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Monday, 22 February 2021

To: The Members of the **External Partnerships Select Committee**  
(Councillors: Robin Perry (Chairman), Morgan Rise (Vice Chairman), Dan Adams, Richard Brooks, Vivienne Chapman, Sarah Jane Croke, Paul Deach, Tim FitzGerald, Shaun Garrett, Emma-Jane McGrath, Pat Tedder, Helen Whitcroft and Kristian Wrenn)

**In accordance with the Substitute Protocol at Part 4 of the Constitution, Members who are unable to attend this meeting should give their apologies and arrange for one of the appointed substitutes, as listed below, to attend. Members should also inform their group leader of the arrangements made.**

Substitutes: Councillors Graham Alleway, Rodney Bates, Edward Hawkins, Ben Leach, Charlotte Morley, Darryl Ratiram, Graham Tapper and Valerie White

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **External Partnerships Select Committee** will be held virtually on **Tuesday, 2 March 2021 at 7.00 pm**. The agenda will be set out as below.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded and live streamed on  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/SurreyHeathBC>

Yours sincerely

Damian Roberts

Chief Executive

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## AGENDA

	Pages
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Chairman's Announcements and Welcome to Guests</b>	
<b>3 Minutes of the Last Meeting</b>	<b>3 - 10</b>
To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021.	
<b>4 Declarations of Interest</b>	
Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and non-pecuniary interests they may have with respect to matters which are	

to be considered at this meeting. Members who consider they may have an interest are invited to consult the Monitoring Officer or the Democratic Services Officer prior to the meeting.

**5 Enterprise M3 Growth Hub: Local Enterprise Partnership**

Report to follow.

<b>6</b>	<b>Camberley Job Club</b>	<b>11 - 16</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Basingstoke Canal Authority</b>	<b>17 - 18</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership</b>	<b>19 - 20</b>

**Minutes of a Meeting of the External Partnerships Select Committee held at Surrey Heath House on 1 December 2020**

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- Cllr Robin Perry (Chairman)
- + Cllr Morgan Rise (Vice Chairman)
  

+ Cllr Dan Adams	+ Cllr Tim FitzGerald
+ Cllr Richard Brooks	+ Cllr Shaun Garrett
- Cllr Vivienne Chapman	+ Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath
+ Cllr Sarah Jane Croke	+ Cllr Pat Tedder
+ Cllr Paul Deach	+ Cllr Helen Whitcroft
	+ Cllr Kristian Wrenn

- + Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Members in Attendance: Cllr Victoria Wheeler

Officers Present: Jayne Boitout and Louise Livingston

**11/EP Accent Housing**

The Committee received a presentation from Rob Mills, Director of Customer Experience (South), of Accent Housing updating the Committee in respect of their ongoing issues with their repair service affecting their Surrey Heath properties.

Accent's new maintenance contractor, Axis Europe, had now been appointed for approximately 12 months. Out of the 1216 repair cases which were handed back to Accent from its previous maintenance contractor, CHS, 1204 cases had been completed with 12 which were still outstanding.

Despite this the COVID-19 pandemic had severely disrupted Accent's Repair Service; and in March the housing supplier had to pause the taking-on of new maintenance cases and only fully mobilized its repair service in September. This had caused a new backlog of repairs, which were being managed by weekly review meetings, work with Axis Europe to take-on 6 additional maintenance operatives as well as sub-contractors, the provision of additional administrative support to help Axis manage its workload.

Since last presenting to the Committee, Axis had made the Accent Customer Liaison Officer role a permanent position and continued its new emphasis on monitoring satisfaction ratings which were being collected from residents via a free text service. The positive improvements were exemplified by the overall average customer satisfaction ratings which had improved from 3.84 out of 5 in February 2020 to 4.23 out of 5 in the Autumn of 2020.

Even though Accent's programme of long-term planned works was much smaller than normal in order to prioritise the repairs works backlog, Accent's planned capital works totaled at a £1.5million capital investment with some of the works

deferred to 2021/22. It was planned that all replacements which were deemed to be a priority were to be completed by March.

