

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held at Council Chamber, Surrey Heath
House, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15
3HD on 12 September 2018**

+ Cllr Moira Gibson (Chairman)

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

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

In Attendance: Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Bill Chapman, Cllr Edward Hawkins, Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper, Cllr Robin Perry, Cllr Ian Sams and Cllr Valerie White

21/E Minutes

The open and exempt minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

22/E Camberley Multi-story Car Parks Tariff Review

The Executive received a report proposing increases to the tariffs for the Council's multi-storey car parks in Camberley Town Centre: Main Square Car Park and Knoll Road Car Park. Charges had not been increased since 2014 and the proposed charges reflected the 9% increase in inflation since the last increase to tariffs.

The Executive was reminded that the car parks were often the first impression that visitors had of a town and that maintaining them to a high standard required regular and significant investment. It was noted that, since 2014, over £800,000 had been spent on improving the car parks; this had included the introduction of a ticketless ANPR system, refurbishing stair cores and lifts, resurfacing of floors including the provision of wider spaces, and replacing the lighting with energy efficient LED lighting.

Members were informed that the funding of these improvement works over a 25 year period would cost the Council approximately £90,000 per year. The proposed tariff increase, which was estimated could generate an additional £170,000 per annum, would be used to cover this cost as well as fund further enhancements.

It was suggested by some Members that it was not an appropriate time to increase charges due to the current uncertainty in retail, including recent uncertainty concerning the town's anchor store. Members also noted that footfall was currently down in the Town Centre, although it was advised that this could have been attributed to the above average weather that summer and there was evidence that

footfall was increasing again. It was therefore proposed that the charges be reviewed in 12 months' time when the retail position was better known. A further proposal was made that the increases should be introduced once the current schedule of car park works was completed.

The Executive endorsed the proposal for up to 100 discounted season tickets of £150 per annum to be made available for Camberley Town Centre workers earning the living wage or below; the tickets would be available on a first-come, first served basis and would require the applicant to provide a copy of a payslip or a letter from their employer as proof of earnings.

Whilst it was agreed not to amend the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Officers to enable automatic inflationary increases to tariffs in line with inflation, Members supported a biennial review of the charges by the Executive to ensure that charges remained at the right level.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the car parking tariffs, as set out at Annex 1 to the agenda report, be agreed, to come into effect after the completion of the works detailed in paragraph 1.3 of the agenda report and following the statutory Traffic Regulatory Order process; and**
- (ii) subsidised annual permits of £150 per annum be made available for Camberley Town Centre workers earning the living wage or below.**

23/E Out of Town Pay & Display Car Park Tariff Review

The Executive received a report proposing changes to the charging regime at Bagshot, Burrell Road, Chobham and Watchetts Road car parks. Car parking tariffs in these out of town car parks had not been reviewed since 2009. At present the operation and maintenance of these car parks was subsidised by approximately £50,000 per annum, after deducting charges.

The proposed tariffs had been increased to reflect the 27.5% increase in inflation since 2009 and also included the introduction of a 40p tariff for the first 2 hours' stay, which had previously been free. In recognition that a number of local businesses depended on short "stop and shop" visits by customers, it was proposed to make available 8 free of charge 30 minute parking spaces for short stay use in each car park.

The Executive considered the loss of the 2 hours free parking and the introduction of the 30 free bays. It was suggested that 30 minutes was not sufficient time to visit the shops and amenities in any of the affected areas and that the proposed charging policy could have a detrimental impact upon the local businesses. Members also suggested that the 2 hours free parking helped maintain a turnover in the car parks, thereby supporting the shops' trade. In addition, concerns were raised that losing the 2 hours free parking would have a detrimental impact on those dependent on it for visiting doctors' surgeries and other healthcare services.

Whilst the Executive supported the review of the charging regime by Members biennially, it was felt that tariffs should remain the same for the present time.

Members noted that discussions had previously taken place with some of the Parish Councils concerning opportunities for them to take over the management of the car parks in their parish areas and agreed to ask officers to make further enquiries on this matter with all of the Parish Councils.

RESOLVED not to amend the current car parking tariffs at Bagshot, Burrell Road, Chobham, and Watchetts Road car parks.

24/E Council Tax and Housing Benefits - Application of Civil Penalties

The Executive considered a report requesting the introduction of a policy for imposing Council Tax and Housing Benefit civil penalties.

