

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - 8 FEBRUARY 2022

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 22 FEBRUARY 2022

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

Present

Cllr Paul Follows (Chairman)	Cllr Nick Palmer
Cllr Peter Clark (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Paul Rivers
Cllr Andy MacLeod	Cllr Liz Townsend
Cllr Mark Merryweather	Cllr Steve Williams
Cllr Kika Mirylees	

Apologies

Cllr Penny Marriott

Also Present

Councillor David Beaman, Councillor Michael Goodridge MBE, Councillor Jerry Hyman,
Councillor Stephen Mulliner and Councillor Richard Seaborne

EXE 78/21 MINUTES (Agenda item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

EXE 79/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3)

There were no declarations of interest raised under this heading.

EXE 80/21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4)

There were no questions from members of the public.

EXE 81/21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 5)

The Executive received the following questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 11:

1) From Councillor David Beaman,

- I. "The Boundary Commission for England is currently undertaking a review of Parliamentary Constituencies that is due to report by July 2023. A first round of consultation was launched in June 2021 and lasted 8 weeks ending in August 2021 during which over 33,000 responses were received. Did WBC submit any submission during this first period of consultation?"

- I. Following this first round of consultation the Boundary Commission's initial proposals are to replace the current South West Surrey constituency being split with Farnham, Haslemere and Hindhead forming part of a new Farnham and Bordon constituency whilst Cranleigh and Godalming will form part of a new Godalming and Ash constituency. If these initial proposals are implemented unchanged is any work being undertaken to assess the possible consequences and implications for Waverley?
- II. A secondary period of consultation commences on 22nd February lasting 6 weeks and will close on 4th April. This second round of consultation includes 32 public hearings at which evidence can be presented with the nearest hearing to Waverley being held in Reading on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd March. Bookings for 10 minute speaking slots are already open (I have already booked my own personal speaking slot for Monday 21st March between 1400 and 1410 hours). Given that the initial proposals are now known does WBC now intend to submit any written evidence and / or appear at the public hearing?"

Reply from the Leader of the Council:

- I. "Waverley BC did not submit a response to the initial consultation. During the initial consultation, Officers informed interested parties of the consultation to raise awareness. Similar communications will be promoted during the second consultation period. A number of the stakeholders within Waverley were informed; and political parties were aware of it and indeed many made comment.
- II. The Borough area is currently split between two constituencies: South West Surrey and Guildford meaning that Cranleigh and surrounding areas are 'given away' to the Guildford Constituency. The proposals seek to keep the Borough split between two constituencies however, it seems likely that Waverley will 'take in' electors from East Hampshire and Guildford as the majority of electors in the new constituencies reside within this Borough. This means that Farnham and Bordon Constituency will 'take in' Bordon from East Hampshire and Godalming and Ash Constituency will 'take in' the south of the current Guildford Borough Council area. As the Borough already has two constituencies within it, and the Electoral Registration Officer is experienced with sharing information between electoral services teams for parliamentary elections, it is anticipated that the consequences of the proposals will be minimal.

This parliamentary boundary review is one of three reviews taking place within our Borough at the moment. The other two are the Local Government Boundary Commission's review and the Community Governance Review.

The Local Government Boundary Commission review is in its final stages and the final recommendations are expected on 29 March.

This review identifies new ward boundaries throughout Waverley and the new wards will be in place for the May elections next year.

There is also a Borough-wide Community Governance Review underway. This was approved to commence at Full Council on 14 December 2021 and the initial consultation has started. Residents and interested parties are invited to submit a response before the deadline of 25 February. This review is undertaken by this Council and identifies changes needed to town and parish councils within the Borough.

- III. Due to the Council's limited resources, a submission will not be made to the Parliamentary Constituency consultation from the Council, unless the Council requests it. Individual councillors or groups may wish to make their own representations. I know they have done and for your reassurance Councillor Beaman, I am also taking part in some of the consultation effort on that. From my point of view, it is difficult for the Council to separate political commentary from commentary regarding the actual process and therefore we did not choose to put a submission in. However if this Council chooses to make that point, we will abide by Council's wishes."

1) From Councillor Joan Heagin

- I. "Assuming the budget is approved, how much will each organisation receive from the Thriving Communities fund?
- II. What criteria will be used to allocate the additional £49k included within the list of Growth Items (Note C of the Budget pack)?"

