

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held at Surrey Heath House on 7
December 2021**

+ Cllr Alan McClafferty (Chairman)

- Cllr Colin Dougan	* Cllr David Mansfield
+ Cllr Shaun Garrett	* Cllr Adrian Page
+ Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans	+ Cllr Robin Perry

+ Present

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

In Attendance: Cllr Peter Barnett, Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Cliff Betton, Cllr Stuart Black, Cllr Paul Deach, Cllr Tim FitzGerald, Cllr Sharon Galliford, Cllr Mark Gordon, Cllr Josephine Hawkins, Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath, Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam, Cllr Morgan Rise, Cllr Pat Tedder, Cllr Victoria Wheeler, Cllr Helen Whitcroft and Cllr Valerie White

71/E Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

72/E Questions by Members

No questions were received for members of the Executive.

73/E Review of parking fees and charges

The Executive received a report proposing a review of car parking tariffs and parking season tickets in the Council's car parks. Having received feedback from Members, it was agreed to defer the item for further consideration of the implications of the proposals, including the impact on residents and businesses, on-street parking, and footfall, along with the implications of not implementing the proposed changes. This would also provide time to consult with relevant parties.

RESOLVED to defer consideration of the item.

74/E The Publication of a First Homes Interim Guidance Note

The Executive was informed that changes to the Planning Practice Guidance, which would have effect from 28 June 2021, included the introduction of First Homes. First Homes was a specific form of discounted market sale housing that would be available to first time buyers and sold at a minimum discount of 30% below the market value, with a maximum price of £250,000 at the first sale after the discount was applied; the discount would be retained in perpetuity through a restriction on the Land Registry title. The Policy set out that, for planning applications determined after 28 December 2021, at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered through developer contributions must be First Homes.

Members were advised that policies within the new Local Plan would reflect the requirement for First Homes; however as the new Local Plan was not due to be adopted until 2023, it was considered appropriate to publish an Interim Guidance Note. This would make the requirements for First Homes clear to developers and could be in place prior to the requirement for First Homes taking effect for schemes granted permission after 28 December 2021.

It was reported that the main implication of the introduction of First Homes was that the delivery of other forms of affordable housing, including affordable home ownership products such as shared ownership, would be impacted. In accordance with Government Guidance, once the 25% of First Homes was accounted for, social rent should be delivered in the same percentage as set out in the Local Plan and the remainder of the affordable housing tenures should be delivered in line with the proportions set out in the Local Plan Policy. Members noted how this would apply in relation to the Council's adopted affordable housing policy.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the update to National Planning Practice Guidance and the introduction of First Homes be noted;**
- (ii) the publication of the First Homes Guidance Note, as attached at Annex A to the agenda report, including the local connection criteria for determining eligibility of purchasers be agreed; and**
- (iii) the potential resource implications of First Homes be noted.**

75/E Calculation and setting of the Council Tax Base for 2022/23

The Executive received a report on the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2022/23, which included 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. Members noted that there had been an increase in the Tax Base of 165.61.

Technical changes to Council Tax introduced from April 2013 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. It was proposed that, with effect from 1 April 2022, the Empty Homes Premium was introduced at the maximum levels allowed in the legislation. This would result in a 100% charge on full amount of rates payable after 2 years of a property being empty. From 2022, this would also result in a premium of 200% where the property had been empty for 5 years and a premium of 300%, where the property had been empty for 10 years or more.

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 Executive was reminded that the scheme for working age claimants adopted by the Council was currently under review.

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 money had subsequently been included within the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) but, as the Council's RSG was now zero, it was reasonable to assume that this funding had been withdrawn.

Despite not receiving any funding from Government the Council recognised the impact the LCTSS had on parishes and in the spirit of partnership and supporting parishes had continued to compensate parishes for some of their loss. It was therefore proposed that for 2022/23 the compensation given to parishes remained unchanged from 2021/22.

RESOLVED

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

Band D Equivalent Properties

Bisley	1,658.21
Chobham	2,075.35
Frimley and Camberley	24,626.69
West End	2,393.10
Windlesham	8,222.82
Surrey Heath Borough Council	38,976.17

- (ii) that £19,943.44 be given to Parishes in 2022/23 to offset the effect on the tax base of the Local Council Tax Support scheme;
- (iii) that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Surrey Heath Borough Council as its Tax Base for the year 2022/23 shall be 38,976.17 Band 'D' properties.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that

- (i) with effect from 1 April 2022 the Empty Homes Premium is introduced at the maximum levels allowed in the legislation where the property has been empty for 2, 5 or 10 more years as detailed in paragraph 7; and
- (ii) the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy remains unchanged for 2022/23, and the fund available remain at £80,000.

76/E Mid-Year Performance Report - 2021/22

The Executive considered the Council's performance at 30 September 2021 and noted comments made by the Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED to note the mid-year performance report.

77/E Council's Finances as at 30 September 2021

The Executive noted the Council's financial position at 30 September 2021.

The Finance Portfolio Holder undertook to respond to a question from Councillor Sashi Mylvaganam concerning variances within Investment and Development's budgets and the reference the Jersey Property Unit Trust.

RESOLVED to note the Council's finances as at 30 September 2021.

78/E Capital Programme Monitoring 2021/22

The Executive considered a report detailing the expenditure associated with the various projects included within the 2021/22 capital programme, between the period of 1 April and 30 September 2021. Members also noted the projects that were no longer taking place and would need to be removed from the capital programme going forward, along with a number that would need to be re-phased to 2022/23 due to delays in the projects starting in the current year.

RESOLVED to note the spend on the capital programme for the period 1 April to 30 September 2021.

79/E Urgent Action

The Executive noted Urgent Action taken in respect of a government grant scheme to provide additional funding to target financial support for vulnerable households over the winter months, known as the Household Support Grant. The new grant would run until 31 March 2022.

RESOLVED to note the urgent action taken under the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Officers.

80/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)
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81/E	3
82/E	3

Note: Minutes 81/E is a summary of matters considered in Part II of the agenda, the minutes of which it is considered should remain confidential at the present time.

81/E Arrears Strategy

The Executive considered a report on the strategy for addressing rental arrears for national multiple retailers, which reflected the Government's evolving legislative and arbitration framework for Covid related arrears.

82/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 report associated with minute 81/E remain exempt for the present time, with any future release of information authorised following review by the Chief Executive and Head of Legal Services.

Chairman