

To: All Members of the Council

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Date: 3 December 2021

Dear Councillor

**COUNCIL MEETING - TUESDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2021**

A MEETING of the WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL will be held in the CAUDLE HALL, WILFRID NOYCE COMMUNITY CENTRE, CROWN COURT CAR PARK, GODALMING, GU7 1DY on **TUESDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2021** at **7.00 pm** and you are hereby summoned to attend this meeting.

The Agenda for the Meeting is set out below.

Yours sincerely

ROBIN TAYLOR

Head of Policy and Governance

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[www.waverley.gov.uk/committees](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/committees)

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**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC F\_PR

To respond to questions from members of the public, received in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.

The deadline for receipt of questions is 5pm on Tuesday 7 December 2021.

Question from Mr Daniel Kuszel:

“The Council's discussion of a new leisure centre at Cranleigh is welcome, although £20 million is almost 4 times the price of the leisure centre built in Godalming only 9 years ago. Why is the proposed price so expensive? Additionally, it has been known by the authority since 2018 that Godalming Leisure Centre has vastly outperformed its estimated revenue, with the facility significantly oversubscribed. Additional facilities are needed for the centre. If Cranleigh is to benefit from a new leisure centre at a cost of £20 million, Haslemere enjoying the benefit of 2 leisure centres, why is no money available to expand Godalming Leisure Centre, a town twice the size of Haslemere that has already exceeded its allocation of new housing under the Council's Local Plan 11 years ahead of schedule?”

7. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL F\_PR

To respond to any questions received from Members of the Council in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.2.

The deadline for receipt of questions is 5pm on Tuesday 7 December 2021.

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### COUNCIL

14 DECEMBER 2021

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#### **Agenda Item 6. Questions from members of the public**

##### **1. From Mr Daniel Kuszel**

“The Council's discussion of a new leisure centre at Cranleigh is welcome, although £20 million is almost 4 times the price of the leisure centre built in Godalming only 9 years ago. Why is the proposed price so expensive? Additionally, it has been known by the authority since 2018 that Godalming Leisure Centre has vastly outperformed its estimated revenue, with the facility significantly oversubscribed. Additional facilities are needed for the centre. If Cranleigh is to benefit from a new leisure centre at a cost of £20 million, Haslemere enjoying the benefit of 2 leisure centres, why is no money available to expand Godalming Leisure Centre, a town twice the size of Haslemere that has already exceeded its allocation of new housing under the Council's Local Plan 11 years ahead of schedule?”

##### **Response from Councillor Liz Townsend, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Leisure and Dunsfold Park**

Thank you for your question. We as an administration are very pleased to be in a position to present a viable business proposal for a new Cranleigh Leisure Centre. The leisure centre is 52 years old and has far exceeded its life expectancy and we are therefore, at a point where Council has to make a critical decision regarding the future of leisure provision in the Cranleigh area. The proposal for a new facility is based on a combination of cost proposals from the consultants, Sport England guidance and local leisure operator experience. In addition to Cranleigh being a larger site, with more facilities than Godalming, there has been a significant amount of change since Godalming Leisure Centre was built in 2012 so a direct comparison, as you suggest, does not give an accurate picture. The challenges of an increase in construction costs (labour and materials), a global pandemic and a corporate commitment and responsibility to reduce carbon emissions has resulted in an increase to the updated costings.

The Council must consider the entire leisure stock and prioritise where finance is spent to ensure that the facilities meet the demands of the local community. Cranleigh Leisure centre is over 50 years old and Farnham Leisure Centre is over 40 years old and as you highlighted Godalming is only 9 years old. However, a redevelopment of the Godalming Leisure Centre, to accommodate the public demand, is still very much in mind and we are awaiting a decision from the Department for Education regarding the release of school land to enable the project to move forward. The pandemic has had a substantial impact on the leisure industry, and it is imperative that we review all business decisions to ensure that the projects still remain viable. Once we have received approval from the DfE to proceed we will conduct such a review accordingly.

##### **2. From Mr Mike Baudry**

“The Council is aware of Haslemere Town Council’s representations that it supports the allocation of the Royal School within LPP2 but only on the basis of a ‘limit of development of 90 units only, being on land on which there were **previously constructed buildings or hardstanding**.’ The Leader confirmed at the Full Council meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 that he had responded to and would continue to listen to the community of Haslemere, as represented by HTC and its Neighbourhood Plan. It is concerning that the Officer’s report on LPP2 accompanying this evening’s meeting does not propose any amendments to the Royal School allocation in reflection of the requirements of the Town Council. The Town Council are clear that no development over the playing fields and green spaces of the site, being wholly within the AONB, must be permitted. Please can Members amend the description of the Royal School allocation to reflect the Town Council’s position.

Further Haslemere Vision has also now stated that the numbers proposed at the Royal School site seem high.”

### **Response from Councillor Andy MacLeod, Portfolio Holder for Planning**

“Waverley is aware that that Town Council has commented on the Addendum to LPP2 that they feel the dwellings proposed in the housing allocation for the Royal Junior School should be accommodated within the existing built-up area of the site and also that Haslemere Vision have stated that the numbers seem high. However, both the Town Council and Haslemere Vision are clear in their general support for the allocation of this site for housing. Whilst it is in the AONB, the site is classed as previously-developed land, it already has a number of buildings and areas of hardstanding on it, and is visually very well screened. The evidence that the Council has gathered concludes that there is a low to medium sensitivity to development in landscape terms. Taking these matters into account, Waverley considers that the number of dwellings proposed for the site in Local Plan Part 2 is appropriate and there is no need to change the allocation. It is recognised that it will not be possible to design an acceptable scheme for this number of units that is solely contained within the footprint of the existing buildings and hard surfaced areas. However, the Council is confident that the character of the site, its size and degree of natural screening are such that a well-designed scheme for the quantum of development as proposed in the Addendum to LPP2 can be accommodated without having an adverse impact on the countryside and AONB.”

