

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 20 OCTOBER 2015

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

**Present**

Cllr Robert Knowles (Chairman)  
Cllr Julia Potts (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Brian Adams  
Cllr Kevin Deanus

Cllr Tom Martin  
Cllr Wyatt Ramsdale  
Cllr Stefan Reynolds  
Cllr Simon Thornton

**Apologies**

Cllr Carole King

**Also Present**

Councillor Peter Isherwood

50. MINUTES (Agenda item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 July 2015 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Carole King.

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3)

There were no declarations of interest raised under this heading.

53. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4)

There were no questions received from members of the public.

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL**

Background Papers

Unless specified under an individual item, there are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to the reports in Part I of these minutes.

54. BUDGET MANAGEMENT 2015/16 (Agenda item 6)

- 54.1 The Executive has considered the budget management report which acts as a review of service delivery progress against the 2015/16 budget for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for period to end of July and RESOLVED that
1. a virement of £10,000 from contracted services to rent-related expenses in Homelessness be approved, as detailed in paragraph 10 of the report;
  2. a virement of £30,000 be approved from the additional investment income to cover predicted Legal fees detailed in paragraph 19 of the report;
  3. the carry forward of £320,000 from the structural budget into 2016/17 be approved, as detailed in paragraph 27; and
  4. a virement of £35,000 be approved for capital works to lifts from work arising in year (a project change) as detailed in paragraph 27 of the report.
- 54.2 For the HRA Capital programme, a review is underway, including the projects carried forward for completion from 2014/15. The Council will be requested to approve various budget re-alignments and rescheduling following a review of each scheme, including restating the cost base and allowing contingencies.
- 54.3 The door and window contract is due for renewal so it is planned to use a framework contract to complete the majority of the door and window programme. Additional funding of boiler compliance work is required and it is requested that this be covered by the predicted underspend on doors and windows and drainage work (see column titled saving/(overspend) in the table below and highlighted in red type:

**HRA Core Capital  
2015/16**

Work Stream	Budget	2015-16 Expenditure	Budget Remaining	Rescheduled	Saving / (Overspend)
	£	£	£	£	£
Compliance Work	1,086,400	61,771	1,002,879		(215,400)
Damp proof / cavity wall	300,000	(4,927)	300,000		
<b>DH External work</b>	<b>1,225,025</b>	<b>39,475</b>	<b>1,069,371</b>		<b>138,400</b>
DH Internal work	4,060,100	466,655	1,978,705		
Disabled Adaptations	200,000	32,075	121,613		
<b>Other Capital Work</b>	<b>471,600</b>	<b>30,823</b>	<b>428,670</b>		<b>77,000</b>
Sheltered Lighting	550,000	0	107,649		
Structural work	800,000	8,933	791,067	320,000	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£8,693,125</b>	<b>£634,805</b>	<b>£5,799,954</b>	<b>£320,000</b>	<b>£0</b>

54.4 The Executive

**RECOMMENDS that**

- 20. virements between the capital projects of £83,600 (doors), £54,800 (windows) and £77,000 (drainage) to communal boiler and heating work be approved, as detailed in the table above at paragraph 54.3.**

*[Reason: to consider a review of service delivery progress against the 2015/16 budget]*

55. PLAY AREA STRATEGY 2015 - 2024 (Agenda item 10)

- 55.1 A Play Area Strategy for the Council has been produced by undertaking a complete review of play provision across the Borough (including Town and Parish Council owned sites) of all known playground, skatepark and multi-use games area (MUGA) sites. The review involved measuring areas of formal and informal play space and comparing it to; Fields in Trust (FiT) Standards, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) assessments of play value and accessibility and lastly the estimated life expectancy of playground equipment.
- 55.2 This information has been compiled to produce an up-to-date strategy with recommendations and an action plan enabling the Council to have a structured approach towards playground provision and refurbishment across the borough. The strategy provides the evidence for sound reasoning and justification to use development gains from the planning process such as Planning Infrastructure Charge (PIC), Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 monies.
- 55.3 Whilst producing the play area strategy, the Council fully consulted with playground providers and the planning department in order to fully understand the levels of provision across the borough. This year the Council has already completed three playground refurbishments; Phillips Memorial Park, Holloway Hill and Farnham Park Play Area. Consultations took place for all three schemes using a range of communication channels including social media. Each scheme received over 400 responses from local residents and park users who voted for their favourite design
- 55.4 Consultations on design options for the partial refurbishment of the Broadwater Park and Aarons Hill play areas have recently been completed and work is due to start on the refurbishment of these sites. Furthermore the Council is also conducting a survey on the provision of play at Oast House Crescent and White Cottage Close, Farnham and Hale Reeds Open Space.
- 55.5 The Council has also implemented a phased signage improvement programme across all the boroughs play areas. Phase one (32 play areas) has been completed and phase two (8 play areas) is in progress. The signage has been designed to inform users; of the name of the play area, that the play area is managed by Waverley Borough Council, how to get in touch with the council and the ages of children the site is intended for.

