

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE – 2 JULY 2013

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 16 JULY 2013

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| * Cllr Robert Knowles (Chairman) | * Cllr Stephen O’Grady |
| * Cllr Mike Band (Vice-Chairman) | * Cllr Julia Potts |
| * Cllr Brian Adams | * Cllr Stefan Reynolds |
| * Cllr Carole King | * Cllr Adam Taylor-Smith |
| * Cllr Bryn Morgan | * Cllr Keith Webster |

* Present

Cllr Diane James attended and spoke on Agenda Item 7 and Cllr Nicky Lee attended and spoke on Agenda Item 22
(Minute Nos. 20 and 39 refer)

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive held on 4 June 2013 were confirmed and signed.

18. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cllr Adam Taylor-Smith declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 26.4 (property matters) and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

Cllr Mike Band declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 16 as Hullmead was located within his ward and Cllr Stefan Reynolds declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 26.4 (property matters) as the applicant was known to him. Both remained in the meeting during the respective items.

19. QUESTIONS

The Executive received the following questions from members of the public in accordance with Procedure Rule 10:-

i. Stewart Edge, Chairman of SW Surrey Liberal Democrats

“At the Examination of Waverley’s Core Strategy on the 5th June Waverley’s Officer, Mr G Parrott, suggested that ‘housing need’ during the plan period was not 706 dwellings per annum, as stated in the submitted CS, but has been reassessed at somewhere between 300 and 450. In his letter of the 13th June the Inspector Mr M J Hetherington noted the difference between these and the CS proposal to provide just 230 per annum and went on to say, “...I would expect your Council to take a positive approach to providing the scale and mix of housing identified in any updated housing needs assessment ...” The Inspector also advised that if necessary Waverley may need to reassess its Green Belt to meet need within NPPF policies.

Assuming that any revised housing needs assessment confirms need in the range quoted by Mr Parrott, at the Examination, Waverley will thus be required to provide for between 1000 and 3000 additional homes in the period up to 2028. . In the light of this can the Executive reassure the residents of Waverley that, if required, before proposing green field or Green Belt development it will positively assess how these additional homes, together with those 900+ currently targeted for green field sites in Cranleigh and Farnham, can be accommodated at the brown field site of Dunsfold Park?"

The Planning Portfolio Holder gave the following response:-

"The figure of 706 houses per annum was derived from a now out-of-date housing assessment that the previous Liberal Democrat Administration had commissioned back in 2005-6 as part of their subsequently abandoned proposals for a new Local Plan. The lower Waverley figure of 230 houses was based on the government South East Regional Plan, which required Waverley to provide some 250 houses per year. This was revised after public consultation, which proposed a substantially lower figure.

In view of the very recent changes in government policy that have come into effect since our Core Strategy was written, it would be totally premature to consider either a new target for housing, or the options for delivering it, until such time as the SHMA (a Strategic Housing Market Assessment) has been completed and its conclusions properly evaluated. At that stage, this administration will take whatever action with respect to the Core Strategy that is in the best interests of the residents of Waverley as a whole."

ii. Kathy Smyth, Guildford, Woking and Waverley Friends of the Earth

"Have Waverley planning officers assessed how far the 2002 Waverley Local Plan is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework using the self assessment tool produced for this purpose by PINS and the PAS when the NPPF was published and if so, can they please provide a copy or identify where it can be located on the WBC website."

The following written response was sent in the questioner's absence:-

"Yes and no. When the National Planning Policy Framework was published, the implications on the Core Strategy were carefully assessed by the officers and the Plan was amended to reflect the requirements of the NPPF at pre-submission stage (August 2012). After then, no amendment to the Core Strategy was permitted.

A soundness self-assessment check of the Core Strategy was completed by officers and is available on the Waverley website, independent advice was obtained from a "critical friend" and the portfolio holder was sent off to the planning Advisory Service for 3 days to be independently trained (at his own expense, I might add).

All planning applications are now assessed in the light of the NPPF and have been so since it was promulgated. If you look at planning committee reports, a reference is clearly made to the requirements of the NPPF with respect to each application and officer recommendations to members take those requirements fully into account.

But there is no requirement to use any specific checklist produced by the PAS, or anyone else, which is only advisory.”

iii. Ken Reed from Cranleigh

“When answering a question to reconsider building homes on Dunsfold Aerodrome, when interviewed by BBC Radio Surrey on the 20th June, Cllr Bryn Morgan said, “Putting housing all over Dunsfold Park would simply increase the number of houses we would have to find across Waverley. It would not take them away from Farnham.”

Please, Cllr Morgan, explain the logic behind these statement and direct me to the appropriate sections of the National Planning Policy Framework that says that the use of brown field sites would result in an increase in the number of houses that should be provided?”

The Planning Portfolio Holder gave the following response:

“Suitable potential sites for development in the Cranleigh area are already being presented by developers – some of which may well attract support from local parish councillors – for additional and sustainable housing but without requiring the destruction of current and potential employment facilities available through Dunsfold Park. The re-allocation of Dunsfold Park for housing would not reduce the availability of these other sites for housing in any way whatsoever.

We already have the benefit of a decision on housing at Dunsfold Park from the Secretary of State and substantial housing there, together with the other preferred local additional housing in Cranleigh, would make those considerations of infrastructure even more acutely unsustainable.

The provision of additional housing at Cranleigh is unlikely to satisfy the need for accommodation for people wishing to live many miles away at the other end of Waverley: a large rural borough. Especially so if they have family ties in Farnham, or work locally in the town or whose employment depends upon ready access to transport systems to London or to parts of neighbouring towns. Consequently, the housing need assessment in Farnham is unlikely to be significantly altered by massive housing provision in the Cranleigh area.

The NPPF requires that the Core Strategy housing need assessment for Waverley must be based upon an “objectively assessed” need for housing, obtained through a SHMA exercise, and any exception must be demonstrably justified to a planning inspector.”

iv. Patrick Haveron from Godalming

“In his BBC Surrey interview on the Core Strategy Bryn Morgan said “the fact that if you work in an area and live in another there has to be some kind of compromise about where the housing need lies”. Is he saying that if somebody currently works in Godalming and lives in Portsmouth or Basingstoke they should not expect to live in Waverley but to look for housing accommodation in Rushmoor or one of the other adjoining boroughs?”

The Planning Portfolio Holder responded as follows:-

“The short answer is no. But when does “demand” for housing become “need”? Does anyone, no matter where they live or work, create a need for housing in Waverley simply because it has been voted the “best place to live” in a national survey and they would like to live here. Or is that demand rather than need? Market forces might dictate that demand will fall as it becomes satisfied, but at what price to the very special environment of our borough.

What we are saying is that, now we have no Regional Plan that can properly and fairly determine such issues, each local planning authority must take a wider view of how the housing need that is created within their area might be best satisfied. That need may well be created by employment facilities or transport and infrastructure provision that is not available outside the area.

In order to do this, it is necessary for local councils to come together to consider how they might work together to satisfy their housing needs and, at the same time, avoid the worst excesses of some unscrupulous developers. That is what is meant by the “Duty to Co-operate”.

