

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive  
held at Surrey Heath House on 6  
January 2015**

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+ Cllr Moira Gibson (Chairman)

|                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| + Cllr Richard Brooks       | + Cllr Colin Dougan     |
| + Cllr Keith Bush           | + Cllr Craig Fennell    |
| + Cllr Mrs Vivienne Chapman | + Cllr Charlotte Morley |

+ Present

In Attendance: Cllr David Allen, Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Chris Pitt and Cllr Valerie White

**84/E Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 2 December 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**85/E The Council Tax Base and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

The Executive received a report on the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2015/16 which reviewed the changes to Council Tax made in 2013/14 and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme introduced in April 2013.

Members noted that there had been an increase in the tax base of 363.47 which would generate an additional income of £70,000.

It was reported that in the past year 96 properties had been brought back into occupation, which would contribute towards the New Homes Bonus.

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 allowed the Council to make a number of changes to the discounts and exemptions as well as introduce a premium for long term empty properties.

The Executive was reminded that government funding for the LCTSS had been insufficient to pay the full cost of granting all claimants a 100% discount. It had, therefore, been decided, to avoid the cost falling on local council tax payers, to set the discount level at 70% for working age claimants, subject to a number of specific exemptions for defined vulnerable groups. Members were advised of the exemptions set in 2014/15. It was proposed that no changes be made to these exemptions in 2015/16.

In 2013/14 the Government had provided a specific grant of £419,000 to compensate the Council for the loss of income from the LCTSS. However, in 2014/15 this grant had been included within the Council's overall revenue support grant and in 2015/16 it would not be separately identifiable. It was anticipated that the loss of income to the Council would amount to £384,000.

In 2013/14 the Parish Councils had been paid £22,923 to compensate for the effects of the LCTSS. In 2014/15 the Grant had been provided but the Council had agreed to reduce the parish element by 13% in line with the overall reduction in funding received by this Council. Given that a reduction in funding had been made in 2014/15, it was agreed that no further reduction be made in 2015/16 and it be reviewed again in 2016/17.

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.

### **RESOLVED**

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

|                                     | <b>Band D Equivalent Properties</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Bisley</b>                       | <b>1,507.32</b>                     |
| <b>Chobham</b>                      | <b>1,922.82</b>                     |
| <b>Frimley and Camberley</b>        | <b>23,125.93</b>                    |
| <b>West End</b>                     | <b>1,997.80</b>                     |
| <b>Windlesham</b>                   | <b>8,046.62</b>                     |
| <b>Surrey Heath Borough Council</b> | <b>36,600.49</b>                    |

- (ii) to note that the changes to Council Tax discounts made by the Executive on 7 January 2014 under the freedoms given in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and relevant statutory instruments remain unchanged for 2015/16;
- (iii) that £19,943 be given to Parishes in 2015/16 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 that**

- (i) the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Surrey Heath, approved by Council on 22 January 2013, remains unchanged for 2015/16.
- (ii) the Executive Head of Finance be authorised 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 changes introduced by legislation; and

- (iii) **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.**

**86/E Draft Camberley Town Centre Masterplan and Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document**

The Executive was reminded that the Council had adopted the Camberley Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) in July 2014. The AAP identified a number of opportunity areas and sites which could come forward for development.

The Camberley Town Centre Masterplan and Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would add detail to the opportunity areas and sites identified in the AAP. The SPD would help ensure that development which took place had a positive impact on the town centre. The SPD would;

- Add detail to the guidance set out in the AAP
- Establish key parameters for each development site
- Set out development briefs for each development site
- Establish a clear concept design for the town centre's public realm
- Establish parameters for public realm improvements, identify costs and indicate a preferred palette of materials to be used
- Outline improvements for which developer contributions will be sought.
- Identify options for varying degrees of pedestrianisation of the High Street

The consultation on the draft SPD would be carried out for a period of at least 4 weeks.

