

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive
held at Surrey Heath House on 21 June
2022**

+ Cllr Alan McClafferty (Chairman)

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| + Cllr Sarah Jane Croke | + Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans |
| + Cllr Colin Dougan | + Cllr Adrian Page |
| + Cllr Shaun Garrett | + Cllr Robin Perry |

+ Present

In Attendance: Cllr Peter Barnett, Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Cliff Betton, Cllr Tim FitzGerald, Cllr Sharon Galliford, Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam, Cllr Graham Tapper, Cllr Pat Tedder, Cllr Victoria Wheeler, Cllr Helen Whitcroft and Cllr Valerie White

10/E Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2022 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

11/E Questions by Members

The Leader responded to a question from Councillor Adrian Page, confirming that, if the suggestion to explore an alternative route for the annual Remembrance Sunday parade considered later that meeting, a full consultation would be undertaken.

Councillor Graham Tapper received a response to a query regarding information provided in a recent Members' Bulletin, confirming that further information on the Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Special Protection Area Mitigation would be circulated to all Members.

In response to a question from Councillor Rodney Bates concerning the minutes of the previous meeting, the Leader advised that the relevant Portfolio Holder would be appointed to the Fairtrade Steering Group.

The Leader responded to a question from Councillor Sashi Mylvaganam explaining the Council's approach to commemorating the 40th anniversary of the end of the Falklands War.

12/E Tennis Court Redevelopment

The Executive was reminded that, at its meeting on 26 May 2020, it had agreed a capital project budget of £135,000 for the purpose of redeveloping the tennis courts at Watchetts Recreation Ground to create a floodlit, mixed-use Tennis and Netball facility.

In October 2021 the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) had committed £8.4m of funding to refurbish public tennis courts across the UK. Following a successful stage 1 funding application, the LTA had advised it would be willing to invest in the

region of £140,000 to help the Council to bring the playing surfaces at Watchetts, Mytchett, and Frimley Green Recreation Grounds back to a playable standard, subject to meeting funding conditions. The LTA's funding would also cover the introduction of gate access technology at each site, along with certain fencing and net post repairs.

It was reported that the LTA's funding would not extend to funding the installation of floodlighting at Watchetts, connection to a 3 -phase power supply, or any netball elements to be introduced with the Watchetts redevelopment. However, these costs had been included within the original scope of works previously agreed for the Watchetts redevelopment in May 2020.

Members recognised the opportunity the LTA funding provided to extend the project to the courts at Frimley Green and Mytchett. It was reported that, due to the size of those courts, it would not be possible to convert them for dual use as netball facilities, but other upgrades such as floodlights could be explored at a future time.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the original scope of the tennis court redevelopment project to be extended to include tennis courts sites at Frimley Green and Mytchett Recreation Grounds;**
- (ii) agreement be given to the terms and conditions of the Lawn Tennis Association's funding;**
- (iii) a tender process to source and appoint a suitable lighting contractor be undertaken;**
- (iv) the completion of project deliverables be delegated to the Strategic Director – Environment & Community in consultation with the Leisure, Culture & Community Portfolio Holder; and**
- (v) a corporate contingency of 20% of the capital project budget be set aside from the Corporate Projects Reserve, with authority to spend this fund delegated to the Strategic Director – Finance & Customer Services in consultation with the Finance & Customer Services Portfolio Holder and the Leisure, Culture & Community Portfolio Holder.**

13/E Star Chamber Outcome Report

The Executive considered a report setting out the initial findings of the Star Chamber process that had been undertaken to identify £1.350m of savings. The £1.350m of savings had been agreed in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, with an aspiration of stretching to £2m of savings, in order to progressively bring the budget back to a sustainable position by maximising the delivery of efficiencies and income generation. The report set out the efficiencies, savings and income generation options that had been identified by officers, detailing the suggested proposals and the projected savings.

It was reported that, whilst the Star Chamber process had been focussed upon the identification of savings, efficiencies and income generation, the impact of the current economic climate had been taken into account. It was recognised that it may be necessary to conduct further reviews if inflation and interest rates continued to rise.

Arising from the discussions on the identified savings from each service area, the following matters were highlighted and changes to the recommendations agreed:

- (i) The proposal to retain the Main Reception opening hours that had operated since the pandemic was supported, but it was agreed to further consider options for extending opening hours one day a week to accommodate residents unable to visit the Council Offices before 1pm.
- (ii) The number of amenity grass cuts completed by this Council on Surrey County Council land was discussed and suggestions were made about working with partners to share costs in areas where both organisations undertook cuts in a particular location. It agreed not to reduce the number of amenity costs, but to explore further opportunities for savings through joined-up working with partner organisations.
- (iii) Following clarification that the proposal to amend leases to include utility costs would only be pursued when leases were due to be renewed, it was suggested that the relevant councillors should be notified at the time this affected a lease within their ward.
- (iv) The proposal to reduce the number of printed editions of Heathscene to one issue per year, within two years, was considered and Members recognised the importance of this communication with residents, in particular those who did not engage with online forms of communication. Arising from the discussions, it was agreed not to pursue this proposal at the current time, but digital options for the delivery of Heathscene, along with increasing marketing revenue from the publication, would be further explored.
- (v) Members were informed that the proposals for altering the route for the annual Remembrance Sunday parade had arisen from discussions with the Royal British Legion (RBL) due to difficulties experienced by some veterans. Having heard concerns about the proposals, it was recognised that any such decision was not related to financial considerations and it was therefore agreed to remove this proposal from the list of savings identified. Whilst discussions on alternative options would continue separately with the RBL, assurances were given that they would only be implemented if they received the organisation's support.
- (vi) The Executive agreed to support the proposal not to continue the current arrangements for the Christmas tree at Surrey Heath House; however, alternative options would be considered for Christmas decorations at Surrey Heath House, including options for an artificial tree, decorating the existing tree on the building's lawn, and planting a more permanent Christmas tree at the location.

RESOLVED that

- (i) subject to the amendments below, the proposals set out in section 4 of the agenda report be agreed**
 - a. the proposal to maintain the current opening hours for the reception at Surrey Heath House rather than reverting back to pre-pandemic arrangements, as set out at paragraph 4.3 of the agenda report, be supported, but further options for longer opening hours one day per week be explored;**
 - b. the proposal to reduce the number of amenity grass cuts this Council completes on Surrey County Council land by two per annum, as set out at paragraph 4.6 of the agenda report, be removed, but further opportunities for savings through joined-up working with partner organisations be explored and reported to the Executive in due course;**
 - c. the proposal to reduce the print editions of Heathscene, as set out at paragraph 4.16 of the agenda report, be removed but officers be tasked with further exploring digital options for Heathscene and increasing marketing revenue from the publication;**
 - d. the proposal to explore a shorter parade route for the annual Remembrance Sunday event, as set out at paragraph 4.16 of the agenda report, be removed but continue to be explored with key stakeholders;**
 - e. the proposal to discontinue the expenditure on a Christmas Tree for Surrey Heath House in its present form, as set out at paragraph 4.17 of the agenda report, be supported, but alternative options for Christmas decorations be explored; and**
- (ii) responsibility for the implementation of the proposals agreed by the Executive and the associated adjustment of relevant in-year budget totals and Medium Term Financial Strategy totals be delegated to the Director of Finance & Customer Service in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Customer Service.**

14/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)
15/E	3
16/E	3
17/E	3

15/E 63a High Street, Bagshot

The Executive considered a report requesting approval to award a contract for refurbishment and repair works to the Council's 63a High Street, Bagshot property to enable letting and occupation of part as offices. It also requested approval for capital expenditure to undertake this work.

Members were informed that the Council could seek to offset the expenditure by using monies held in a reserve fund and known as the Notcutts bursary, which had been lodged at the time of the Waitrose development in Bagshot and were governed by a memorandum. It was suggested that it would be advisable to engage with Notcutts if this option was to be pursued.

The Executive discussed the proposal to submit a planning application for consent to develop a dwelling unit on land to the rear of 63a High Street, Bagshot and questioned whether two dwellings could be accommodated on that site. A preference was also indicated for providing social housing or alms-house accommodation at the site. It was therefore agreed to further explore options with officers in order to achieve the best solution for the site.

RESOLVED that, subject to completion of the standstill process without challenge,

- (i) A contract be awarded to the bidder and for the sum identified in the agenda report, to carry out refurbishment works within 63a High Street, Bagshot to enable the opportunity for letting and occupation of part as offices on a commercial basis;**
- (ii) expenditure of up to the amount identified in the agenda report be approved from the Council's capital budget to undertake the refurbishment of parts of 63a High Street, Bagshot;**
- (iii) any expenditure of the Additional Contingency Sum included within the total expenditure request be delegated to the Director of Finance & Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader and the Economic Development & Transformation Portfolio Holder;**
- (iv) subject to discussions between the Portfolio Holders for Economic Development & Transformation, Environment & Health and officers to explore a solution that was acceptable and that maximised the value achieved from the site, an application be submitted for planning consent for development on Council owned land at the rear of 63a High Street, Bagshot; and**

- (v) discussions be undertaken with Notcutts in order to seek to offset the expenditure by using monies held in a reserve fund and known as the Notcutts bursary (£185,000).**

Note: In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor Rebecca Jennings-Evans declared a pecuniary interest as her husband owned a business at the rear of 63a High Street, Bagshot and she left the Chamber during consideration of the item.

16/E Award of Contract

The Executive considered a report concerning the awarding of a contract for the delivery of security and cleaning services in The Square Shopping Centre.

RESOLVED that a contract be awarded to undertake cleaning and security services in The Square Shopping Centre, to the bidder and at the value as identified in the agenda report.

17/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 decisions at minutes 15/E and 16/E, including the successful bidders, be made public following the completion of the standstill process, but the value of the contracts and the associated agenda reports remain exempt for the present time.

Chairman