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

20. CORE STRATEGY

20.1 The Council submitted the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination on 31 January 2013, following its approval by Full Council on 22 January. The Core Strategy sets out the planning policies for the Borough Council for the period up until 2028. It sets policies to support housing and employment provision to meet the needs of our communities, balanced against environmental and other constraints.

20.2 The process of examination by the Planning Inspector started as soon as the Council’s Development Plan was submitted. The examination is a continuous process running from the date of submission through to the receipt of the Planning Inspector’s Report. The Inspector’s task is to assess the Core Strategy and its policies and test them for their “soundness” to see if they comply with Government policies, which are contained within the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF was published in March 2012 at which stage the Council’s Core Strategy was at an advanced stage of preparation.

- 20.3 The preparation of the current Core Strategy started in 2007 and has taken place at a time of major upheaval in the planning system, with the recent introduction of the NPPF and major legislative change culminating in the partial revocation of the South East Plan (SEP). The SEP has been a major influence on the development of the Core Strategy, not least because, until its partial revocation, there was a requirement for Waverley's Core Strategy to be in general conformity with it. In his letter the Inspector emphasised however that continued reliance on a figure that is derived from the SEP would be unlikely to succeed. This shifting national policy position has represented a particular challenge to the Council in taking forward its Plan.
- 20.4 The evolution of the Core Strategy was influenced by a number of consultations on a range of matters. A particular focus was on the issue of the number of new homes that Waverley should be planning for and their broad distribution. The Council put forward a Plan that it felt struck the right balance between responding to the need for homes and other development in Waverley whilst also recognising and safeguarding the character and qualities of the Borough. Indeed the Inspector has acknowledged the significance of the Borough's environmental assets and designations.
- 20.5 On 20 February the Inspector sent his 'Initial Note' to the Council. Having reviewed the Core Strategy and accompanying evidence, he identified some concerns relating to the 'duty to co-operate', meeting housing needs, the location of development and traveller sites. Following the Council's response to his Initial Note, the Inspector decided that the issues he had identified should best be raised within the format of the public hearing sessions. Therefore, he set a programme of hearing sessions, starting with sessions on 5 June to consider the 'duty to co-operate' and meeting housing needs elements.
- 20.6 Although the Inspector set a programme of hearing sessions to consider other matters, he made it clear at the outset that if serious soundness concerns emerged from these opening sessions, he would take a view on whether there was merit in holding the sessions scheduled for the second week. At the end of the sessions on 5 June, the Inspector decided not to continue with the remaining sessions and said that he would write to the Council with his findings from his consideration of the first two matters.
- 20.7 On 13 June the Inspector wrote to the Council (attached copy of the letter is at Annexe 1) setting out his preliminary view on whether the Council had met the legal duty to co-operate, and his findings in relation to the matter of meeting housing needs.
- 20.8 With regard to the duty to co-operate, the Inspector was satisfied that the Council had engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to the housing needs assessment process. Overall, he said that he could see no reason to reach a conclusion that the duty to co-operate has not been complied with. It is important to highlight that the duty to cooperate is a continuous process and, whatever decision the Council takes, will require further consultation and cooperation with neighbouring authorities.

- 20.9 On the issue of meeting housing needs, the Inspector referred to the requirements of the NPPF and expressed concerns about the robustness of the current Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). He said that a new SHMA should be produced. He said that in doing this, the Council should work with other authorities, given that the housing market area crosses administrative boundaries.
- 20.10 The Inspector also said that continued reliance on a housing figure derived from the SEP process is unlikely to result in a finding of soundness. He said that he would expect the Council to take a positive approach to providing the scale and mix of housing identified in any updated housing needs assessment, consistent with other policies in the NPPF. The Inspector said that he did not under-estimate the significance of Waverley's environmental assets. However, he said that failure to meet housing needs due to constraints arising from these designations would have to be clearly and specifically justified in terms of the NPPF policies.
- 20.11 In his conclusions the Inspector said that his comments imply a significant amount of work and said he was concerned that it may not be possible to consider them appropriately within the context of the present Examination. However, he identified three alternative courses of action:-
- 1) He proceeds to write his report based on the evidence before him. He says that this is unlikely to result in a finding that the Plan is sound; or
 - 2) The Council undertakes the additional work if it feels that this could be accommodated without fundamentally altering the Plan's spatial strategy, without prejudicing the preparatory work and public consultation that has already been carried out and is completed within a realistic timescale; or
 - 3) The Council withdraws the Core Strategy, carries out the work described in the letter, republishes the Plan for consultation and then submits the Plan for examination. He says that, with regret, this may well be the most appropriate course of action.
- 20.12 The Inspector asks the Council to carefully consider how it wishes to take matters forward and to advise him of its response as soon as possible. In the light of the Inspector's comments, it is necessary for the Council to decide how it wishes to proceed.
- 20.13 It is clear that Option 1, based on what the Inspector has said in his letter, and his conclusions to the hearing sessions, is not realistically viable. The real choice for the Council is between Options 2 and 3.
- 20.14 The advantage of Option 2 would be that progress with the Core Strategy would continue, having regard to all the work that led to its original submission, including the extensive public consultation. However, the Inspector has pointed out the risks associated with this approach. In essence this is that the amount of work needed could take longer than could reasonably be considered in the context of a suspension of the Examination and may result in changes to the Core Strategy itself that are too significant to be considered in the context of the Plan that the Inspector is examining (i.e. the Plan that was published in August 2012).

- 20.15 With regard to Option 3, the potential advantage of this approach is that it provides more flexibility in terms of making changes to the overall strategy, if these are needed as a result of the findings of the updated SHMA. The significant disadvantage with Option 3 is that it would lengthen the time needed to get the Core Strategy in place in conflict with the Council's desire to have up-to-date planning policies in place as soon as possible to manage future development in the Borough. This may further encourage developers to submit proposals for unplanned housing development which the Council would need to consider in the context of the NPPF. This has in reality been the case since the publication of the NPPF in March 2012 but further delay may increase the likelihood of ad hoc schemes being promoted.
- 20.16 While there are some advantages and disadvantages with both Options 2 and 3 it is considered that Option 2 should be followed as will retain momentum with the delivery of the Core Strategy. What is common to both options is the need to update the evidence of housing need through a new SHMA. Clearly, until that work has been completed and the Council has identified what it regards as being the current objectively assessed need for new homes, it is difficult to identify the extent of other work that may be needed so that the Council can consider the implications of delivering that level of housing in Waverley. The process of updating the SHMA should be completed by October 2013.
- 20.17 Another factor which should be borne in mind is the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Council has already consulted on a draft tariff but the timescale for further progress may need to be reviewed as it cannot be adopted until such as time as the Core Strategy is adopted. This carries the risk that the Council may have a period when it will no longer be able to collect contributions under the current Planning Infrastructure Policy (due to legislative changes which come into force in April 2014) before it is replaced by CIL. However, the situation remains uncertain as the Government has recently consulted on extending the transition period for limiting the use of pooled planning obligations from April 2014 to April 2015.
- 20.18 The delivery of the Core Strategy will continue to be largely managed through existing resources, including the budget set aside for the use of consultants to support the work on the Core Strategy. In the first instance, it will be necessary for the housing needs evidence to be updated through a new SHMA and officers estimate that this could cost in the region of £20,000. Other potential costs will depend on the findings of the SHMA, but may include the need to update other supporting documents, including the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment, both of which were produced for the Council by specialist consultants.
- 20.19 It is important to recognise that the Core Strategy has not been found unsound. However, the Inspector has given a very strong steer that in its current form that this is the most likely outcome. Bearing in mind the work that has been already been undertaken, including extensive public consultation and the Council's commitment to put in place a Core Strategy which reflects the communities wishes, it is considered appropriate to follow the Inspector's option 2. At the current time this represents the best opportunity to get an update Core Strategy in place in the short period possible.

