

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held on 18 April 2023**

+ Cllr Alan McClafferty (Chairman)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| + Cllr Sarah Jane Croke | + Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans |
| + Cllr Colin Dougan | + Cllr Adrian Page |
| + Cllr Shaun Garrett | + Cllr Robin Perry |

+ Present

In Attendance: Cllr Graham Alleway, Cllr Peter Barnett, Cllr Paul Deach, Cllr Tim FitzGerald, Cllr Sharon Galliford, Cllr Edward Hawkins, Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam, Cllr Pat Tedder and Cllr Victoria Wheeler

111/E Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

112/E Tree Strategy and Action Plan

The Executive considered the proposed Tree Strategy and Action Plan, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report. The proposed strategy acknowledged the importance of trees to the local community and their potential to mitigate for the effects of climate change. The action plan provided direction on how high tree coverage should be achieved and maintained within the borough.

Members recognised that as well as the potential to mitigate the effects of climate change, trees had the important ability to sequester carbon emissions and it was agreed that this should be noted within policy. Further to this, the aesthetic and ecological values of hedgerows were recognised and it was agreed that this would be captured in the proposed policy.

Following discussion, it was recognised that sometimes trees came into conflict with human development and wider Council objectives; and in some instances needed to be removed. It was agreed that the Strategic Director – Environment and Community in consultation with the Leisure, Culture and Community Portfolio Holder would adjust the wording to capture the necessary balance in the policy.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Tree Strategy and Action Plan, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, be adopted, as amended, and**
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Strategic Director- Environment and Community in consultation with the Leisure, Culture & Community Portfolio Holder to strengthen the wording and include reference to:**
 - a. the carbon sequestration value of trees,**

- b. **the importance of hedgerows; and**
- c. **handling of those instances where the loss of trees may be outweighed by broader benefits, and the planting of replacement trees.**

113/E Property Acquisition and Disposal Strategy

The Executive considered a proposed strategy for the acquisition and disposal of property for the purposes of economic development, regeneration, protection of local employment opportunities and the sustainability of town centres within Surrey Heath. The strategy accorded with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the wider goals of the Council's Five Year Strategy and would assist in the aim of achieving financial stability to deliver high quality services to the residents and businesses of the Borough.

Members felt it was important to recognise that, despite reference to the Five Year Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy in the proposed strategy, the Council often acquired property to meet goals and aspirations for a much longer period of time. It was also noted that sometimes the motivation for the Council to acquire property was explicitly not for investment or income-generation purposes, but to provide wider-benefits to residents. It was agreed both these points would be reflected in the policy.

Despite this it was recognised that all Council acquired property should be able to at least break-even and not be at a cost to the Council. It was agreed that this would also be reflected in the strategy.

RESOLVED that

- (i) **the Property Acquisition and Disposal Strategy, as attached at Annex A to the agenda report, be approved, as amended; and**
- (ii) **authority be delegated to the Head of Investment and Development in consultation with the Economic Development & Transformation Portfolio Holder and the Finance Portfolio Holder to make minor changes to reflect that:**
 - a. **property should be acquired for their contribution to longer-term objectives and not short-term financial return; and**
 - b. **acquired property should usually be assessed against a minimum income margin 2% to cover the current and future property-related costs although this could be balanced against wider community benefit.**

114/E Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, 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 Local Government Act 1972 as set out below:

Minute	Paragraph(s)
115/E	3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
116/E	3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

115/E The Square Roof Repairs

The Executive considered a proposal to place a contract for urgent repair works to the roof of the Square Shopping Centre.

116/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 the decision at minute 115/E and associated agenda report remain exempt for the present time.

Chairman