

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held at Council Chamber, Surrey Heath
House, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15
3HD on 11 December 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

In Attendance: Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper and Cllr Chris Pitt

48/E Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

49/E Questions by Members

The Leader received a question from Councillor Rodney Bates regarding consultation and communication with the Council by Surrey Police on the recent use of exclusion zones within the borough. The Chief Executive undertook to write to the Neighbourhood Inspector to ensure that the normal procedures regarding consulting with this Council would be followed in future.

50/E Air Quality Feasibility Study

The Executive considered a report seeking approval of the Outline Business Case to implement measures to improve air quality on the A331 (Blackwater Valley Relief Road) and comply with the accompanying Ministerial Direction.

Members were reminded that in July 2017 the Government had published the National Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide (the Plan). The Plan set out how it would ensure compliance with air quality limits in the shortest possible time. A key part of the Plan was a requirement on some Local Authorities to undertake feasibility studies to explore a range of measures to improve air quality. The Plan had identified a straight-line exceedance on a short section of the A331, Blackwater Valley Relief Road, within the Borough of Surrey Heath as having predicted exceedances of the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive limits of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂).

A Blackwater Valley Partnership had been formed with Guildford, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Councils, who had been named in the Plan in relation to the A331, along with the respective highways authorities of Surrey and Hampshire County Councils, in order to produce a Feasibility Study to reduce roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the shortest possible time. Highways England was also a

partner, along with Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The Partnership had been awarded a grant from the JAQU Early Measures fund to implement a scheme to improve air quality on the A331. Vehicles exiting the A331 were caught in congestion on the south eastern approach to Bradford's roundabout, with vehicles currently queuing back approximately 60 metres from the roundabout at peak times. The scheme sought to provide improvement by creating a third lane on the northern side of the eastern arm of Bradford's roundabout, within the existing grass verge. This additional lane would provide additional capacity for traffic entering the roundabout and wishing to proceed to the west or north, or back to the A331 to the east, thereby reducing the amount of time vehicles were idling and improving flows from the northern section of the A331 onto the local highway network.

Members were apprised of the measures proposed to improve air quality along the section of the A331. The Partnership had identified one single feasible option: a 50mph speed limit for a stretch of the A331 in the areas of Rushmoor Borough and Surrey Heath Borough. The stretch of road currently had a speed limit of 70mph. The Partnership's Technical Group considered the preferred measure to be the only solution due to the uniqueness of the straight-line exceedance in this location.

Members expressed concerns about the proposal to reduce the speed limit, particularly in view of the recent advice that the speed limit would not be enforced by Hampshire Police. It was, however, recognised that this had been identified as the only feasible option. It was agreed to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner expressing concerns about the proposed lack of enforcement on the stretch of road.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Outline Business Case (OBC) to date and the preferred option of a 50mph speed limit on a section of the A331, as set out in the OBC annexed to the agenda report, be endorsed; and**
- (ii) the Executive Head of Community, in consultation with the Environment & Health Portfolio Holder, be authorised to**
 - a) make any minor amendments to the Outline Business Case;**
 - b) submit the Outline Business Case to the Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) at The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) by the 31 December 2018; and**
 - c) submit the Full Business Case to the Joint Air Quality Unit.**

51/E Council Tax Base and Review of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme

The Executive received a report on the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2019/20 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 513.8 which would generate an additional income of £115,000 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 the proposal to introduce a relief for 2019/20 in respect of Young People who have left care and indicated support for this initiative.

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.

Given the imminent introduction of Universal Credit to some claimants, the Executive recognised the recommendation that the scheme remained unchanged at present until the full impact of this could be assessed

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.

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 money had subsequently been included within the revenue support grant (RSG), but as the Council's RSG is now zero it was reasonable to assume that this funding has 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 the 2019/20 the compensation given to parishes remained unchanged from 2018/19.

RESOLVED

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

	Band D Equivalent Properties
Bisley	1640.07
Chobham	2005.58
Frimley and Camberley	24,103.84
West End	2,189.73
Windlesham	8,115.20
Surrey Heath Borough Council	38,054.42

- (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 2019/20;**
- (iii) **that £19,943.44 be given to Parishes in 2019/20 to offset the effect on the tax base of the Local Council Tax Support scheme; and**
- (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 2019/20;**
- (ii) **the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy remains unchanged for 2019/20;**
- (iii) **from 1st April 2019 young people who have left care (care leavers) will receive a full reduction from Council Tax until their 25th birthday;**
- (iv) **authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Finance 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 / Universal Credit changes introduced by legislation; and**

- (v) **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.**

52/E Response to Woking Borough Council's Site Allocations Development Plan Document Regulation 19 Publication

The Executive reviewed a draft response to Woking Borough Council's draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

RESOLVED that

- (i) **the letter at Annex 1 of the agenda report be agreed as the Council's formal response to the Woking Site Allocations Development Plan Document; and**
- (ii) **that the matters raised through Surrey Heath's response be addressed through ongoing Duty to Cooperate between Surrey Heath and Woking Councils.**

53/E Response to Surrey County Council consultations

The Executive considered draft responses to Surrey County Council consultations on the following areas:

- Family Resilience and Children's Centres
- Concessionary bus travel
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Libraries and Cultural Services
- Community Recycling Centres

Arising from the discussions on Surrey County Council's proposals, it was agreed to amend the draft response to include the following points:

- Concern about how the proposals would impact upon minority groups and the need to complete Equality Impact Assessments
- Concern that the proposals for closing recycling centres, in particular those in Farnham and Bagshot, would heavily impact on the use of Camberley recycling centre
- Concern that the proposals for closing recycling centres would increase fly tipping
- Concern about the lack of data and statistical information included in some aspects of the consultation
- In relation to the SEND consultation, the importance for families dealing with multiple agencies to work with a single point of contact
- A general comment that, whilst this Council recognised the need for the County Council to make savings, it considered that the proposals were the wrong way to address its financial position.

RESOLVED that the draft response to the 5 Surrey Council consultations, as amended, be agreed as the Council's response.

54/E Economic Development Annual Report 2018

The Executive considered a report detailing the economic growth in the borough over the previous 12 months, plus the activities being undertaken by the Economic Development team to benefit the businesses and the community in Surrey Heath.

It was noted that the Kevin Cantlon Shopfront Scheme was to be reviewed and a business case was being put together to widen the use of the fund.

Members were informed that a full review of the Economic Development Strategy would be undertaken over the next 12 months.

RESOLVED to note the annual Economic Development update.

55/E Council Finances as at 30 September 2018

The Executive noted the Council's financial position at 30 September 2018.

RESOLVED to note the Council's finances at 30 September 2018.

56/E Treasury Management Mid-year Report for 2018/19

The Executive noted the performance of the Treasury Management Service performance for 2018/19, as at 30th September 2018. The report also illustrated the compliance to-date with the Treasury Management Indicators for 2018/19

RESOLVED to note the Treasury Management Mid-year Report 2018/19.

57/E Executive Working Group Notes

The Executive received the notes of Executive Working Group meetings which had taken place in the previous 9 months.

RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Executive Working Group meetings.

58/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 notes of the Executive Working Group meetings received by the Executive on 11 December 2018 be made public.

Chairman