20.20 The Executive RESOLVED that

1. the Strategic Housing Market Assessment be undertaken, to be funded from the Local Development Framework Budget; and
2. officers be requested to produce a time-based resource programme to achieve the timetable required to reinstate the Core Strategy in line with Option 2 for determination by the Executive at its next meeting.

20.21 The Executive accordingly

RECOMMENDS that

3. **the Council follows the Option 2 highlighted by the Inspector and that he be asked to suspend the Examination of the Core Strategy in order for the Council to carry out the additional work needed.**

[Reason: to agree a way forward for the Core Strategy in response to the Inspector's letter].

21. GODALMING AND CRANLEIGH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA APPLICATIONS

- 21.1 One of the neighbourhood planning initiatives introduced by the Localism Act 2011 is for local communities to prepare a neighbourhood plan. This allows them to shape the future of their own communities by planning where and what type of new development will take place in their local areas and what it should look like. A neighbourhood plan can include allocations for development such as housing and employment as well as policies for managing specific types of development. Once it is approved and comes into force it will take precedence over the non strategic policies in the local plan for making decisions on planning applications for that neighbourhood.
- 21.2 Where an area is covered by a town or parish council, a neighbourhood plan for that area can only be prepared by that town or parish council. Certain procedures and requirements have to be carried out when preparing neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood plans must be in line with Waverley's Local Plan. Therefore, a neighbourhood plan cannot plan for less development in an area than that proposed in the local plan and therefore must plan for an equal or greater level of growth.
- 21.3 However, it is up to the town or parish council to decide the scope of their neighbourhood plans. Where a neighbourhood plan does not make allocations or set out policies to manage specific development, then this responsibility will fall to the Borough local plan. Under the legislation the first stage of preparing a neighbourhood plan is for the town or parish council to apply to Waverley Borough Council to designate the neighbourhood area that they propose their neighbourhood plan should cover. Once it has been agreed then the neighbourhood plan can be prepared.

- 21.4 Godalming Town Council and Cranleigh Parish Council have each resolved to prepare a neighbourhood plan for their individual communities and therefore have applied to Waverley for the Borough Council to agree the neighbourhood areas they wish their respective plans to cover. In both cases the intention is for the neighbourhood plan to cover the entire area that the respective parishes cover. The neighbourhood area applications from Godalming Town Council and Cranleigh Parish Council are attached as Annexes 2 and 3 respectively.
- 21.5 Before Waverley Borough Council can determine the neighbourhood area applications it is required under the neighbourhood planning regulations to consult on the application proposals for 6 weeks to invite comments on the proposed areas and consider the responses made. Therefore, for each neighbourhood area application the Council:
- advertised the area application on its website;
 - publicised it in the Surrey Advertiser Newspaper Series (12th April for the Godalming area application and 26th April for the Cranleigh area application); and
 - wrote to statutory consultees, local residents associations, chambers of commerce, and adjoining district and parish councils to inform them that they can comment on the area application proposals.
- 21.6 The dates of the public consultations on the neighbourhood area applications were:
- Godalming Area Application 12 April to 24 May 2013
 - Cranleigh Area Application 26 April to 7 June 2013
- 21.7 Under the Localism Act 2011 Waverley Borough Council can only consider whether the area for which the neighbourhood area application is made is appropriate for the purposes of preparing a neighbourhood development plan. The legislation states that when determining an area application the Council must have regard to:
- the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area; and
 - the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.
- 21.8 The Council can also refuse to consider the application if another area application has already been made to designate the area and that application has yet to be decided.
- 21.9 As a result of the consultation two letters supporting the Godalming neighbourhood area application were received from Frith Hill Residents' Association and Witley Parish Council. As a borough council adjoining Godalming, Guildford Borough Council has no comments to make on the area application. However, it has requested that it and the parish councils within Guildford Borough that adjoin Godalming Town be kept informed and engaged with the work on the neighbourhood plan, particularly on cross boundary issues.

- 21.10 Natural England has no comments to add in respect of the consultation as the application relates solely to the area the Godalming Neighbourhood Plan is to cover. As the area application from Godalming Town Council meets the requirements of the legislation and there are no representations that demonstrate that the area applied for is not appropriate for the purposes of a neighbourhood plan for Godalming, it is recommended that Waverley Borough Council approves the area application.
- 21.11 As a result of the consultation there have been two representations on the Cranleigh neighbourhood area application as follows. Guildford Borough Council has no comments to make on the area application. However, it has requested that it and the parish councils within Guildford Borough that adjoin Cranleigh parish be kept informed and engaged with the work on the neighbourhood plan, particularly on cross boundary issues, as it goes forward.
- 21.12 Natural England has offered some general advice which may be of use in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan. However, this advice includes advice about protected landscapes, protected species and opportunities for enhancing the natural environment. It does not comment on the area application itself. As the area application from Cranleigh Parish Council meets the requirements of the legislation and there are no representations that demonstrate that the area applied for is not appropriate for the purposes of a neighbourhood plan, it is recommended that Waverley Borough Council approves the area application.
- 21.13 The Executive

RECOMMENDS that

- 4. the neighbourhood area application from Godalming Town Council for the purposes of the Godalming Neighbourhood Plan be approved; and**
- 5. the neighbourhood area application from Cranleigh Parish Council for the purposes of the Cranleigh Neighbourhood Plan be approved.**

[Reason: for the Borough Council to agree the neighbourhood area that the neighbourhood plans should cover.]