Reply from the Councillor Kika Mirylees, Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing, Parks and Leisure:

- I. "The overall budget for the Thriving Communities Commissioning Fund is being considered tonight by the Executive as part of the Council's Budget Setting process the decision will be considered for approval at the full budget council meeting on 22 February after which we will publish the amounts allocated to the successful organisations.
- II. The additional £49k for is for 1 year and is being allocated to specific organisations to support them through this transitional funding year."

2) From Councillor Jerry Hyman

"Given that the 2018 *People Over Wind & Sweetman* Ruling overturned the 'established' '*Hart*' (Dilly Lane) practice adopted by Natural England and many UK planning authorities since 2008, whereby the need to conduct full Art.6(3) Appropriate Assessments has been evaded by unlawfully assuming the effectiveness of mitigation measures at Screening, does the Leader accept that the internal and external legal advice given to Members which sustained Waverley's errant interpretation has always been wrong and misleading?"

Reply from the Councillor Liz Townsend, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development:

“Our planning officers do undertake appropriate assessments where these are required to comply with the applicable regulations and these are published on the Council’s planning applications portal. In view of concerns raised previously, since the 2018 ruling, we have sought independent opinions from counsel on this matter and I do not accept the Councillor’s suggestion that the internal and external advice given to Members has been either wrong or misleading. Should anyone believe the Council has erred in law in our decision making it would be open to them to seek leave to challenge this in the High Court.”

Councillor Townsend added that she had received a further email from Council Hyman and she would be responding following the receipt of some additional information.

EXE 82/21 LEADER’S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS’ UPDATES (Agenda item 6)

The Leader and Portfolio Holders gave brief updates on current issues not reported elsewhere on the agenda:

- The Leader advised that the changes to the Executive, announced at the previous meeting, were now in place and welcomed Councillor Paul Rivers to the Executive as Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Operations).
- The Leader also advised that a cross-party working group of Councillors from Guildford and Waverley were meeting weekly to discuss and draft the Heads of Terms of the Inter-Authority Agreement.
- The Leader encouraged those not yet vaccinated to get a vaccination as Covid rates were still high. He also asked the Executive to highlight any Covid related support funding in their areas.
- Councillor Clark provided an update on the results of a survey of Councillors to ascertain their IT requirements and use of paperless meeting software. This was an important area to consider as Councillors had a duty to read papers in advance of meetings. Whilst it was desirable to move to a paperless meeting environment, this must not impinge on the ability of Councillors to carry out their duties. He thanked those Councillors who had responded and advised that the IT support would be tailored to Councillors’ needs, with an action plan being brought back to the Executive for consideration.
- Councillor MacLeod advised that a project was ongoing to look at enforcement across the whole Council. On the Brightwells project, he advised that the projected opening date of the commercial element was now expected to be November 2022 and this was tied in with the opening of the cinema. The developer had advised that there had not been much progress with commercial lets, however the developer was still optimistic that 70% of units would be let by the time of opening. He clarified that the Council had not been the cause of delays, as had been reported, rather that the Council had been waiting to receive information from third parties on a complex legal issue. The Leader added that he would like to encourage Surrey County Council and the developer to continue to communicate on this important project.

- Councillor Mirylees reiterated her earlier points in her response to Councillor Heagin and she hoped to have an update on green spaces at the next meeting.
- Councillor Rivers provided an update on the Landlord Services Advisory Board, which he had chaired for the first time in January. He commended the Board to the Executive and welcomed the engagement with tenants representatives.
- Councillor Townsend provided an update on her new portfolio, including ongoing work on Local Plan Part 2 and the development of a biodiversity and sustainability checklist. A new server for planning would be introduced which it was hoped would speed up the current system. She reminded those present that there was still support funding available for local businesses impacted by the pandemic and applications would close on 18 March 2022. The draft Biodiversity Policy was being finalised and would come forward for consideration shortly and the Friday Night Project had returned to Cranleigh.
- Councillor Williams provided an update on the decarbonisation work on Memorial Hall in Farnham. A consultant had been appointed to carry out a feasibility study on solar panel installation on specific sites in the borough. The Waverley walking and cycling infrastructure plan work had begun, with town and parish councils invited to participate.

PART 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

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.