As a result of the pandemic many of Accent's tenants had been badly financially hit. This was illustrated by a severe upturn in the amount of Accent tenants which were on universal credit. Whilst the number of Accent tenants within Surrey Heath on Universal Credit was 96 in February 2020, this number had increased to 670 Accent tenants in December 2020. As a result of economic hardship Accent tenants had also built up larger levels of debt and many had gone into rent arrears. This issue was being proactively tackled by Accent's Income Team in their South Office who were implementing a new rent arrears policy and were aiming to establish a collaborative approach with residents when dealing with arrears.

Arising from Members' comments and questions the following points were noted:

- There was a greater positivity around Accent's maintenance service and Members had noticed a significant reduction in the amount of negative correspondence from Accent residents.
- Accent were ready for the combined negative impacts of the pandemic and Brexit. Accent had been internally modelling the impact of an economic downturn on their future rental income and the amount of their residents in rent arrears. Accent had also ready noticed struggles in obtaining materials needed for maintenance work as a result of Brexit.
- Within Surrey Heath Accent currently had a backlog of 1800 maintenance cases. This was in contrast to a normal run-rate of 600-800 outstanding cases.
- The amount of Accent residents claiming Universal Credit was in line with the 300% increase in Universal Credit applications for Surrey Heath as a whole; and it was reiterated that Accent worked with residents to tackle rent arrears and that eviction was only a last-resort. Accent also worked with organisations such as Citizens Advice Surrey Heath, Step Change, local foodbanks and BESOM in order to refer and signpost residents which were facing hardship.
- Accent had a relative level of financial resilience due to recent bonds which the company had sold and loan facilities which it could easily access.
- Accent were already in conversation with the Council in respect of a parcel of Council-owned land on Sullivan Road which could lead to expansion of its current site on Sullivan Road.

The Committee thanked Rob and Holly for their presentation and answers; and agreed that it would be positive if Accent presented to the Committee again half way through the 2021/22 municipal year.

## **12/EP Citizens Advice Surrey Heath**

The Committee considered a presentation from Citizens Advice Surrey Heath (CASH) in respect of continued work throughout the pandemic and its future challenges.

CASH were committed to continuing to provide an independent, impartial and free service to the residents of Surrey Heath. In addition to this CASH provided governmental organisations, the Council and the third sector, with vital information about its cases, whom accessed their service and about the demographics of the area. Nationally this also allowed the Citizens Advice Bureau to work as a pressure-group lobbying Government.

CASH's core financial funding came from the Council's Revenue Grant Scheme. However the Council highly benefitted from the relationship and certified modelling showed that the public value of CASH's volunteers amounted to £290,000. Whilst CASH had always continued to help Surrey Heath residents with a wide range of issues, statistics had shown that CASH's clients had increasing amounts of issues per person. Whilst in the 2018-19 financial year there was a 3 issues per person average, in the 2019-20 financial year the average amount of issues per CASH client had risen to 4.

After the first peak of the pandemic and a lull in service-uptake in May, CASH resumed select face-to-face appointments for those clients who were unable to access their services via the telephone or internet. The top issues which CASH clients sought advice on were benefits and tax credits, universal credit, debt and housing problems. This was in turn backed up from data from CASH's website where webpages on Furlough, and 'If you can't pay your bills because of Coronavirus', were amongst the most visited pages. Moreover CASH's website saw a 24% rise in overall traffic.

The organisation faced the challenge of being unable to anticipate the demands on their service post pandemic. The pandemic had caused a noticeable reduction in CASH's volunteer advisers and 75% of those whom stayed on chose to volunteer from their homes. Going forward CASH's challenges looked to be around retention of volunteers and around human resourcing; and the organisation was trying hard to manage a constructed approach to recruitment including training and mentoring.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- The Council had the ability to raise awareness in respect of CASH's job vacancies and provide general support to CASH in respect of recruitment issues.
- There were significant numbers of residents who were accessing CASH services for the first time looking to access the benefit system and had fallen on significant hardship for the first time.
- The Council already had significant social media campaigns promoting local services which were available to those in hardship. However there was potential for the Council to provide further social media support to CASH.
- There was potential in the future for the Council and CASH to work in order to develop the organisation's outreach programme post-pandemic.
- CASH were currently able to manage their caseload, as the organisation wasn't currently picking up large amounts of in-person casework. In addition further capacity for CASH was provided by the 24 hour national Citizens

Advice Bureau helpline and CASH worked in close collaboration with Citizens Advice Woking.