Phase three will be implemented as part of the ongoing refurbishment programme.

- 55.6 The Council aims to provide clean and challenging play environments that are accessible for children of all abilities and ages to play together. This enables children to play in a social environment where they will experience and learn about risk. Clearly the Council aims to minimise risk and to not provide unsafe play opportunities but must balance this against the level of challenge provided. All playgrounds managed by the Council will confirm to the relevant safety standards applicable and endorsed by RoSPA.
- 55.7 One of the main focuses of the play area strategy is to constantly seek to improve the play provision and environment of the playgrounds and skate parks directly managed by the Council by a programme of continual refurbishment of sites each year (see Action Plan at [Annexe 1](#)). Wherever possible we will seek to encourage and influence other playground providers such as local development, Town & Parish Councils and other organisations to also provide challenging play environments and to continually seek to improve the play provision and play environment.
- 55.8 Where it is of interest to the Council, the transfer of the management and maintenance of playgrounds over to the Town & Parish Councils will be considered. When local development provides new play provision, the Council will seek to ensure that these are managed by a management company rather than the Council taking on the management and maintenance obligations and associated costs and risks.

### Health and Wellbeing

- 55.9 The Play Area Strategy promotes the 'Health and Well Being' benefits of adequate play provision in terms of quantity and quality of play value. There is a large body of research that highlights the benefits of open space and physical activity for children and adults alike in reducing health inequalities and improving mental as well as physical health. This research complements the physical activity guidelines for children and adults produced by the Department of Health. There is also evidence that the more children play outside, the more likely they are to do so as adults and therefore to go on and encourage their own children to play outside.
- 55.10 The greatest health risk facing children today is obesity. Recent statistics from the National Centre for Health Statistics report that the number of obese and overweight children is increasing. It is also known that Children who are obese are more likely to become adults who are obese. Therefore the adequate provision of play opportunities for children within the borough that provide access to challenging physical activity are essential to providing a solution to combat child obesity.

### Executive Summary

- 55.11 The Play Area Strategy provides an executive summary which summarises the main 35-page document and its appendices A-F, ([Annexe 2](#)), and sets out its purpose and timescale over a ten-year period from 2014-2024 and

includes methodology, introduction to play, standards for play and recommendations for action.

### Recommendations

55.12 The Play Area Strategy provides recommendations which have been organised into geographical areas, giving an opportunity to see provision for communities as a whole rather than just in ward areas. Where the strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has highlighted potential development sites, these have been identified as presenting an opportunity for improved play infrastructure in that area. Whilst these sites are not confirmed development sites, they have been highlighted in case an opportunity for play provision arises. Annexe 2 (Executive Summary) summarises the main recommendations of the play area strategy.

### Action Plan

55.13 The findings from the recommendations have enabled an action plan to be drawn up that addresses current and future needs for play provision. The action plan lists playground sites generally in order of priority of need for refurbishment and also includes areas for review and consideration such as new play areas (Action Plan, Annexe 1). Sometimes the order of priority will change dependent on funding available, e.g. PIC/s106 and the forthcoming CIL or the condition of the equipment changes significantly.

### Local Development Links

55.14 The details of this action plan will enable a direct link to be made to the Council's justifications for spending PIC monies on play area improvements and will put the Council in an ideal position when CIL contributions become available. The playing area strategy will provide a sound justification to argue successfully for developer contributions (once adopted by the Council) to be used towards; maintenance, quality improvements, additional play provision and other facility improvement.

### Funding and Risk Implications

55.15 The Council will need to decide how to fund investment into play provision and refurbishment against the other competing priorities of the Council. This could be achieved by considering a combination of capital investment, use of PIC/s106 & and the future CIL from planning gains and also any identified external grant funds available during the normal budget setting process.