**RESOLVED that the consultation on the draft Camberley Town Centre Masterplan and Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document be carried out for a period of at least 4 weeks.**

**87/E Surrey Heath Local Development Framework - Authorities Monitoring Report 2013/14**

The Surrey Heath Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR) had been produced in line with the requirements set out in the Localism Act 2011, which continued to require a report to be produced and planning authorities to publish this information direct to the public at least yearly. The AMR monitored the period from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

The purpose of the AMR was to provide details of actions taken to implement a Local Development Plan and the Local Development Scheme, to indicate the extent to which policies in the current Surrey Heath Local Plan had been achieved, and to identify any solutions and changes where targets were not being met.

**RESOLVED that the Surrey Heath Local Plan Authorities Monitoring Report be approved for the purpose of making the document publically available at the Council offices and on the Council's website.**

**88/E Draft Bagshot Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Document**

Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 required local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals document for the Bagshot Village Conservation Area had been prepared, which would replace the Bagshot Village Conservation Area Statement (1997). The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals document defined the Conservation Area's unique character and identified opportunities for positive change. It was also proposed that the boundary of the designated Conservation Area be revised to incorporate a small outbuilding at 3a Half Moon Street.

A six week public consultation would be undertaken in respect of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals document and the proposed extension to the boundary of the conservation area to incorporate 3a Half Moon Street. The consultation would be targeted at Bagshot residents and businesses, and all specific consultation bodies and heritage bodies with an interest in Surrey Heath.

**RESOLVED that the consultation on the draft Bagshot Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals document and the proposed alteration to the Bagshot Village Conservation Area boundary be carried out for a period of up to six weeks.**

**89/E Response to Surrey County Council Local Transport Review**

Surrey County Council was carrying out a Local Transport Review, the purpose of which was to make savings whilst maintaining the services which residents most relied upon. The County Council was carrying out a consultation on this review. The Review could have implications for bus services, including community transport, for residents and businesses in Surrey Heath. The Local Transport Review focused on the following aspects:

- The County Council's subsidy of all local bus services.
- The provision of community transport in the county, and how this could be made more commercial.
- County Council-funded discretionary concessions:
- Free travel for disabled persons pass holders at all times (the statutory requirement is between 9.30am and 11.00pm Monday-Friday and all day at weekends and on public holidays).
- Companion passes issued to qualifying Surrey residents (already disabled or older person's bus pass holders) who cannot travel without assistance, enabling free travel for a friend, carer or relative.

Members noted a draft consultation response which had been prepared and suggested a number of amendments should be made, including:

- expanding the reference to bus services in rural areas by emphasising the value of these services and requesting the relevant borough councillors' involvement in any discussions on services changes;
- adding representations about concerns in relation to charging for companion passes;
- expanding the representation on seeking assurance that the Review would not negatively affect the regeneration of Camberley Town Centre; and
- removing reference to Route 1, as it was a commercial service.

It was agreed that the response should be amended to incorporate these points.

It was also agreed that all councillors would be invited to submit views on how any proposed changes would affect their ward; these views would be appended to the consultation response.

**RESOLVED that**

- (a) the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader and Regulatory Portfolio Holder, be authorised to respond to the consultation, taking into account the matters raised at the meeting; and**
- (b) all councillors be invited, within the next 7 days, to submit their views on how any changes would affect their wards, to be incorporated into the Council's response.**

**90/E Revenue Grants to Voluntary Organisation 2015/16**

The Council funded a number of voluntary organisations which either worked in partnership with the Council or performed functions on the Council's behalf. The allocation for these grants in 2014/15 had been £127,470 for community organisations and £24,900 for leisure organisations, totalling £152,370.

The Executive received a breakdown of the funding requests compared to the grant awarded in 2014/15, the percentage of funding requested against annual running costs where appropriate and the in-kind support given to the organisations by the Council.

Members were reminded that the Executive had decided to defer a grant for the 2014/15 year to Surrey Heath Age Concern (SHAC) pending further discussions between the Council and the Trustees. It was reported that positive progress had been made, including the appointment of a new manager. In the past there had been a focus on the provision of the Tea Rooms based in Camberley Town Centre, but it was felt there was a need to focus on developing the visiting and befriending service. A new Service Level Agreement was proposed that:

- strengthened the visiting and befriending service;
- secured additional funding from other key agencies;
- enhanced the skills of the Board of Trustees; and increases volunteer numbers

It was proposed that a grant of £10,000 be awarded to SHAC for 2015/16, but that no retrospective grant be awarded for 2014/15.