The Chairman thanked Kate on behalf of the Committee and reiterated that CASH would have the backing of the Committee if the organisation required any additional support from the Council.

### **13/EP The Hope Hub**

Mags Mercer, Chief Executive Officer, gave an update on the Hope Hub which was a charitable organisation which worked to prevent and end Homelessness within Surrey Heath.

The Hope Hub provided crisis and empowerment services for anyone who was or was at risk of becoming homeless, or whom was struggling with mental health, debt issues and unemployment. This included provision of emergency relief and items and one to one casework support, employment advice; and money and debt advice. The Hope Hub continued to be open throughout during the national lockdowns but had reduced their client-open days to two to three days a week. One to One appointments for clients continued in order to try to house them, the Hope Hub's IT services continued to be utilised and recently a gazebo had allowed refinement of the Hope Hub's hot food offering which had continued all throughout the pandemic.

The Hope Hub had seen a dramatic uptake in its services in comparison to previous financial years; and its service had been accessed 4688 times between April and October which was approximately double the number of times which the Hope Hub's services had been accessed during the same months the year before. There had also been a significant rise in new clients and the amount of clients housed, and food parcels provided.

The Hope Hub had experienced rise in numbers of domestic abuse cases, clients with mental health problems, unemployment and destitution which could be attributed to the pandemic. In addition it was found that the Hope Hub's clients with the most complex issues had regressed whilst working with the Hope Hub during the pandemic.

Despite the pandemic, the Hope Hub's employment support service had managed to get 16 clients into work. Moreover, The Hope Hub was looking to reintroduce its regular employment, living-well, cooking and employment support workshops as soon as possible post pandemic.

Looking forward to the 21-22 financial year, the Hope Hub was aiming for the opening of the emergency night stop accommodation being carried out in partnership with the Council. In addition the charity was aiming to increase its upskilling and social enterprise offering; which would lead to increased training, qualifications and employment opportunities for its clients.

The Hope Hub aimed to continue to work in close partnership with organisations such as Citizens Advice Surrey Heath and Accent Housing, as well as statutory bodies such as the Police and NHS, which had recently worked with the Hope Hub to arrange flu jab access and Hepatitis B screening for clients.

- There was potential for the Hope Hub to apply for significant funding from the Surrey County Council Community Fund for the Hope House project which had significant potential to alleviate homelessness throughout the Borough.
- Since the inception of the Hope Hub a few years ago, the organisation had made significant progress which could be attributed to the people involved.
- It was appreciated that there would be higher numbers of Surrey Heath residents needing the services of the Hope Hub in the coming years.
- The Hope Hub had plans to expand and to recruit a Head of Operations and a Project Officer to look after strategy and future fundraising.
- At present there was significant local authority and governmental funding for the charity sector. However it was suggested that this could possibly dry-up in the future. Although the Hope Hub was aiming to grow its reserves, this could hit other organisations in the charitable sector which would put strain on and lead to increased demand for the Hope Hub's services.
- Councillors were in a great position via social media to relay to their constituents what items the Hope Hub was in need of.
- At least 90% of The Hope Hub's clients were in Surrey Heath residents.

The Committee thanked Mags and her team for attending and the continued outstanding work they undertook within Surrey Heath.

#### **14/EP Catalyst**

Members received a presentation from Jane de la Rosa, Head of Communications and Business support, and Gemma Johnston, Marketing Assistant, in respect of Catalyst and in particular their mental health and well-being community football team, called The Welcome Wizards.

Catalyst was a Surrey-wide charity which provided mental health; and drug and alcohol services in a friendly, accessible and professional way. The organisation also worked in close partnership with the NHS service i-access to provide support for drug and alcohol misuse including recovery support and SMART groups. Catalyst also provided support at Mental Health safe havens which Catalyst helped to support in Aldershot and Woking.

Catalyst had always aimed to provide groups and activities as a way to allow clients to tackle mental health, substance misuse and wellbeing issues which they maybe struggling with. Recently this has included the Welcome Wizards initiative which had expanded pre-pandemic to include two teams in Surrey Heath and a separate team in Elmbridge. The Welcome Wizards was a community football team which aimed to support its players with mental health and wellbeing support.