22. HOUSING DELIVERY BOARD FRAMEWORK FOR THE PURCHASE OF LAND OR PROPERTY

[This item contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)]

- 22.1 The Council's Business Plan currently provides in excess of £240m for new affordable homes over the next 30 years. This will be delivered by building new homes, buying existing properties and acquiring additional land to build on or to reserve for future use. To enable acquisitions to be facilitated in a timely manner, this report proposes giving various delegated authorities to enable officers and the Housing Delivery Board to act on the Council's behalf.
- 22.2 A series of flow charts are attached at Annexe 4 which set out the various steps that will be followed in purchasing properties or land and which have been devised to ensure a consistent approach is taken when opportunities for acquisitions arise, and also to help identify which delegations are required to enable a sale to proceed as timely as possible. They are specifically for the processes involved in
- i. buying back a former Council property (or share of)
 - ii. purchasing a property on the open market; and
 - iii. purchasing land (with a view to immediate development).
- 22.3 It is likely that in the longer term the Council will be interested in purchasing parcels of land that can be banked for future development and the appropriate process for facilitating this will be developed in due course.
- 22.4 Council authority would normally be required for the acquisition of land and property. However, with there being only five decision-making Council meetings each Council year, this could result in missed opportunities and this report, with the suggested framework, proposes suggested delegations with levels of spending that the Executive is recommending to the Council. If approved, these delegations, set out at Annexe 5 and (Exempt) Annexe 6, will then be included in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
- 22.5 In all eventualities, the processes refer to criteria which will need to be applied to every opportunity to purchase land or property to ensure that investment in the Council's stock is appropriate for housing need, in the correct locations and value for money.
- 22.6 In addition to building new homes, the Council is likely to want to consider property buy-backs and purchase of properties on the open market. Before pursuing such purchases, the following criteria should be met:-
- Making a business case for each potential purchase demonstrating financial viability. This should have regard to the initial capital outlay, potential ongoing costs and the future income stream
 - Any property should require no more than £20,000 initial spend on works, to be established through a structural survey commissioned from an external surveyor with professional indemnity
 - The property should help meet local housing need and be suitable for social housing
 - If considering open-market property purchases, regard should be had to construction type and the potential of on-going maintenance
 - A property that would provide an affordable home but in an isolated location should not be considered
 - A property outside of the Borough should not be considered

22.7 For land purchases the following criteria should be met:

- Making a business case for each potential purchase demonstrating financial viability.
- The purchase price should have regard to prevailing land prices as advised by the council's valuer and external advisor drawn from the standing list, in order to demonstrate the land is unencumbered
- A minimum plot size that would facilitate a viable scheme
- The land should be capable of acquiring planning permission
- The land should be located in an area of housing need
- The land should be free from major constraints

22.8 The Housing Delivery Board has endorsed this framework and recognises the need for it to be kept under close review. Experience from operating the processes in practice is likely to advise of any amendments that need to be made and any changes to delegation levels that may be required. Should this be necessary, a report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Executive for recommendation to the Council.

22.9 In addition, there are multiple opportunities factored into the process whereby any proposals that do not meet the set criteria or which form an exception can be referred by the Housing Delivery Board to the Executive and/or Council for consideration. The Executive will also be given regular update reports on outcomes of purchases that are delivered through the agreed framework.

22.10 This item was deferred at the Executive meeting on 9 April 2013 to enable officers to clarify the levels of delegation required and ensure that levels of expenditure were open and transparent. This has now been achieved, as set out in Annexe 5, and it is further recommended that authority be delegated to the Housing Delivery Board to determine appropriate maximum amounts on an annual basis, based on property sizes.

22.11 For the first time in many years Waverley has the resources to provide additional new affordable homes. Establishing this approved framework to take advantage of timely opportunities that arise and ensuring that actions can be taken promptly when necessary should facilitate effective provision that will increase housing supply.

22.12 The Executive

RECOMMENDS that

- 6. the principles of the report, along with the detailed processes involved in the framework and the set criteria for purchasing land and property, be endorsed;**
- 7. the scheme of delegation be amended to include the delegations set out at Annexe 5; and**

- 8. authority be delegated to the Executive to review and determine appropriate maximum amounts of expenditure for purchasing property or land on an annual basis.**

[Reason: to establish a framework for the timely purchase of property and land that will enable the delivery of more affordable homes in the Borough].

23. WAVERLEY'S HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2013-2018

- 23.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that Local Authorities publish a Homelessness Strategy every 5 years. Waverley's last Strategy was published in July 2008. The Strategy should be the result of consultation and partnership working with Waverley's statutory and voluntary partners. It should include a review of the current levels of homelessness in Waverley and the services and accommodation available to meet the needs of those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. It should also take into account Government priorities in terms of tackling homelessness as well as link in with the Council's own strategies and the strategies of its partner agencies.
- 23.2 Customer surveys of the Housing Options Service customers give a very positive picture of the Council's service and Officers are consulting other stakeholders regarding the priorities for the strategy. These include Waverley's Faith Forum, Single Housing Panel, Surrey Alcohol and Drug Advisory Service, Surrey Social Services, Citizens Advice Waverley, Surrey Supporting People, Health Services, Supported Housing Providers and Housing Associations. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in regard to the Strategy.
- 23.3 This item highlights the main themes of the proposed Homelessness Strategy. The Strategy also contains an action plan which accompanies this report. The longer Review document forms the appendix and is available in the Members' Room. The strategy and action plan are subject to minor amendments following any further feedback from stakeholders.
- 23.4 The strategy highlights the progress the Council and its partners have made in tackling homelessness by adopting a proactive, preventative approach, known as a Housing Options approach. This means that resources are targeted at preventative housing advice and measures such as mediation, negotiation and housing support, to help people remain in suitable accommodation. Where prevention is not appropriate or achievable, the Council has worked very hard at helping people access alternative housing options such as accommodation in the private sector or supported accommodation.
- 23.5 This approach has meant that the number of households formally applying as statutorily homeless to the Council and being accepted as homeless has dropped considerably. This in turn has meant the Council easily met the previous Government's 2010 target of reducing the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation by 50%. Currently Waverley has the lowest number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in the South East, at a time when across Surrey and the UK, numbers of

homeless applications and households placed in temporary accommodation has been steadily rising, along with the number of rough sleepers. The decline in numbers in temporary accommodation is shown in the table below:

Homeless households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
107	80	53	28	17	5	7	2	2	1

23.6 This excellent performance has been the result of taking innovative approaches to managing homelessness such as developing homeless prevention units with the Council's housing association partners, remodelling the housing options service to create increased frontline housing advice capacity, developing positive partnerships with private landlords, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations and making use of new technology such as the online housing options wizard.

23.7 This approach has delivered financial benefits to Waverley in that the Council has been able to end its reliance on expensive privately leased properties as temporary accommodation. It has also been able to review its own stock of temporary accommodation provision so that some properties have been either sold to generate income for decent homes work or redeveloped to provide more affordable housing. Waverley's homelessness budget for the last few years is outlined in the following table:

04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
£507,640	£419,220	£382,460	£333,910	£245,920	£195,580	£191,050	£244,130	£210,690

23.8 Purely relaying statistics does not fully capture the reality of homeless prevention work. That is why in this strategy anonymous case studies/pen pictures are included to show the positive impact that the hard work of Waverley's and other agencies staff has on some of the most vulnerable people in the community. The strategy also highlights that sometimes, despite officers' best efforts, interventions can fail due to chaotic behaviour, mental health difficulties, drug/alcohol issues. Sometimes it takes a number of interventions from the housing options officers and other agencies before customers to fully engage and co-operate with the help that is on offer.

23.9 Despite the excellent work, the Council and its partners have by no means eliminated homelessness in Waverley. The numbers of people approaching the Council for help in regard to their housing and the threat of homelessness is in fact increasing as shown by the following table:

New Housing Advice inquiries dealt with by Housing Options team

04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
476	658	634	682	734	884	774	879	881

- 23.10 The uncertainty in regard to the economic recovery and the additional challenge of welfare benefit reforms are likely to place greater pressure on Waverley's resources and its ability to maintain its excellent performance in preventing homelessness. Additionally the Government has set local authorities the challenge to further improve services for homeless people. These are particularly around the needs of homeless households for whom Councils do not normally have a statutory duty to house, such as single homeless people and rough sleepers.