55.16 Should the Council decide not to fund investments into play provision and refurbishment, the Council will be at risk of; providing inadequate play provision, providing poor play value, missing out of the health and well being benefits and potentially providing poor maintained facilities which may pose a health and safety risk.

### Financial Implications

55.17 Playground provision and the refurbishment of existing play areas associated with this play strategy are not fully funded so funding will be sought from a

combination of capital investment, use of PIC/s106 and the future CIL and any identified external grant funds. In addition to the capital investment in playground facilities there is an ongoing revenue cost for inspections and repairs. By continuing the ongoing refurbishment programme maintenance costs associated with older playgrounds should be reduced over time.

- 55.18 Where new developments provide new playground provision as part of the overall scheme, the management and maintenance costs will be covered by the setting up of management companies who manage and maintain the play area independently, rather than the Council incurring the costs associated.
- 55.19 On occasions there may be a requirement for new playgrounds to be provided directly by the Council in order to deliver adequate play area provision. As a result the Council would then be responsible for the additional management and maintenance costs associated.
- 55.20 The Executive has recognised and noted that the Play Area Strategy is aspirational and that there are financial implications for the Council to fully deliver the strategy, its recommendations and action plan and acknowledged that the financial implications will be met by using funding received from developer contributions sought through the planning process such as PIC, CIL and s106 and also any available external grant funds for playground provision and refurbishment. The Executive, having endorsed the findings and recommendations, now

**RECOMMENDS that**

**21. the Play Area Strategy 2015-2024 be adopted.**

*[Reason: to seek adoption of the Play Area Strategy as guidance for the Council when considering play area provision and refurbishment in the borough]*

56. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL - REVIEW OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES (Agenda item 15)

- 56.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel last reviewed the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances in 2011 and the Council meeting on 21 February 2012 agreed to adopt the recommendations, for implementation within the remaining three years of the Council. These increases have now been implemented.
- 56.2 Since the last review, there has been a steady increase in the workload of the Joint Planning Committee with a continuing rise in the number of meetings, particularly since the start of the Council year 2014/2015, see Annexe 3. At the time of the last review, the Joint Planning Committee met very infrequently and it was agreed that no Special Responsibility Allowance should be payable to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman because the majority of the planning application workload was being dealt with at the Area Planning Committees.

- 56.3 An additional criteria for which planning applications are referred to the Joint Planning Committee has impacted on the number of applications coming forward since the start of 2014/2015, as follows
- “to review all housing scheme which propose a net increase of more than 25 dwellings, where the recommendation is for permission to be granted”.
- 56.4 The Council’s practice has been to consider one planning application at each Joint Planning Committee meeting, largely because of the likely contentious and sensitive nature of the application proposals and the high level of public interest in it, often resulting in a large attendance of members of the public and the need to manage this effectively.
- 56.5 As background information, the Independent Remuneration Panel was provided with a copy of their last report and recommendations from 2011, the members’ allowances scheme from 2011/2012, the current members’ allowances scheme for 2015/2016 and the statistics around the increasing number of Joint Planning Committee meetings. The Panel had now been asked to look solely at the issue of whether a special responsibility allowance for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Planning Committee should be included within the Members’ Allowances Scheme. The current special responsibility allowances payable are attached as Annexe 4.
- 56.6 The Panel recognised that the workload for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee had increased dramatically since they last carried out their review of the scheme, particularly since each meeting necessitated attendance at a Chairman’s briefing and a site visit in advance. The Panel was particularly mindful of the responsibility associated with managing the Joint Planning Committee meetings because of the often politically contentious nature of the applications being considered, and the resulting scale, quantity and quality of the leadership required.
- 56.7 The Panel reiterated a principle set out in their last report that special responsibility allowances should be used to recognise the significant additional responsibilities which attach to some roles and not just the extra time required. The Panel felt that this criteria was met in this instance because of the nature of the applications being considered at the Committee. It also wished to ensure that the level of allowances remained sufficient so as not to discourage or deter existing councillors from fulfilling their roles and balanced this alongside the need for the allowance system to remain as simple as possible.
- 56.8 To this end, for ease of understanding to a member of the public looking at the scheme, the Panel recommended that the level of allowances should be consistent for the Area Planning Committees and the Joint Planning Committee.
- 56.9 Waverley’s budget includes £353,430 for members’ basic and special responsibility allowances. These proposals total an increase of £4,650. Regulation 10(6) of the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations allows for an amendment to the scheme to apply with effect from

the beginning of the year in which the amendment is made. The Council's Members' Allowances Scheme includes a restriction that members will only be entitled to the basic allowance plus one special responsibility allowance.