Whilst the Welcome Wizards were unable to meet during the worst of the pandemic, they continued to meet online and risk assessments had allowed them to meet later on in the year. Whilst numbers of participants would be higher outside of the pandemic, since April the Welcome Wizards had still supported 22 people, including 16 from Surrey Heath.

During the pandemic Catalyst had continued to provide its other support services including via the telephone, online, outreach and some limited face to face work. Online support had included an online platform called the Catalyst BigBlueButton which centralised activities, counselling and family and friends support all in one place.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Members were happy to pledge their support for catalyst and the Welcome Wizards, both in respect of endorsing their grant bids, as well as offering non-financial support.
- There were opportunities for catalyst to bolster their marketing and communications which would in turn make their self-referral routes more accessible.
- Residents did not need to be referred for Catalyst's mental health and wellbeing services by an organisation or General Practitioner. In addition Catalyst aimed for the self-referral process to be quick and simple; which was exemplified in that self-referrals via the phone were always picked up by Catalyst member of staff. During the phone conversation, an online or telephone appointment would be scheduled to allow for a prompt assessment of the client's needs.
- Catalyst always offered their clients a service relative to their need and if their services were unsuitable for a potential client, they would sign post the person in need to other services.
- Like other third-sector organisations, Catalyst experienced a lull in referrals at the start of the first lockdown.
- Catalyst foresaw major challenges in the years ahead. Catalyst had worked closely with Surrey County Council and Surrey Heath CCG who both anticipated a large spike in the demand for mental health services in Surrey Heath in the future. This was coupled with an anticipated contraction in funding in the long term which meant Catalyst was looking to instigate flexibility in its future strategies and fundraising opportunities.

The Committee thanked Jane and Gemma for their informative presentation.

## **15/EP External Partnerships Select Committee 20/21 Work Programme**

The Committee noted its Work Programme for the remainder of the 20/21 municipal year and noted additional plans for the Enterprise M3 to present at the March meeting of the Committee.

Members requested that newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner be invited to present to the Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year and that the Council's representative on the Police and Crime Panel also be asked to attend the meeting.



Chairman

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**Camberley Job Club**

Portfolio	Transformation

**Purpose**

**To receive a presentation from Janet Ward representing the Camberley Job Club**

**Background**

1. This organisation has received revenue funding since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. Its aim is to provide training and support to local people who are unemployed.
2. The ONS Labour Market profile for Surrey Heath shows that from May 2019-June 2020 the local unemployment figures are recorded at 1,300 which equates to 2.8% of the population, compared to 3.4% in the South East and 3.9% in the rest of Great Britain. The NOMIS data for the same period shows the 976 are long-term unemployed and never worked.
3. The unemployment numbers are high for Surrey Heath in comparison with previous years.
4. The Job Club client numbers recorded in September 2020 at 6 were significantly impacted from the Covid Pandemic and the numbers of clients supported in both 2018 and 2019.
5. From April 2021 the club are working to provide a blended support for job seekers using face to face contact and distant support via telephone and video contact. The Job Club is intending to re-open the core activity of its Monday morning drop-in session at High Cross Church where support, and one to one assistance relating to CV writing, and confidence building are provided. The referral method to its service is varied and can be from the Job Centre Plus, churches, and self-referrals.
6. With the increase in unemployment numbers it is anticipated that this voluntary group will be very busy next year providing vital support to those who are vulnerable within our community. The club intends to extend its involvement with young people over the next year.
7. From April to October 20, 53 clients were supported. In November a further 8 clients have been helped virtually.
8. An estimated total number of people, who have found employment through the Club, is estimated to be 10 (YTD) from which, 7 have moved out of the area and 1 has returned to college.

9. The overall costs forecasted for 2021/22 are estimated at £16,000 which will covers the administrator and room hire charges, with other costs linked to the operation. The club has reserves of £3,886.
10. A revenue grant award was agreed at £7,000 to enable the organisation to provide the support needed locally of those who seek work (year starting from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 subject to a service level agreement).

### Recommendation

1. The Committee is asked to consider the presentation in relation to Surrey Heath any future steps which Members would wish to recommend to the Executive and/or Council.