Principles behind Waverley's Homelessness Strategy

- 23.11 **Proactive** – One of the reasons the Council has been successful in tackling homelessness over the last few years is through taking a proactive and innovative approach. It has done this by anticipating trends and changes and embracing alternative options as demonstrated by the recent use of homeless prevention units, launching the online housing options wizard and the employment of a welfare benefits officer to help Council tenants deal with challenges from welfare reform.
- 23.12 **Partnership Approach** – Waverley's strategy aims to build upon the partnership working that has already contributed to the effectiveness of the current service. The Council works with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies in its work to prevent homelessness such as Citizens Advice Waverley, Social Services, Housing Associations, supported housing providers, private sector lettings agents and landlords, Surrey Supporting People, Three Counties Money Advice, Police and Health Services.
- 23.13 **Personal responsibility - not incentivising homelessness** — Before embracing a housing options, preventative approach to homelessness, the way Councils dealt with homelessness was frequently perceived to incentivise homelessness. Some applicants saw being accepted as homeless as the first step to becoming a Council tenant. To address this issue Waverley's Allocation Scheme was changed in 2007 to give equal housing register priority to those with a local connection to Waverley whether they are homeless, living with friends or relatives, or in private rented accommodation. This in turn means that those who are under threat of homelessness are incentivised to help themselves find alternative accommodation, often in the private sector, and not see homelessness as a means to a Council tenancy. Waverley's strategy aims to maintain this approach.
- 23.14 **Continuous improvement** – despite Waverley's success to date there are a number of challenges ahead including a national rise in homelessness numbers, a challenging economic outlook and the implementation of welfare reform. Waverley's strategy aims to build on the success and in keeping with the Government's 'Gold Standard' challenge for homelessness services (see below), 'strive for continuous improvement and deliver the best possible housing options services to all clients'.
- 23.15 Following the consultation and review of services, certain challenges, risks and opportunities were identified – these include:

- The challenge of helping customers through the changes of welfare reform and improving the help offered to single homeless households
- The risk of the uncertain economy, the fact that homelessness numbers nationally and in Surrey are on an upward trend and the resulting impact of this on emergency hostel vacancies and private rented accommodation availability for those reliant on benefits.
- The opportunities the Council has in developing new affordable housing and building on its excellent innovation and partnership approach

23.16 Following analysis of these factors, five priorities have been identified to inform the action plan for Waverley's Homelessness Strategy: Prevention, Accommodation, Improvement, Support and Partnership Working. Although the Strategy covers a five year period, the intention is to review it annually so the majority of the actions relate to the first year.

23.17 **Homelessness Prevention.** Given the success of adopting a preventative approach to tackling homelessness, the strategy recommends that Waverley maintains and builds on this success. This includes developing our partnership approach in tackling homelessness and continuing to use budgets flexibly on a 'spend to save' basis to prevent homelessness where it is in the Council's and the applicant's interests to do so.

23.18 The strategy outlines that the impact of welfare reform changes will be monitored so that resources are targeted at those most in need. The Council will further promote its online Housing Options Wizard so customers can receive the best advice and preventative measures such as the HELP school education project and the Council's Sanctuary Scheme for victims of domestic violence will also be maintained.

23.19 **Accommodation.** Among the contributory factors for homelessness is a lack of affordable housing in Waverley. Waverley is one of the most sought after and expensive places to live in the UK, which means that house prices and private rent levels are often beyond the reach of many people. As a result people have to live with relatives and friends far longer than either party would wish and this in turn can create tensions in households that leads to homelessness. The development of a range of affordable and supported housing and making best use of existing housing plays a key role in reducing homelessness and providing accommodation for those who are under threat of homelessness.

23.20 The strategy highlights the welcome development that the Council is now able to develop more Council housing under the new financial arrangements outlined in the Council's HRA business plan. Linked to provision of affordable housing is maximising existing social housing stock. Waverley's allocation scheme supports this by prioritising households who are under-occupying social housing for moves to smaller accommodation.

- 23.21 The Council's plans outlined in its tenancy strategy to introduce 5 year flexible tenancies for new tenants of social housing will also help ensure that best use is made of its housing stock. The strategy highlights that whilst the Council has been very successful in preventing homelessness and keeping the number of households needing to be placed in temporary accommodation to the minimum, a sensitive balance needs to be made between having sufficient temporary accommodation and not having too many units standing empty. Throughout Surrey and nationally the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation is steadily rising and welfare reform changes are likely to increase the demand on the Council's Housing Options Team.
- 23.22 To ensure that the Council can fulfil its statutory duties and avoid increased general fund costs of bed and breakfast accommodation, the strategy outlines a number of measures to ensure that it can manage increased demand. These measures include commissioning more homeless prevention units in existing or new housing association stock, improvements to the Council's deposit bond scheme so it remains attractive to private landlords and letting agents and, in the event that it is needed, creating an additional accommodation officer role to maximise letting opportunities in the private sector market.
- 23.23 Linked to the greater use of the private sector, the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council the power to discharge its homelessness duties to households with an offer of private sector accommodation. This will mean that homeless households will no longer be able to refuse accommodation in the private sector, unless it is unsuitable. Supported accommodation is a key resource in helping the Council to fulfil its homelessness responsibilities. The strategy and action plan outline a number of plans to increase supported housing places. These include providing a move on satellite house in Waverley so vulnerable Waverley clients can access more intensively supported housing in Guildford and exploring whether a difficult to let unit in Churt could be leased to a supported housing provider as accommodation for clients with learning difficulties.
- 23.24 For Waverley to be able to continue to access supported housing within or outside the Borough, it needs to demonstrate that it will help Waverley clients move on through different accommodation pathways from so the accommodation does not become 'silted up'. A welcome development highlighted in the action plan are some additional units of supported accommodation for vulnerable clients that will be managed and owned by Transform Housing and Support.
- 23.25 **Improvement** - The Coalition Government has set Councils ten challenges in regard to how they discharge their homelessness/housing advice duties known as the Gold Standard:
1. Adopt a corporate commitment to preventing homelessness which has buy in across all services;
 2. Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs;
 3. Offer a Housing Options prevention service including written advice to all clients;

4. Adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative;
 5. Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support;
 6. Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups including advice and support to both clients and landlords;
 7. Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme;
 8. Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs;
 9. Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation; and
 10. Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks.
- 23.26 The strategy recommends that the Council apply for the Gold Standard to demonstrate its commitment to continuous service improvement. Besides working to achieve the Gold standard the strategy outlines plans for other improvements such as expanding its consultation with customers, offering an online landlord resource centre for landlords who work with Waverley and improving the assistance available for single homeless applicants as part of the Surrey Homelessness Alliance.
- 23.27 Support. One of the key ways to ensure that homelessness does not occur is to ensure that households receive the necessary support to enable them to maintain their tenancy. This can include help such as assistance with filling in forms to claim benefits or set up utility bills to advocacy to properly engage with social care/health professionals. Since the last strategy Waverley launched its Don't Lose your Home or Business support service to give targeted advice and advocacy to those negatively affected by the economic downturn.
- 23.28 When re-structuring the housing options service in 2010 the Council took the decision to use funding from the retirement of its temporary accommodation officer to mainstream a housing support officer post within the team that otherwise would have been lost due to cuts in Supporting People funding. This role has helped stabilise vulnerable customers and prevent 'revolving door' homelessness. Aware of the challenges presented by welfare reform the Council has been proactive in appointing a Welfare Reform Officer to help ensure that Council tenants negatively affected by the changes are given the necessary advice and support to maintain their tenancies.
- 23.29 The Council benefits from a Supporting People funded housing support officer role for vulnerable Council tenants as well as from a multi tenure generic floating support service managed by Riverside Housing Association. Chapter One housing association provides outreach support to victims of domestic abuse across Guildford and Waverley and there are a number of other support services working in Waverley targeting different vulnerabilities.