56.10 For 2015/2016, the Chairman of the Joint Planning Committee is also the Chairman of the Southern/Western Area Planning Committees and therefore only entitled to one special responsibility allowance. The financial implications for 2015/2016 only relate to the additional payment for a special responsibility allowance to the Vice-Chairman of the Committee who is not currently entitled to any other special responsibility allowances. This equates to £1,550 but may not be the case in future years. The additional budget required for 2015/2016 will be met from the underspend resulting from the reduction in size of the Executive from 10 to 9 members for the remainder of the year, thereby reducing the amount of special responsibility allowances payable to portfolio holders.

56.11 The Executive thanked the IRP for its findings and now

**RECOMMENDS that**

**22. the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2015/16 onwards be amended to include provision for the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Chairman (£3,100) and the Vice-Chairman (£1,550) of the Joint Planning Committee.**

*[Reason: to consider the discussion and findings of the Independent Remuneration Panel]*

57. HRA ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015-2020 (Agenda item 11)

57.1 Waverley's HRA Asset Management Strategy, attached as Annexe 5, sets out the Council's approach to managing its housing related assets, held in the Housing Revenue Account. Its aim is to ensure that the housing stock meets the needs of the Borough, whilst also ensuring best use of available resources as well as achieving value for money.

57.2 The current strategy was written six years ago. It therefore now needs to be updated to ensure it reflects:

- changing needs and demands
- changes in legislation and regulation
- changes in funding regimes
- changes in corporate objectives
- changes in aspirations

57.3 The Council holds significant assets in its Housing Revenue Account. It is good practice to have a clear Asset Management Strategy. Over the years the Council has managed its HRA assets effectively and in a planned manner. The HRA Asset Management Strategy brings together in one document the range of issues and factors that will influence how the Council will take decisions in relation to its HRA assets over the coming years.



#### 57.4 The HRA Asset Management Strategy

- Outlines the Council's position in the management of its housing assets, and how this aligns to the core business objectives in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- Identifies the stock, its condition, use and required reinvestment over the next 30 years.
- Records the risks and issues relating to the assets and how they may be eliminated, reduced and/or managed.
- Identifies needs, future trends and changes that will influence how we manage our assets.
- Outlines how we will approach Asset Management in the Housing Revenue Account.
- Establishes methods for monitoring and evaluating the delivery of the aims of this Strategy.
- Explains the methods through which we will procure and deliver programmes of work to our assets.

#### 57.5 The HRA Asset Management Strategy includes the following Strategic 5 year Action Plan:-

- Carry out stock condition survey of all pre-war properties
- Develop strategy for tackling dampness across the Council's stock, including developing a policy/procedure for dealing with damp related issues reported by tenant.
- Continue programme of kitchen and bathroom upgrades
- Undertake review of 7 year 'break-clause' in Maintenance Contract with Mears
- Continue strategic regeneration of Ockford Ridge and identify other suitable areas for improvement.
- Monitor and log all noise related complaints
- Review effectiveness of estate inspections and walkabouts

57.6 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that the Strategy had been prepared before the election, recent budget and imminent Housing Bill presenting such challenges as the extended Right to Buy and the requirement for Councils to sell their highest value properties on becoming void. However it was recognised that the document was sufficiently robust to understand and deal with the risks at such time as changes in Government policy come into force. The Director of Finance and Resources reassured the Committee that there were still some doubts about whether the new legislative measures would apply to Waverley and explained that if they did, a range of options would need to be brought before members to balance the business plan going forward.

57.7 With regard to Voids and Annexe 6, it was suggested that the document would benefit from setting out how successful the Project 20 objectives had been and whilst it was useful to know why voids had occurred, the strategy should also set out the current situation.

