note the calculations of the tax base in Annexes A to F summarised below:**

Band D Equivalent Properties

Bisley	1,587.78
Chobham	1,969.27
Frimley and Camberley	23,871.57
West End	2,020.58
Windlesham	8,091.42
Surrey Heath Borough Council	37,540.62

- (ii) to note that the changes to Council Tax discounts made by Executive on 7 January 2014 under the freedoms given in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and relevant statutory instruments remain unchanged for 2018/19;
- (iii) that £19,943.44 be given to Parishes in 2018/19 to offset the effect on the tax base of the Local Council Tax Support scheme;
- (iv) that the final setting of the Tax Base be delegated to the Executive Head of Finance.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that

- (i) the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Surrey Heath, approved by Council on 22 January 2013, remains unchanged for 2018/19;
- (ii) the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy be amended to state that Council Tax Support must be, or have been, in payment in the financial year which an award is sought;
- (iii) the Executive Head of Finance be delegated to make minor changes to the Local Council Tax Support scheme so as to ensure that where applicable to income calculation it remains in line with Housing Benefit changes introduced by legislation; and
- (iv) incomes and applicable amounts and non-dependant deductions are uprated in line with the percentages and amounts supplied by DWP and DCLG, and applied to Housing Benefit claims.

67/E Council Finances as at 30 September 2017

The Executive noted the Council's finances as at 30 September 2017.

RESOLVED to note the report.

68/E Treasury Management Mid-year Report 2017/18

The Executive noted the Treasury Management Service's performance at 30 September 2017 and the compliance with Prudential Indicators.

RESOLVED to note the report.

69/E Response to South Western Railway's December 2018 timetable consultation

The Executive considered a draft response to South Western Railway's consultation on the proposed changes to train services in the December 2018 timetable. The consultation would close on Friday 22 December 2017.

It was agreed that, in relation to the Camberley to Waterloo section of the response, a minor amendment be made to refer to passengers with restricted mobility. It was further agreed to emphasise that the Camberley to Guildford journey times would be roughly similar to using the Blackwater to Guildford service, which would include any travel time from Camberley to Blackwater Station.

RESOLVED to agree the response set out in the letter at Annex 1 of this report, as amended, as the Council's formal response to South Western Railway's consultation on the changes to the train services in the December 2018 timetable

70/E 2018 Parliamentary Boundary Review

The Executive considered a draft response from the Council to the Boundary Commission for England's consultation on revised proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries. The deadline for the consultation was 11 December 2017.

Members were advised the proposals included moving the current Windlesham Ward from the Surrey Heath Constituency to the Windsor Constituency. It was noted that, as a result of the recent local boundary review, the Windlesham Ward would not exist in its current form from May 2019.

Members reviewed the draft response and agreed to add further wording to the representation, specifically that the Boundary Commission's original proposal to include Crown Wood ward from the Bracknell Constituency to the Windsor Constituency should be adopted.

It was also commented that some residents appeared to support the proposal for reasons which were not related to Parliamentary constituencies, including school admission matters and association with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

RESOLVED to agree the response to the Boundary Commission for England's consultation, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, as amended.

71/E Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as set out below:

Minute	Paragraph(s)
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65/E	5
72/E	3
73/E	3
74/E	3&5

72/E High Street Public Realm Improvements Update

The Executive was reminded that in October 2017 the Council had submitted a bid to the Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnership for £3.5m as a contribution towards the improvement of the public realm in High Street, Knoll Walk and Princess Way. It was reported that the bid had been successful.

Members were also reminded that, in July 2017, the Executive had approved a recommendation to contribute £900k from developers' contributions and income from Community Infrastructure Levy towards this project, should the bid be successful.

The funding would enable the Council to move towards the next phase of the development, which would include procuring the detailed design including selection of materials & street furniture and public art, securing S278 agreements to enable the Council to carry out the works to further engaging with the public and Town Centre retailers, and procuring the main construction contractor.

The Executive expressed its thanks to Mrs Jane Ireland for all her work in securing this successful bid.

RESOLVED that

- (i) up to £900k from current and future CIL and section 106 contributions be used on the High Street Public Realm Improvements; and**
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Regulatory in consultation with the Leader, to take forward the delivery of the High Street Public Realm Improvement Project.**

RECOMMENDED to Council that a Capital scheme be approved for £4.4m for the High Street public realm.

73/E London Road Block Redevelopment

The Executive was informed that, following the acquisition of the Mall in 2016, the Council had reviewed the options for taking forward proposals for the London Road Block.

Members were reminded that, at the Executive meeting on 22 October 2013, authority had been granted to the Chief Executive to proceed with a Development Agreement and all associated documentation to deliver the project. At this time,

£500,000 had been agreed to be funded out of the capital reserve, for the fees associated with advising the Council on the negotiations of any joint venture arrangement.

The funding had been returned to reserves on the advice of external audit, whilst the project was on hold during the acquisition of the Mall. Members were informed that, following advice from the Council's advisors, Montagu Evans, the costs were expected to be in the region of £600,000.

Members also considered draft sketches of the site, which were purely indicative concepts on which feasibility work had been based, and provided feedback which would be used to inform the development of the proposals.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the budget of £600,000 from the Capital Revenue Reserve be reinstated in order to fund professional fees in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the London Road Block.

74/E Review of Exempt Items

The Executive reviewed the reports which had been considered at the meeting following the exclusion of members of the press and public, as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information.

RESOLVED that

- (i) Minute 65/E be made public, with the exception of any matters relating to legal negotiations;**
- (ii) Minute 72/E and the associated agenda report be made public; and**
- (iii) Minute 73/E and the associated agenda report be made public, but all discussions concerning the draft plans for the site remain exempt for the present time.**

Chairman

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