- 23.30 **Partnership Work** The Council continues to fund Citizens Advice Waverley in its work in providing independent advocacy and advice on the full range of issues facing Waverley residents such as welfare benefits, debts, housing, relationship breakdown, employments issues etc. Building on its partnership work with Social Services, Police, Education and Health, Waverley has also been at the forefront in developing a 'troubled families' team known as Waverley Family Support. This service will also contribute to the prevention of homelessness agenda by providing co-ordinated support and advocacy for some of the most vulnerable households in Waverley and help them get their lives back on track.
- 23.31 Among those that require assistance due to homelessness are those with vulnerabilities and support needs. The Council works in partnership with supported housing providers, Social Services, health services and the police to ensure that those less able to manage their affairs or at risk of homelessness receive the necessary support. Council officers often attend Adult and Child Protection meetings as well as multi agency public protection meetings regarding ex offenders and risk management meetings for victims of domestic abuse. Waverley will continue its partnership work with Guildford and Woking Councils in arranging Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) for Waverley clients and work with colleagues in the other Surrey Councils as part of the Surrey Homelessness Alliance to improve the level of assistance offered to rough sleepers and single homeless people.
- 23.32 The Executive now

RECOMMENDs that

- 9. Waverley adopts the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2013 – 2018, contained in Annexe 7, and notes the information contained in Waverley's homelessness review which forms the appendix of the Strategy.**

[Reason: to adopt a strategy that sets out the priority areas for addressing homelessness in Waverley over the coming years].

24. REPORT FROM THE STANDARDS PANEL

- 24.1 The Localism Act gave Councils an explicit duty to promote and maintain high standards of Member conduct. It abolished the statutory model Code of Conduct and replaced it with an obligation on the Council to adopt a Code dealing with the high standard of conduct that is expected of Members when acting in their official capacity. The Code had to include such provision as the Council considers appropriate for the registration and disclosure of pecuniary and other interests. It set up a new category of disclosable pecuniary interests which involve very strong sanctions, and made failure to disclose this type of interest a criminal offence.
- 24.2 The Government did not prescribe what local Codes must contain, other than stipulating that they must be consistent with the following principles of holding public office first set out by Lord Nolan's Committee on Standards in Public Life in the 1990s: -

- selflessness
 - integrity
 - objectivity
 - accountability
 - openness
 - honesty
 - leadership
- 24.3 The Code adopted by the Council in July 2012 is attached as Annexe 8. The Code applies to both elected councillors and co-opted members when they act in their official capacity (paragraph 1(1)). The seven principles of public life are given prominence in paragraph 1(3).
- 24.4 The Council agreed to include some general obligations of good conduct transposed from the template code provided by the Minister for Local Government, these included: -
- treating other persons with respect;
 - not breaching confidences except in limited circumstances; and
 - only using the resources of the Council for proper purposes.
- 24.5 The Code cautions against the acceptance of excessive gifts or hospitality but there was no requirement to register individual items. Council agreed to continue to require registration of gifts or hospitality if the estimated value exceeded £25, to help maintain public confidence in Waverley's high standards. The Panel, at its meeting on 25 June, commented that this item was too low and had been in place for some time. It was suggested that the levels for gifts and hospitality could be different and the Panel proposed increasing the levels to £50 for gifts and £100 for hospitality.
- 24.6 The Code made provision for the registration and disclosure of pecuniary interests. The annexe to the Code sets out the definition of these. Council also agreed it was appropriate to make provision for a limited number of non-pecuniary interests to be registered. These covered membership of or occupation of a position of general control or management of the following bodies: -
- bodies to which the Member has been nominated by the Council;
 - bodies exercising functions of a public nature;
 - bodies directed to charitable purposes; and
 - bodies whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion
- 24.7 Paragraph 7 of the draft Code takes account of the new legislative position on allegations of bias or predetermination.
- 24.8 The Council appointed two Independent Persons whose views must be sought by the Council before it takes a decision on an allegation which it has decided shall be investigated, or at any other stage. These are Vivienne Cameron and Tony Allenby. The Member against which an allegation has been made can also consult them. They have been consulted on three initial investigations.

- 24.9 They have also been asked for general views on the operation of the Code. One of the Persons, Tony Allenby, has suggested the Council might look again at the wording of the Code relating to non-pecuniary interests such as Club or Society membership, and whether this is necessary particularly for ordinary members. Vivienne Cameron has suggested that the Independent Persons might become more involved overall rather than just being consulted in writing. The Standards Panel considered these comments and felt that to maintain their independence, Independent Persons should not be invited to meetings, unless regarding matters where their views were sought, but that it would be beneficial for the Chairman to meet informally about standards matters (not particularly cases) with the Monitoring Officer, on a 6monthly basis. Furthermore, Members felt that whether or not membership to clubs or societies should be disclosed at meetings as a non-pecuniary interest was up to the Member concerned to decide, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer if required. Members felt that retaining disclosure of Local Club and Society membership as non-pecuniary interests was still important in retaining community confidence in transparency.
- 24.10 The intention in handling allegations was to provide for arrangements that are substantially simpler and clearer than the previous procedures. Council adopted the procedures in July 2012 which have since been revised by the Standards Panel at its meeting on 25 June 2013 and the proposed revised arrangements are set out in Annexe 9.
- 24.11 When Council adopted the new Scheme of Members' Allowances it agreed to allocate an allowance to the Chairman of the new Standards Panel, of the current level of £1,761. This represented a saving of £1,200 on the Members' Allowances budget.
- 24.12 Officers worked through the Surrey Secretaries Group to aim to have broadly consistent Codes of Conduct across Surrey. This has largely been achieved, though the essence of the Localism Act approach is that Councils should be free to adopt arrangements that reflect their particular circumstances.
- 24.13 Council agreed that in future these be dealt by the Monitoring Officer in the following circumstances –
- (i) That so many Members of the decision-making body have disclosable pecuniary interests in a matter that it would “impede the transaction of the business”. In practice this means that the decision-making body would be inquorate as a result;
 - (ii) That, without the dispensation, the representation of different political groups on the body transacting the business would be so upset as to alter the outcome of any vote on party lines on the matter, in which case, it would be inappropriate to grant a dispensation to enable them to participate;
 - (iii) That the authority considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
 - (iv) That, without a dispensation, no member of the Executive would be able to participate on this matter; or
 - (v) That the Council considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation. This will inevitably be fact specific.

