

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held at Surrey Heath House on 17
December 2019**

+ Cllr Richard Brooks (Chairman)

+ Cllr Dan Adams	+ Cllr Josephine Hawkins
+ Cllr Vivienne Chapman	+ Cllr Charlotte Morley
+ Cllr Paul Deach	+ Cllr Adrian Page

+ Present

In Attendance: Cllr Graham Alleway, Cllr Peter Barnett, Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Tim FitzGerald, Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath, Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam and Cllr Graham Tapper

58/E Minutes

The open and exempt minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

59/E Questions by Members

No questions were received from Members.

60/E Community Infrastructure Levy

The Council had been collecting Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding since the Charging Schedule had come into effect on 1 December 2014. The CIL Regulations required the Council, as the collecting authority, to pay money over to the parishes, decide how to use the Fund, and to publish details of its CIL income and expenditure.

The Council had received a total of £1,299,716.825 for the reporting period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019. The Executive was advised that monies due to parishes for the reporting period had been as follows:

- Chobham - £696.30
- West End - £194,800.00
- Windlesham - £20,408.77

Members discussed the Executive's decision in 2015 to invite ward councillors in non-parished areas to submit suggestions for projects in their areas to be funded from the 15% of CIL collected in those areas; this had been introduced in order for non-parished areas to be treated equitably with the parished areas.

It was recognised that some areas of the borough, including the parished areas, were being impacted by high levels of development and it was agreed that there was a need to ensure a fair allocation of CIL across the borough. The Executive therefore agreed that all ward councillors would be asked to submit suggestions for identified infrastructure needs and enhancements within their ward.

It was noted that new amendments to the CIL regulations had been introduced in September 2019 requiring an Infrastructure Funding Statement to replace the Section 123 List. The regulations introduced a requirement for councils to publish "infrastructure funding statements". These statements would replace existing Regulation 123 lists. Councils will be required to publish their first statements by 31 December 2020.

RESOLVED

- (i) to note the CIL monies received;**
- (ii) that all ward councillors be asked to submit the identified infrastructure needs and enhancements within their ward to accommodate new residents and meet the Council's adopted environmental objectives; and**
- (iii) that the remaining CIL contributions held by the Council be retained for spending to support key priorities.**

61/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 471 which would generate an additional income of £103,000 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 considered and supported the proposal to remove the 28 day Council Tax discount for an empty unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties. It was noted that Surrey County Council had stated that any additional income generated by the reduction in empty property relief normally due to them would be returned to Districts to support community services. The 28 day unoccupied and substantially unfurnished discount was currently worth approximately £190,000.

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.

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 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 2020/21 the compensation given to parishes remained unchanged from 2019/20.

The Executive agreed that the LCTSS and Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy should remain unchanged in 2020/21; however, it was agreed that a review of both those schemes would be undertaken over the next 12 months.

RESOLVED

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

Band D Equivalent Properties			
Bisley			1,676.50
Chobham			2,058.83
Frimley and Camberley			24,283.22
West End			2,313.69
Windlesham			8,193.62
Surrey Heath Borough Council			38.525.86

- (ii) **that £19,943.44 be given to Parishes in 2020/21 to offset the effect on the tax base of the Local Council Tax Support scheme; and**

- (iii) that the final setting of the Tax Base be delegated to the Executive Head of Finance.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that

- (i) the 28 day Council Tax discount for an empty unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property be removed for these properties using the freedoms given in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and relevant statutory instruments;
- (ii) the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Surrey Heath, approved by Council on 22 January 2013, remain unchanged for 2020/21;
- (iii) the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy remain unchanged for 2020/21;
- (iv) a review of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Surrey Heath and the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy be undertaken over the next 12 months;
- (v) 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
- (vi) incomes and applicable amounts and non-dependant deductions be uprated in line with the percentages and amounts supplied by DWP and DCLG, and applied to Housing Benefit claims.

62/E Council Finances at 30 September 2019

The Executive received a report summarising the Council's finances at *** 2019.

The report requested authority to add 3 projects to the 2019/20 capital programme, as follows:

- £50k – Obelisk and Camberley Park improvements
- £20k - Pennypot Lane Culvert Works

RESOLVED to note the report.

RECOMMENDED to Council the additions to the 2019/20 capital programme, as set out in the agenda report.

63/E Treasury Management Mid-year Report for 2019/20

The Executive noted the performance of the Treasury Management Service performance for 2019/20, as at 30 September 2019. The report also illustrated the compliance to-date with the Treasury Management Indicators for 2019/20

RESOLVED to note the report.

64/E Repurposing of the Ground Floor of Ashwood House

The Executive agreed to defer consideration of this item.

65/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)
58/E (part)	3
66/E	3
67/E	3

Note: Minute 66/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.

66/E Letting: Ashwood House, Unit 4, 15 Princess Way, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3SP

The Executive made decisions in relation to granting a new lease for Unit 4, Ashwood House, 15 Princess Way, Camberley.

67/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 minute 66/E and the associated agenda report remain exempt until the completion of lease negotiations.

Chairman