EXE 83/21 GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2022/23 AND MTFP 2022/23 - 24/25 (Agenda item 8)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Assets gave a detailed presentation on the report which set out the proposed budget for 2022/23 and highlighted the key areas for the Executive to consider. He gave an overview of the financial pressures on the Council including the threat of inflation rises, the National Insurance levy and the decrease in amount of business rates the Council was able to retain. In light of the uncertainty, it was proposed that the covid recovery earmarked reserves be retained and repurposed as an inflation and economic risk reserve. The financial impact had been mitigated for one year only through the receipt of one-off New Homes Bonus funding and a smaller services grant. He gave an overview of the measures proposed to offset the financial pressures on the Council, including car park utilisation and the ongoing Guildford collaboration. Despite these measures, it was still necessary to propose a £5 increase in council tax and it was recognised that this would be a financial burden on residents. Therefore, to mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable, it was proposed to continue the Council's existing Council Tax Support Scheme at the current levels and to not implement a blanket increase to fees and charges. Further sustainable measures would be identified to balance the budget for future years and deliver services to residents. He thanked the officers for their dedication and to all Councillors who had submitted constructive feedback as part of the consultation process.

The Leader echoed the thanks to the officers for responding to a large number of comments and questions on the draft budget.

Councillor Jerry Hyman spoke on the item, questioning the wording of the recommended increase in council tax and whether it should be expressed as a percentage. He sought clarification on whether there should be a schedule of rises for consideration and whether recommendation 3 should be a Council decision rather than a delegation.

In response, the Leader advised that the Council tax bands are set in legislation. The Strategic Director (s151 Officer) confirmed that the percentages were the same through all the bands and that there would be a separate technical report on Council Tax on the agenda for the Council meeting on 22 February.

Councillor Mulliner spoke on the proposal to publicise the individual allocations from the Thriving Communities Fund after the Council meeting had agreed the budget which he felt was not transparent. He expressed concern over the reduction in funding to Citizen's Advice and the impact this would have on residents. He urged the Executive to consider £60k in support.

In response, the Leader advised that Town and Parish Councils have Service Level Agreements with Citizen's Advice, and therefore these would need to be renegotiated. It was noted that Citizen's Advice had received other sources of funding, including from Surrey County Council. Clarification would be provided on when the figures would be made known and a meeting would be held with the CEO of Citizen's Advice to clarify the funding. Councillor Mirylees clarified the process for considering allocations for funding and the requests made of Citizen's Advice to ensure that support was targeted to those in need. Councillor Merryweather advised that there was a Service Level Agreement with Citizen's Advice and therefore there were contractual obligations as part of that.

Councillor Goodridge also spoke about the proposed reduction in funding to Citizen's Advice the impact that cut would have. He was not aware of any other sources of funding and would welcome clarification after the meeting.

Councillor Townsend clarified that further funding would be available to Citizen's Advice from Surrey County Council and that officers were supporting Citizen's Advice to reorganise themselves to best meet the needs of residents. Councillor Merryweather acknowledged that any change was difficult and there were demands on all organisations to meet needs with dwindling resources, through no fault of the organisation in question. However he reminded the Executive that the decision was for the allocation of a budget to the Thriving Communities fund and how that fund was allocated was not for consideration.

RESOLVED

That the Executive, after considering comments from the Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee, recommends to Council to:

- 1. agree a £5 increase in Waverley's Band D Council Tax Charge for 2022/23 with resultant increases to the other council tax bands;**

2. **agree to continue the Council’s existing Council Tax Support Scheme at the current levels;**
3. **agree to extend Waverley’s council tax hardship fund to help those council taxpayers most financially affected by the pandemic, as set out in this report, with the final scheme details and criteria delegated to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder;**
4. **agree to make no change to Fees and Charges for 2022/23 except for those proposed in Annexe 4, including the new approach for planning pre-application fees;**
5. **approve the General Fund Budget for 2022/23 as summarised in Annexe 2, incorporating the baseline net service cost variations included at Annexe 1 and Annexe 3;**
6. **approve the General Fund Capital Programme as detailed in Annexe 5; and**
7. **approve the specific use of reserves to mitigate the Covid-19 uncertainty and other emerging economic risks including inflation; the estimated expected reduction in Retained Business Rates and New Homes Bonus funding over the Medium-Term Finance Plan period, and the other reserve movements as set out in Annexe 6.**

Reason: The General Fund Budget is a major decision for the Council and setting a balanced budget is a statutory requirement. Scrutiny of these MTFP and Budget proposals demonstrate transparency and good governance. As a result of the sudden and unexpected Covid-19 impact, the Council had to act quickly in mid-2020 to take steps to address the significant projected net General Fund Budget shortfall so that the Council can continue to function. A revised budget for 2020/21 was set in August 2020 and the medium-term financial projections were updated in February 2021 alongside the budget setting report for 2021/22. Despite a very welcome - but one-off - respite in 2022/23 from the continuing decline in central funding, the latest MTFP for the subsequent years ending 2025/26 continues to project future financial pressures, and opportunities, to enable the Council to take action to ensure sufficient funding is in place to deliver services.