Members were informed that legislation allowed for civil penalties to be imposed for failing to give accurate information or for failing to advise of a change in circumstances in relation to any Council Tax discount, exemption or Council Tax Reduction Scheme. It also allowed for civil penalties to be imposed in relation to Housing Benefit where a person had been negligent in the information they had provided, or where a person has failed without reasonable excuse to inform the Council about a change in their circumstances. There was, however, currently no legislative provision for penalties to be applied in respect of Business Rates.

The introduction of the civil penalties was intended to provide an incentive for people to provide accurate and timely information which would ensure that they pay the correct amount of Council Tax and receive the correct level of support or Housing Benefit.

The Executive was informed that before imposing a civil penalty, consideration would be given as to whether a person was considered to be vulnerable and therefore whether a civil penalty was appropriate.

Whilst it was emphasised that penalties would only be imposed in cases of intent, concerns were expressed that some of the wording in the policy could be open to interpretation and it was suggested that the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Frontline should be consulted before its adoption. It was therefore agreed to authorise the Executive Head of Finance to finalise the wording following consultation with the CAB and Frontline and thereafter implement the Policy.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the adoption of the policy for imposing Council Tax and Housing Benefit Civil Penalties, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, be agreed in principle;**
- (ii) the finalisation of the wording of the policy be delegated to the Executive Head of Finance following consultation with the Citizens Advice Bureau and Frontline; and**

- (iii) **a report on the application of the policy be brought to the Executive following a year of its operation.**

25/E Response to the Government Funding Review

The Executive considered a draft response to the Government's consultation on the 2019/20 Local Government settlement. It was agreed to make a minor amendment to the final sentence in response to Question 1 by replacing the reference to 'land' with 'infrastructure'. It was also agreed to expand the response to Question 2 to provide examples of social cares services provided by district councils.

RESOLVED to agree the Council's response to the 2019-2020 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation Paper, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, as amended.

26/E Council Finances as at 30 June 2018

The Executive received a report summarising the Council's finances at 30 June 2018.

The report requested authority to add 2 revenue items to the 2018/19 budget relating to carry forwards that had not been on the carry forward list approved by the Executive at its meeting on 17 July 2018. The requested budget carry forwards were £90,000 for Swift Lane and £31,000 for Chobham flood reserve.

The Executive also considered a request to add 2 projects to the 2018/19 capital programme, as follows:

- **Playground refurbishment at Evergreen Road** - cost £10k The first project was the refurbishment of the playground equipment at Evergreen Road at a cost of £10k, to be funded by Community Infrastructure levy (CIL) monies.
- **Play Area and Path Link on land north of the Ridgewood Centre** – the projected related to a residential development of 100 dwellings on land at the Ridgewood Centre. The developer had provided a contribution of £70k to secure a footpath between the site and the highway network to the north across council owned land; the remainder of the funding was to provide improvements to the existing play area on Council owned land.

It was reported that applications had been invited from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for groups of councils to become Business Rates pilots for 2019/20. As the deadline for applications was soon it was agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Head of Finance to complete and submit the application on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED that

- (i) **the financial position at 30 June 2018 be noted;**

- (ii) **£90,000 for Swift Lane and £31,000 for Chobham flood reserve be added to the 2018/19 revenue budget; and**
- (iii) **the completion and submission of an application for Surrey Heath to be part of a Surrey Business Rates pilot and/or pool for 2019/20 be delegated to the Executive Head of Finance.**

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the 2018/19 capital programme be amended to include £10k for the playground refurbishment at Evergreen Road and £70k for Local Equipped area of play on land north of the Ridgewood Centre.

27/E Annual Report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators for 2017/18

The Executive received a report detailing the authority's treasury management performance during the year as well demonstrating compliance with the 2017/18 Prudential Indicators.

RESOLVED to note the report on Treasury Management including compliance with the 2017/18 Prudential Indicators.

28/E Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Regulation 5 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 Act as set out below:

Minute	Paragraph(s)
21/E (part)	3
29/E	3
30/E	3
31/E	3

Note: Minute 29/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.

29/E Property Acquisition

The Executive made decisions in relation to the acquisition of property in support of the ongoing provision of local services and to assist employment and economic development in the drive to work area.

30/E Urgent Action

The Executive noted Urgent Action which had been taken in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Officers.

31/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 29/E and the associated agenda report remain exempt for the present time, but the decision be made public following the completion of negotiations; and**
- (ii) the Urgent Action reported at minute 30E remain exempt for the present time.**

Chairman