#### Background Papers:

##### Author:

Service Level Agreement 20/21

Jayne Boitout 01276 707464

e-mail: [jayne.boitout@surreyheath.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.boitout@surreyheath.gov.uk)

##### Service Head:

Louise  
Livingston

Executive Head of Transformation

**SURREY HEATH BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT 2020/21**

1	Parties
	<p>“The Council” means Surrey Heath Borough Council.</p> <p>“The Provider” means Camberley and District Job Club.</p>
2	Appointment and Duration
	<p>The Council agrees to grant the Provider funds to deliver the services set out in Section 3 below.</p> <p>The Service will run for 12 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.</p>
3	The Providers Roles and Responsibilities
	<p>The Provider agrees to deliver the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide employment training for those in high need within Surrey Heath, and to work with partners such as JCP to prioritise the support for those who have been unemployed for the longest periods, 6 months and longer, with a progress report to be provided at the end of each quarter.</li> <li>• To provide accurate information on the outcomes of the services provided: numbers of those who have found work, numbers of clients seen, referral information, who, and numbers, with a progress report to be provided at the end of each quarter.</li> <li>• Over the period of this SLA for 70 to find work through this service with CJC providing evidence of this achievement.</li> <li>• For those who represent the organisation to retain a professional standard at all times when working with partners.</li> <li>• Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity.</li> <li>• To work collaboratively with the Hope Hub and CASH and other local groups where work areas overlap.</li> <li>• To complete the newly introduced, monthly annual plan on time.</li> <li>• Maintain accounts, to be reviewed by a qualified auditor as requested by the Council.</li> <li>• To further develop a community fundraising strategy that reduces the financial dependence from the council, specifically this year to source separately the costs to meet the cost of the replacement ICT equipment and the Carers or any other Work Fayre event.</li> <li>• To increase the numbers attending the weekly drop-in sessions on a Monday morning to an average of 22.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be fully inclusive in your service and delivery approach.</li> </ul>
4	The Council's Roles and Responsibilities
	<p>The Council agrees to supply the Provider with the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend meetings of the management group and offer support and guidance when possible.</li> <li>Provide the grant on a quarterly basis in advance as set out in Section 5 on the next page.</li> <li>To help promote the services when possible.</li> </ul>
5	Cost and Funding Arrangements
	<p>The Council has agreed to grant the Provider the following amount for the provision of the services.</p> <p>For the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 = £6,000</p> <p>The grant shall be paid quarterly in advance and on submission of quarterly performance reports by the Provider (e.g. the July-September 2019 payment will be made on receipt of the performance report for January - March 2019).</p>
6	Resolution of Issues
	<p>Either party has a right to terminate this agreement, subject to providing at least six month's written notice.</p> <p>The Council has the right to refuse further payment or request an appropriate amount be returned by the Provider should the Provider fail to deliver the service in a satisfactory manner and/or fails to submit a completed quarterly performance report.</p>

Council Sign Off:

Name: Louise Livingston

Position: Executive Head Transformation

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider Sign Off:

Name: Murray Rowlands

Position: Chairman, Camberley and District Job Club

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Basingstoke Canal Authority**

Portfolio

Transformation

**Purpose**

**To receive a presentation from James Taylor, Strategic Manager representing the Basingstoke Canal Authority.**

**Background**

1. The Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA) manages and maintains the 32 mile long canal which serves Mytchett, Deepcut, and Frimley and Camberley (4.5km of canal is within the borough). The canal is a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) and forms a significant part of the local blue/green infrastructure of the borough, providing recreational benefits to residents such as walking, cycling and kayaking. The canal centre based in Mytchett also acts as a local tourist attraction providing historical interest, events and activities.
2. The BCA works alongside The Basingstoke Canal Society to enable projects on the canal, ranging from new moorings and paths to events and boat rallies. According to the 2011 Census, 85,845 people live within 5 miles of the canal and 700,000 live within a 30 minute drive.
3. People and cycle counters located between the Canal Centre and Frimley Lodge Park show that from 1st April to the 10th Nov 2020, 110,021 people used this area of towpath. This figure is up on previous years, likely due to the increased number of people using the towpath to exercise during lockdown periods. Conversely camp site users and canal centre visitors were around half their usual levels due to the pandemic.
4. The BCA highlight how they meet all of the Council's 4 'P's within the five year strategy, in particular that keeping the canal in good condition fits perfectly with SHBC's 'Place' objective by enhancing and protecting green spaces and encouraging active recreation. The BCA also advise they help keep the borough a safe place to live as they manage water levels to protect residents and regulate use of the Canal by issuing boating, angling and other recreational licences.
5. Other benefits provided include a hugely diverse ecological benefit and a large volunteer programme including over 60 'lengthsmen' walking a section of the canal every week.
6. The BCA is founded on partnership between 9 local authorities including Surrey Heath and is reliant on annual contributions from these partners, although it also supports itself through various income streams. The general reserves for the BCA at 31/3/20 were £697,089, up slightly from £691,509 on 31/3/19, but the impact of the pandemic means a loss of £92,000 is projected