EXE 84/21 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN - REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 (Agenda item 9)

Councillor Merryweather presented the report which set out the proposed budget and capital programme for the Housing Revenue Account, which was the ringfenced reserve for building and maintaining council housing and was entirely self-funding through rents. He highlighted an amendment to the wording of Annexe 2, which had been recommended by the Landlord Services Advisory Board, to change “Community Rooms – Residents” to “Community Rooms – Non-commercial”; and change “Community Rooms – Non-residential” to “Community Rooms – Commercial”. He outlined the key areas for consideration, including the financial pressures resulting from the pandemic and the measures proposed to

mitigate the impact. He thanked the members of the Landlord Services Advisory Board and the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their constructive input.

Councillor Palmer welcomed the report and working with Councillor Rivers to continue the work of Councillor Rosoman. He addressed the uncertainties arising from the pandemic and inflation; and the difficulties from the Government's definition of affordable housing which meant that as market values were so high in Waverley, affordable housing was still unaffordable for many. The availability of affordable housing was a key priority although noted the constraints on the Council. He welcomed the input of all Councillors on the priorities. A hardship fund had been established and it was proposed to use that fund to address those in need.

Councillor Rivers thanked the officers for their presentation to the Landlord Services Advisory Board and the Waverley tenants for their suggestion. The Leader echoed those thanks.

Councillor Hyman spoke on the report, expressing concern over the impact of the proposals on vulnerable residents and that the rent increase was over the rate of inflation. In response, the Leader advised that housing need outstripped the supply. This demonstrated the case for building more houses and in order to do so, money needed to be generated through rents. It was recognised that this may temporarily push some residents into hardship and therefore a hardship fund was proposed. The Council was required to use a formula to calculate part of the rent, and therefore that element was outside the Council's control. He also addressed the question of climate change and stressed that sustainable housing would bring energy bills down for residents.

Councillor Merryweather responded to the comments made, clarifying the CPI measure of inflation used to calculate rents and that the rent level proposed was not higher than the rate of inflation based on current projections. He noted that the energy market was failing and the impact that was having.

Councillor Mulliner spoke on pilot scheme of installing new green technology in homes and stressed the need to learn how much that installation of green technology would cost tenants and the logistics of the installation. The Leader agreed with the comments and officers were currently looking into the issues.

Councillor Seaborne sought clarification on the £16m underspend and what mitigations were in place for the coming year to ensure delivery. The Leader responded and advised that the mitigating circumstances around Covid were a factor in the delivery of the projects. Councillor Merryweather agreed to look into Councillor Seaborne's question. The Council was constrained in that only 60% of new homes could be funded from capital receipts. Proposals were considered by the Landlord Services Advisory Board and the feedback has been taken into account.

RESOLVED

That the Executive, after considering the comments from the Landlord Services Advisory Board and Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee,

recommend to Council that:

- 1. the rent level for Council dwellings be increased by a maximum of 4.10% from the 2021/22 level with effect from 1 April 2022 within the permitted guidelines contained within the Government's rent setting policy;**
- 2. the average weekly charge for garages rented by both Council and non-Council tenants be increased by 50 pence per week excluding VAT from 1 April 2022;**
- 3. the service charges in senior living accommodation be increased by 30 pence per week from 1 April 2022 to £20.10;**
- 4. the recharge for energy costs in senior living accommodation be increased by 50 pence per week from 1 April 2022;**
- 5. the revised HRA Business Plan for 2022/23 to 2025/26 as set out in Annexe 1 be approved;**
- 6. the fees and charges as set out in Annexe 2 be approved;**
- 7. the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes as shown in Annexe 3 and 4 be approved;**
- 8. the financing of the capital programmes be approved in line with the resources shown in Annexe 5: and**
- 9. a strategic review will be undertaken on the 30-year HRA Business Plan in line with the content of this report during 2022/23.**

Reason: To provide the resources to fund Waverley Borough Council's Landlord Services operations, maintenance programme and building new affordable homes.