- 24.14 Any grant of a dispensation must specify how long it lasts for, up to a maximum of 4 years.
- 24.15 All Councillors were asked for their views on the operation of the Code, three responded and their comments are set out in Annexe 10. Two of the Members do not feel it appropriate to have a full review at this stage apart from looking again at the level of hospitality specified. One Councillor has given detailed comments relating to a particular Hearing which started under the previous Code. The aim of the new arrangements was to meet several of the criticism raised, and to date there have been no Hearings of the type the Councillor refers to under the new Code.
- 24.16 Under the new arrangements, the Monitoring Officer is the first contact for all complaints. The arrangements anticipate an initial review, and if necessary a consultation with the Independent Person. If the complaint is trivial or a breach of the Code is not specified, the process may end there with the complainant being given reasons. In the last ten months two complaints have been dealt with by the Monitoring Officer responding, and in three further cases a more detailed initial investigation has been carried out by the Monitoring Officer, the Councillors the subject of the complaint interviewed and the views of the Independent Persons sought on the action proposed. These views have proved very helpful and constructive, and given the process the element of Independent scrutiny that is important in maintaining public confidence in the new Arrangements. This early stage provides for the possibility of informal resolution without a formal investigation.
- 24.17 If a complaint alleged the commission of a criminal offence relating to a declarable pecuniary interest, the police would need to be informed. However, no such complaints have been received. If the Monitoring Officer feels an investigation is appropriate, the investigative procedure is set out in paragraph 5 of the note. It has not been necessary so far to use this procedure.
- 24.18 One issue that has been highlighted by an investigation into a complaint under the previous Code is the need for treating investigation reports as confidential. The Panel considered this and made some amendments to strengthen and clarify the Code and arrangements to deal with this.
- 24.19 The procedure for a Panel hearing is set out in paragraph 7.2 of the arrangements. A summary of possible actions, if a breach of the Code is established, is provided in paragraph 8. On request of the Standards Panel, the Monitoring Officer agreed to find out and clarify that these are the same sanctions available to a Town/Parish Council on receipt of a Town/Parish Councillor complaint.
- 24.20 The Standards Panel, having considered revisions to the Code of Conduct and the Arrangements, agreed to recommend the following amendments which are reflected in the attached documents:
- The hospitality limit should be increased to £100 and gifts to £50.
 - It should be made clear in the Arrangements that Panel Members cannot represent Members or contact other Panel Members about a complaint

and nor shall any other representative contact the Panel Members, and if any Member has had contact, they should not continue to take part on a Panel.

- There should be included a statement that all Parties should work together to complete the process within reasonable timescales.
- The Code and arrangements should be strengthened to make it clear that investigation reports are confidential and that any breach of this would be treated as a breach of the Code.

24.21 The current constitution reflects the previous standards regime. A suggested update to this considered by the Standards Panel is attached as Annexe 11.

24.22 The Monitoring Officer and Deputy arranged three training sessions for all Waverley Members on the new framework. Training sessions were also organised for all Town and Parish Councils, and training given on two occasions to a Town Council following a Hearings Panel decision on a complaint begun under the previous arrangements.

24.23 The Executive deferred consideration of the revised Planning Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol and these will be presented again at its next meeting. The Executive now

RECOMMENDS that

- 10. the revised Waverley Code of Conduct and Arrangements for handling complaints at Annexes 8 and 9 be adopted;**
- 11. the Independent Persons and Town and Parish representatives be reappointed until May 2015;**
- 12. the revisions to the Constitution, attached at Annexe 11 to the report, be approved and adopted; and**
- 13. the Code of Conduct be reviewed again after the next Borough Elections in May 2015.**

[Reason: to review the operation of the standards framework adopted in July 2012].

25. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

At 8.24 p.m. it was

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Procedure Rule 20, and in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during these items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information (as defined by Section 100I of the Act) of the description specified in the following paragraphs of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, namely:-

Minute 26

Information relating to an individual (paragraph 1)

Minute 27

Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (paragraph 2)

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (paragraph 3)

Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime (paragraph 7).

26. REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

The Executive considered a report on this matter, attached as (Exempt) Annexe 12 and now

RECOMMENDS that

14. the recommendations set out in (Exempt) Annexe 12 be agreed.

27. DIRECT PERFORMANCE OF REQUIREMENTS OF AN ENFORCEMENT NOTICE

The Executive considered a report on this matter, attached as (Exempt) Annexe 13 and now

RECOMMENDS that

15. the recommendations set out in (Exempt) Annexe 13 be agreed.

Part II – Matters Reported in Detail for the Information of the Council

There were no matters falling within this category.

Part III – Brief Summaries of Other Matters Dealt With

28. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that the forward programme of key decisions for Waverley Borough Council be adopted.

29. BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT MAY 2013

RESOLVED that

1. further consideration be given to the position at the September meeting when a further report will be presented;
2. the addition to the General Fund Capital Programme of £10,000 for the Paper-Free Planning Project funded by Planning Delivery Grant be approved, as detailed in paragraph 12 of the report;
3. the virement within the Capital Programme of £13,000 from the AutoCad site licence to the e-mail archiving and encryption project be approved and the CMT decision that the £4,000 to meet the additional revenue cost of the e-mail archiving and encryption project and £2,500 ongoing revenue cost be met by budget virement from the annual licence savings negotiated with Civica regarding Comino workflow be endorsed;
4. £10,000 budget virement from the overall underspend to fund the Freedom Parade be approved;
5. an increase of £29,000 to the Development Consultancy budget met by virement from the overall underspend to fund the costs of the Planning Inspector for the Public Enquiry regarding the Brightwells Compulsory Purchase Orders be approved; and
6. the additional works (Kitchens £325,500, Bathrooms £238,650, Roofs £294,266 and £384,461 of roof works being removed) to properties within the HRA Capital Programme in accordance with the schedule at (Exempt) Annexe 5 of the report be approved.

The Executive further agreed to RECOMMEND to the COUNCIL that the Council agrees a supplementary estimate of £70,000 to cover planning enforcement costs and a recommendation to this effect has been dealt with under Minute No. 27.

[Reason: To monitor the progress of revenue expenditure, income, capital expenditure compared with the budget for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account].

30. TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Performance for 2012/13 and 2013/14 to date be noted and the approach to Treasury Management activity endorsed.

[Reason: to summarise Waverley's investment performance and propose amendments to current investment limits.]

31. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANIES

RESOLVED

1. to recognise that CICs exist and make a contribution to the community;

2. that CICs are not included within the discretionary rate relief policy;
3. that the Indigo Café is invited to submit an application for grant support under the Waverley Community Partnerships Fund for 2014/2015;
4. that any future application for rate relief from a CIC be considered on its merits and, if it doesn't meet Waverley's approved policy, the organisation be invited to submit a grant funding application, provided that it meets the criteria, and are also directed towards SCC and their respective town or parish council to seek funding; and
5. that officers be asked to investigate whether a system of rate rebates could be devised to apply to CICs which are clearly of a charitable nature, and how it could be applied, and to report back to the Executive within six months.