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#### Agenda Item 7. Questions from Members

##### 1. From Cllr Richard Seaborne, Bramley Busbridge & Hascombe Ward

“On September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019, this Council declared a Climate Emergency, requiring urgent action. At the same meeting the Council resolved to instruct officers to provide to the Council’s Executive, within six months of the date of the decision, a report on the actions the Council and the local community could take to address these issues together with an action plan, specifying year on year milestones and metrics to show progress towards achieving the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030 noting any additional costs that might be involved.

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, some 15 months later, a Carbon Neutrality Action Plan was brought to Council for noting, having been approved by Executive two weeks earlier. Some delay was understandable because of Covid but nine months seems a lot given the declared need for urgent action.

That plan stated: *This action plan is intended to be a live document and will be updated frequently as required. An update of the action plan will be presented to Executive and Environment O&S Committee annually with the next update scheduled for October 2021 in order to align with budget setting processes for the following year.*

Will the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability please advise members when they can expect to see the update to the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan? Neither Executive nor Environment O&S or its successor committee has seen anything in formal meetings and so it will not be until sometime in 2022 that the clearly stated objective in the plan can be delivered, well after the time for 2022-23 budget setting.”

##### **Response from Councillor Steve Williams, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability**

I am pleased to confirm that the annual update on the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Services on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and then to the Executive on 8<sup>th</sup> February and Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.

##### 2. From Cllr Steve Cosser, Godalming Charterhouse Ward

“As we near the end of 2021 it is now 27 months since this Council declared a climate emergency but we have as yet seen no hard numerical data with which to gauge progress in that period. The Carbon Neutrality Action Plan published at the end of 2020 was based on a 2015 baseline figure for the Council's operational CO2 emissions. When the overdue update to the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan is released can we be assured that this will contain fully detailed current data that will enable the Council to make effective judgements on how much progress has actually been made towards achieving the Council's stated objective of carbon neutral operations by 2030 and, if not, why not?”

**Response from Councillor Steve Williams, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability**

Since the adoption of the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan in December 2020, councillors have received regular progress reports on elements of the action plan at meetings of both the executive and full council in the regular portfolio holder updates. An informal interim update of the plan has been presented to Executive members in July 2021. The Greenhouse Gas emissions data for 2020/21 has also been produced and is available on Waverley's website.

I am pleased to confirm that the annual update on the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Services on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and then to the Executive on 8<sup>th</sup> February and Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.

The Carbon Neutrality Action Plan was adopted as a living document and not a fully quantified 10 year plan. The Council has engaged consultancy support for reviewing the trajectory and providing some quantification on key projects, including costs. The revised Carbon Neutrality Action Plan along with the covering report will provide key data to indicate and measure progress toward our target of carbon neutrality by 2030. The plan will continue to be reviewed and updated with more specific numerical data as and when projects mature and have funding allocated to them. This way the Executive can make fully informed decisions on a project by project basis.

**3. From Cllr Val Henry**

“How much Officer resource has been devoted in 2021 to the task of researching and calculating the Council's carbon reduction targets and estimating the associated costs and timescales of achieving these targets? AND, Is the Administration planning to increase that level of Officer resource in 2022?”

**Response from**

The plan and its targets constitute a corporate commitment impacting on every activity of the council and therefore requiring officer time from across the council services. As a result the actual overall level of officer resource devoted to it is difficult to quantify.

The sustainability team, a team of 3 officers supported by the Head of Environmental and Regulatory services, is responsible for managing and coordinating the progress on the Carbon Neutrality Action across all council services and managing its monitoring processes.

We are currently actively considering additional resources to support the delivery of this very ambitious plan in order to both focus on the range of key priorities in our Carbon Neutrality Action Plan , facilitate carbon reduction work across the full range of service areas and see through our commitment to developing our waste reduction strategy.

#### **4. From Cllr Sally Dickson**

“Earlier this year, £50000 was allocated for a preliminary feasibility study in respect of the Hale Trail or Eastern Boundary Cycle Path. Please could the Portfolio Holder provide an update?”

#### **Response from Councillor Steve Williams, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability**

Waverley remains committed to delivery of the Farnham Park, Eastern Boundary Cycle Path (Hale Trail). The project was included as part of the Surrey County, Waverley Borough and Farnham Town Council partnership to deliver the wider Farnham Infrastructure Programme (FIP). The Hale Trail Greenway along the eastern boundary of Farnham Park, had been included in the list of infrastructure improvements as one of the ‘medium term interventions’.

Unfortunately, the sift and prioritisation of this list by FIP has been delayed. Therefore, Waverley, concerned about the need to progress this project in this financial year, has now agreed with the FIP Programme Manager to remove the Hale Trail from the FIP list and proceed directly with the preliminary study. Following an initial meeting with FIP, a way ahead has been proposed. The Atkins project manager is outlining a feasibility study for the FIP programme manager. This study would look at all the aspects of the Greenway and provide a small number of options with rough costings. Following consultation and option selection, the project would proceed with detailed design, securing the construction funding and then implementation.

Waverley remains committed to delivery of the Farnham Park, Eastern Boundary Cycle Path (Hale Trail Greenway). It is incorporated into our Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.

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