The Executive was informed that The Butts Bisley Centre had closed in July 2014, with existing clients being offered places at Tringhams Centre in West End. From September 2014, Tringhams had been providing an additional day's service at the Butts Centre in Bisley.

It was recommended to increase the grant to Tringhams in 2015/16 by £4,000 to £19,000, acknowledging the increase in service provision. This proposal also took into account the pledge from the Butts to contribute any unspent money to Tringhams.

**RESOLVED to allocate revenue grants for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 as follows:**

| <u>Organisation</u>                              | <u>£</u>      |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Surrey Heath Citizens Advice</b>              | <b>80,000</b> |
| <b>Voluntary Support North Surrey</b>            | <b>24,970</b> |
| <b>Surrey Heath Age Concern</b>                  | <b>10,000</b> |
| <b>Tringhams, West End</b>                       | <b>19,000</b> |
| <b>Basingstoke Canal Authority</b>               | <b>10,000</b> |
| <b>Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership</b> | <b>10,000</b> |
| <b>Surrey Heath Sports Council</b>               | <b>3,500</b>  |
| <b>Surrey Heath Arts Council</b>                 | <b>1,400</b>  |

Note 1: In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor Charlotte Morley declared a non-pecuniary interest as she was the Treasurer of Surrey Heath Sports Council.

**91/E Reference from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor David Allen introduced a reference from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee which set out the recommendations it had made at its meeting on 5 November 2014.

The Committee had recommended that the Council's Treasury Strategy be amended to permit investment in BBB+ rated British banks and building societies for a maximum of 100 days. This recommendation had been made on the advice of the Council's Treasury Management Consultants, Arling Close, to ensure that money could still be placed with the Council's bankers should they be downgraded.

The Executive considered the Committee's suggestion that a meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Working Group, or a sub group thereof, be scheduled to urgently focus upon property acquisition options, including those that would deliver economic development. However, it was felt that there was sufficient

focus on this area of work and it was therefore agreed that meetings of the Working Group would be scheduled if it was considered necessary.

Councillor Allen reported that a Member Panel on Grants had investigated the principal areas where the Council could obtain grants. The Panel had identified that grants were predominantly available in the area of health, fitness and outdoor activity and had proposed 2 areas of focus. In recognition of the opportunity to promote Bagshot as the home of the England Rugby Training Squad, it was proposed to seek grants linked to the Rugby World Cup. It was also proposed to seek grants for Frimley Lodge Park.

**RESOLVED to**

- (a) schedule meetings of the Finance and Asset Management Working Group when necessary;**
- (b) allocate officer resources to enable the Council to proactively seek Activity based grants linked to the Rugby World Cup and Environmental Grants linked to Frimley Lodge Park and surrounding area; and**
- (c) take action to use the fact that the England Rugby Team train in the borough as a way to promote the Borough during the Rugby World Cup.**

**RECOMMENDED to the Council that the Treasury Strategy be amended to permit investment in BBB+ rated British banks and building societies for a maximum of 100 days.**

**92/E Exclusion of Press and Public**

In accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, 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:

| <u>Minute</u> | <u>Paragraph(s)</u> |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 84E (part)    | 3                   |
| 93/E          | 3                   |
| 94/E          | 3                   |

Note: Minutes 93/E and 94/E are summaries of matters considered in Part II of the agenda, the minutes of which it is considered should remain confidential at the present time.

**93/E Future Arrangements for the Arena Leisure Centre**

The Executive made decisions in relation to the extension of the Arena Leisure Centre contract.

**94/E Grounds Maintenance Contract Delivery from February 2016**

The Executive made decisions in relation to the extension of the Grounds Maintenance contract.

**95/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 minutes 93/E and 94/E and the associated agenda reports remain exempt until the completion of the negotiations.**

Chairman