[Reason: To agree how requests for financial support from Community Interest Companies should be considered].

32. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL FOR GODALMING TOWN CENTRE

RESOLVED that the draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Godalming Town Centre be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

[Reason: to seek approval to undertake a formal consultation on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) for Godalming Town Centre.]

33. REFURBISHMENT – HERONS LEISURE CENTRE

[This item contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)]

RESOLVED that

1. the appointment of the preferred contractor be approved, as identified in the (Exempt) Annexe, to work up to the completion of Stage 2 of the tender process for the refurbishment of the Herons Leisure Centre;
2. the spending of the preferred contractor's pre-construction cost identified in the (Exempt) Annexe be approved, to be funded from the approved Herons capital budget;
3. officers be authorised to negotiate with DC Leisure to agree the revenue impact of the capital schemes on the management fee;

4. officers be requested to submit a progress report to the October meeting of the Executive and the Shottermill Trust, along with a re-profiled capital budget for the scheme; and
5. officers be requested to present to the Executive and Council, in February 2014, detailed designed and costed scheme proposals and options, including final revenue implications, for approval.

[Reason: to obtain authorisation from the Executive to appoint the contractor to carry out Stage 2 of the tendering process].

34. RIVERSIDE TENDER APPROVAL – CONTRACT AWARD FOR CABLING WORKS, FARNHAM LEISURE CENTRE CAR PARK AND SKATE-PARK GROUND WORKS

[This item contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)]

RESOLVED that

1. the capital request set out at Annexe 3 to the report, be approved for the Leisure Centre Car Park and Skate Park works to be included in the contract, to be funded from the Brightwells approved budget in the first instance pending agreement that the LEP funding can be used;
2. the contract for the cabling ground works, the Riverside tennis club and car park works and Leisure Centre and skate park works be awarded to the preferred contractor identified in (Exempt) Annexe 1 of the report;
3. approval be given to the commencement of the ground works for the cabling and skate park, and improvements to the Leisure Centre car park; and
4. approval be given to enter into discussions with the M3 LEP Board regarding extending the use of the funding loan to cover the Leisure Centre car park improvements and skate park ground works.

[Reason: to obtain authority to proceed with the award of the tender to the successful contractor].

35. GARAGE AREA ADJACENT TO 64 HULLMEAD, SHAMLEY GREEN: APPROVAL TO SUBMIT PLANNING APPLICATION

RESOLVED that approval be given to the submission of a planning application for the development of the under-used garage site adjacent to 64 Hullmead, Shamley Green to provide two new 2 bedroom affordable homes to meet housing need.

[Reason: to seek approval to submit a planning application].

36. HOME IMPROVEMENT POLICY

RESOLVED that the Home Improvement Policy for Waverley be approved for implementation with effect from 17 July 2013.

[Reason: to introduce a revised Private Sector Home Improvement Policy for Waverley.]

37. GAS SAFETY, ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) POLICIES AND POLICY WHEN REQUIRING TENANTS TO MOVE (DECANT)

RESOLVED that the Gas Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Policy when requiring tenants to move (Decant) be approved.

[Reason: to adopt policies which will confirm the Council's commitment to ensuring all homes are safe, adhere to legal requirements, effectively deal with ASB and support council tenants].

38. ROWLEDGE LOCAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FIRST CONSULTATION FINDINGS

RESOLVED that

1. agreement be given to local government electors in the area to which the petition relates, including the village of Rowledge and the area referred to as the Sandrock Triangle, being consulted during the second consultation period; and
2. the method of consultation be by way of questionnaire, as outlined in the Terms of Reference, sent to each local government elector falling within the area to which the petition relates.

[Reason: to present the findings of the first consultation period and to seek approval to proceed to the second consultation period.]

39. PROPOSAL FOR SHOPPERS' PARKING PERMIT SCHEME TRIAL – HASLEMERE HIGH STREET CAR PARK

The Portfolio Holder for Parking amended the terms of the trial scheme at the meeting, the details of which are as follows:-

- to apply to Haslemere High Street Car Park only
- to initially be for a 12-month trial period
- to be limited to 50 permits initially, to be revisited each quarter
- the permit to cost £50
- hours of parking to be between 3.00 pm and 5.30 pm Monday to Wednesday.]

RESOLVED that the proposal to embark on a time-limited trial of a pre-payment parking permit scheme at High Street Car Park in Haslemere be endorsed and Officers be instructed to proceed with the issuing of a Notice of Variation to enable the scheme to commence as soon as possible.

[Reason: to seek approval to proceed with the introduction of a time-limited trial of a pre-payment shoppers' parking permit scheme in Haslemere]

40. AIR QUALITY ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

RESOLVED that the Air Quality Annual Progress Report be endorsed.

[Reason: to receive and endorse the progress report]

41. NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOUSING COMPLAINTS AND ROLE OF DESIGNATED PERSONS

RESOLVED that the report be noted, taking into account the observations from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

[Reason: to provide information about the nature of the role of designated person]

42. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT EXCEPTION REPORT Q4 (JAN-MARCH 2013) AND END OF YEAR OUTTURN 2012/13

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be thanked for their observations and recommendations and the performance figures for Quarter 4 (January – March) and end-of-year outturn for 2012/13 be noted, as set out at Annexe 1 to the report.

[Reason: to review performance indicators to help identify improvement priorities and progress against targets].

43. PROPERTY MATTERS

[This item contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)]

[NB. Cllr Adam Taylor-Smith left the meeting during consideration of this item].

RESOLVED that

1. the Rowledge Bowling Club be granted a surrender of their existing lease and a grant of a further lease of 40 years on terms and conditions as set out in (Exempt) Annexe 1, other terms and conditions to be agreed by the Estates and Valuation Manager;
2. an easement of access be granted to Long Island, Border Road, Haslemere, on terms and conditions set out in (Exempt) Annexe 2b, other terms and conditions to be negotiated by the Estates and Valuation Manager;
3. the Engine House at Sicklemill House be sold to the owners of 1 Sicklemill House on terms and conditions set out in (Exempt) Annexe 3, other terms and conditions to be negotiated by the Estates and Valuation Manager; and
4. a lease to the owners of Weycolour House be granted on terms and conditions set out in (Exempt) Annexe 4b, other terms and conditions to be negotiated by the Estates and Valuation Manager.

[Reason: to consider a number of property-related issues in the Borough].

44. SURREY LEADERS' GROUP NOMINATION – SURREY CC PENSION FUND

RESOLVED that Cllr Tony Gordon-Smith be put forward as the Waverley nomination for the Surrey Leaders' Group representative on the Surrey CC Pension Fund.

45. REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

[This item contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 1 of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

Information relating to an individual]

RESOLVED that Postholder AG06 be granted flexible retirement from August 2013, in accordance with the Council's flexible retirement policy.

The meeting commenced at 6.45 p.m. and concluded at 8.28 p.m.

Chairman