- 57.8 It was agreed that in the section of the Strategy relating to health and safety, slips, trips and falls should be included in the list of risks to be managed as one of the main causes of accidents in the home. This was considered to be especially important with the profile of the ageing population in Waverley increasing by 29% by 2020. The Chairman suggested that both Corporate and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committees had a role to play in the increasing need for access to a wide range of services by the ageing population and the Council's role in working in partnership with other agencies to meet these needs. It was agreed that a joint meeting of the Committees should be organised to talk about health and wellbeing implications in the borough.
- 57.9 As a matter of principle, the Committee wished to reinforce to officers and the Executive the importance of ward councillors being involved in all issues affecting their wards and this included matters such as development proposals for garage sites. Having asked about estate walkabouts talking place, it was confirmed that these were continuing and being led in the short term by the Tenants' Panel working with local councillors. It was noted that it would be helpful for reports back to be given of any findings. The Committee endorsed the draft Strategy for consideration by the Executive.

57.10 The Executive accordingly

**RECOMMENDS that**

- 23. the draft HRA Asset Management Strategy for 2015-2020 be agreed and adopted.**

*[Reason: to agree the Strategy setting out the Council's approach to managing its housing related assets]*

**PART II - MATTERS OF REPORT**

The background papers relating to the following items are as set out in the reports included in the original agenda papers.

58. FORWARD PROGRAMME - SEPTEMBER 2015 (Agenda item 5)

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

59. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY - YEAR-TO-DATE 2015/2016 (Agenda item 7)

RESOLVED that the investment activity and performance in 2015/16 be noted.

*[Reason: to receive the current investment activity and performance].*

60. LOCAL PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (Agenda item 8)

RESOLVED that the provisional timetable set out at Annexe 1 to the report be approved and the significant progress which has been made since the Core Strategy was withdrawn be noted.

*[Reason: to receive an update report]*

61. ALFOLD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL (Agenda item 9)

RESOLVED that the draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Alfold be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

*[Reason: to gain authorisation to undertake a formal consultation on the draft CAA for Alfold]*

62. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY UPDATE: YEAR TWO (Agenda item 12)

RESOLVED that the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be received and the Council's progress in preventing homelessness in the borough be noted.

*[Reason: to update the Executive on the Council's progress in preventing homelessness and highlighting the areas to focus on in the year ahead]*

63. IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY (Agenda item 13)

RESOLVED that the report be approved for publication and submission to the Department for Energy and Climate Change.

*[Reason: to meet the mandatory requirement to report the greenhouse gas emissions produced from operational activities]*

64. DECISION-MAKING PROTOCOL FOR LICENSING OF SCRAP METAL DEALERS (Agenda item 14)

RESOLVED that the Waverley Borough Council Decision-Making Protocol for licensing of Scrap Metal Dealers be endorsed.

*[Reason: to agree a protocol to formalise the decision-making process for scrap metal dealer licence applications]*

65. PROPERTY MATTER - EASEMENT OF ACCESS TO 1 CROSSWAYS COTTAGES, ALFOLD (Agenda item 16)

*[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 an easement of access be granted to 1 Crossways Cottages, Alfold, subject to the terms set out in the (Exempt) Annexe to the report.

*[Reason: to consider a property-related issue]*

66. PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEES (Agenda item 17)

RESOLVED that the time limit available for public speakers at Area Planning Committees and the Joint Planning committee should be four minutes per party, and the public speaking scheme amended accordingly, to come into effect from 1 October 2015.

*[Reason: to apply consistency to the public speaking scheme for all Planning Committees]*

67. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ACTIONS (Agenda item 18)

The Executive noted the following action taken by the Executive Director after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman since its last meeting:

i. Gas Safety Inspections

To authorise necessary applications to be made by housing officers to enable access to be obtained to tenanted properties for gas safety checks to be carried out where access has been denied or requests to access have not been responded to.

ii. Payment of Appeal Legal Costs – Cortium Sports Ltd

To authorise the payment of £36,000 in planning appeal costs that have been awarded against the Council to Cortium Sports Ltd.

iii. Christmas Free Parking initiative

To authorise the Director of Operations to implement provision of free car parking between 3pm and 7pm at Waverley owned shoppers car parks in December on the following three Thursday afternoons leading up to Christmas 2015, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

This initiative supports Waverley's local economy, specifically supporting local shoppers and traders in the key period leading up to Christmas. By taking the decision now, work can commence with the Chambers of Commerce to maximise the promotion and positive impact of this initiative. The financial implications of this decision is £18,000 and this can be contained within the Council's car parking revenue budget for 2015/16.

**The meeting commenced at 6.45 pm and concluded at 7.18 pm**

**Chairman**