for the year ending March 2021 with a further projected loss of £83,000 to March 2022.

7. In recognition of paragraph 6 above, the Basingstoke Canal Authority is currently one of the ring-fenced organisations under the Council's Revenue Grant Scheme. A grant of £10,000 was approved at the Executive meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 subject to an agreed service level agreement for the year starting 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.
8. Surrey Heath Borough Council has a member on the Basingstoke Canal Authority's Joint Management Committee, which is currently Cllr Sarah Jane Croke.

#### Recommendation

1. The Committee is asked to consider the presentation in relation to Surrey Heath along with any future steps which Members would wish to recommend to the Executive and/or Council.

#### Background Papers:

##### Author:

Service Level Agreement 20/21

Jayne Boitout 01276 707464

e-mail: [jayne.boitout@surreyheath.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.boitout@surreyheath.gov.uk)

##### Service Head:

Louise  
Livingston

Executive Head of Transformation

**Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership**

Portfolio

Transformation

**Purpose**

**To receive a presentation from Steve Bailey representing the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership.**

**Background**

1. The Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (BVCP) restore and manage the Blackwater Valley's Countryside to maximise its value for outdoor recreation, landscape, wildlife and healthy living by involving and co-ordinating the work of local authorities, communities and landowners.
2. BVCP also work with the environment agency to identify improvements to the River Blackwater to reduce the risk of flooding and improve water quality, in addition to working with Surrey CC to improve cycle pedestrian routes in Surrey Heath and the adjacent districts.
3. While it is not possible to count users at every site, BVCP do monitor use with counters on the Blackwater Valley path and major sites, with two counters in Surrey Heath. In September 2020 usage figures were measured at 6,800 visits, but the monthly count during spring lockdown had reached 16,000 with annual use estimated at c. 96,000 visits.
4. BVCP stress that by being able to co-ordinate projects across political boundaries, raise funds and support partners and community organisations to carry out work, a great deal more can be achieved to benefit residents of the Valley than by any one partner working in isolation. If the partnership did not exist, the vast majority of work would still need to be carried out but at each individual partner's expense. BVCP argue that investing in the partnership provides best value for money through economy of scale.
5. In their annual report BVCP advise that their £10,000 contribution this year has enabled them to deliver £39,883 of work in Surrey Heath. The annual report details a number of areas where BVCP has provided valuable support such as improving access (e.g. clearing vegetation at various locations within the borough), engaging the community through tasks such as hedge-laying and litter picking, increasing biodiversity, maintaining areas of greenspace and work on developing new sites.
6. While over £2million has been paid by SHBC in relation to Hawley Meadows SANGS, this money sits with Hampshire County Council to look after the site in perpetuity. Only the interest on this figure can be used by Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership and even then this is restricted to the Hawley Meadows site and can only be spent on items which are classed as above and beyond 'usual' works.

7. The balance on the reserve account at 31/3/20 was £116,813, up slightly from £114,409 on 31/3/19. Funding comes from local authorities and income from site management and project work. As a minimum, a balance equivalent to three months of forecasted operating costs (c. £73k) must be held in reserves should the Partnership ever be wound up.
8. This is one of the ring-fenced organisations under the Council's Revenue Grants Scheme, with £10,000 awarded at the Executive meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> January subject to a service level agreement to start from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

Recommendation

1. The Committee is asked to consider the presentation in relation to Surrey Heath any future steps which Members would wish to recommend to the Executive and/or Council.

Background Papers:

Author:

Service Level Agreement 20/21

Jayne Boitoult 01276 707464

e-mail: [jayne.boitoult@surreyheath.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.boitoult@surreyheath.gov.uk)

Service Head:

Louise Livingston Executive Head of Transformation