EXE 85/21 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/2023 - INCORPORATING TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ASSET INVESTMENT STRATEGY (Agenda item 10)

Councillor Merryweather presented the report which was a Council wide approach to capital investment and expenditure; and overall strategic planning. The Strategy was reviewed on an annual basis and the main change was the replacement of the Property Investment Strategy with the Asset Investment Strategy. He thanked the members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their constructive comments and the recommendation had been modified to address their concerns.

Councillor Hyman spoke on the item and asked if guidance had been received from the Government on investments for yield. In response, Councillor Merryweather advised that guidance received from the Public Works Loan Board was that borrowing would not be available for any investments solely for yield. This advice had been made available in 2021, but would be circulated to Councillor Hyman for his information. He gave a detailed explanation of the calculation of minimum revenue provision and the constraints on the Council.

Councillor Mulliner made a brief comment on the external borrowing figures and asked Councillor Merryweather to address how these will be funded as part of his presentation to Council.

RESOLVED

That the Executive, after considering comments from the Policy Overview &

Scrutiny Committee, recommends to Council:

- 1. The 5-year Capital Strategy for 2022/2027, incorporating the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Asset Investment Strategy, for approval.**
- 2. That Full Council delegate authority to the Executive for the financial year 2022/23, subject to a positive recommendation from the Asset Investment Advisory Board and agreement from the Chief Executive and Strategic Director:**
 - a. to bid, negotiate and complete on property acquisitions and investments in land and buildings with a total individual cost of up to £10m, subject to the decision fully satisfying all criteria and process requirements set out in this Strategy; and**
 - b. to determine a funding strategy for the acquisition or investment in line with the Treasury Management Strategy; and**
 - c. to appoint advisors and undertake appropriate due diligence for each property acquisition and investment proposal as necessary; and**
 - d. to complete the legal matters and signing of contracts to execute the transactions referred to above.**

Reason: The Capital Strategy is a whole organisation approach to capital investments (expenditure) and overall strategic planning. It has historically been seen as a finance responsibility but should be steered by the leadership of the Council and is a responsibility of all.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) have issued guidance on the aims and requirements of a Capital Strategy focusing on a whole organisation approach to prudent, sustainable, and resilient local government investment.

CPFA have also issued two professional Codes of Practice to which the Council is required to "have regard to". These give frameworks designed to support local strategic planning, local asset management planning and proper option appraisal:

- **The Prudential Code** – developed to support local authorities in taking decisions around their capital investment programmes. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear reporting framework, that a local authority's capital expenditure plans and investment plans are affordable and proportionate; that all external borrowing and other long-term liabilities are within prudent and sustainable levels; that the risks associated with investments for commercial purposes are proportionate to their financial capacity; and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.
- **The Treasury Management Code** - Treasury Management is defined as 'The management of the organisation's borrowing, investments, and cash flows, including its banking, money market and capital

market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks’.

Both codes have been out to consultation in 2021 in response to a rise in local authorities undertaking commercial investments, purchasing property solely to make a return, with concerns where these investments have been financed by borrowing. Proposals outlined in the consultations address that borrowing for yield only is a risk to prudent investment. CIPFA hopes that these strengthened Codes will alleviate further government intervention in the Prudential Framework and ensure local decision making is protected.

The new Codes were published in December 2021.

EXE 86/21 DUNSFOLD PARK GARDEN VILLAGE - SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - ADOPTION (Agenda item 11)

Councillor Townsend presented the final draft of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), thanking the officers involved, the consultants, Allies and Morrison and Design South East. The report set out the changes which had been made to the draft following the consultation period and was an important document setting out the clear vision for the site and the masterplanning framework. Allies and Morrison gave a detailed presentation on the final draft of the SPD following the consultation responses received.

Councillor Hyman spoke on this item, expressing disappointment in the decision making process, concerns over the use of appropriate assessments and the impact on the residents of Dunsfold. In response, Councillor Townsend clarified that the document was an SPD and did not change the quantum set out in Local Plan Part 1. She assured Councillor Hyman that the Council had complied with all regulations and residents of Dunsfold and the surrounding parishes had been represented on the working group. The Leader added that Councillor Townsend and the Head of Planning would respond separately to Councillor Hyman’s concerns. Councillors Williams and MacLeod confirmed that legal advice had been sought and the comments were not relevant to this document. The consultation period had been exemplary and the SPD was welcomed.

The Leader welcomed the report and encouraged the new owners of the site to proceed with building out the site as per the previously agreed planning application without delay and deliver for residents.

RESOLVED

That the Executive recommends to the Council that the Dunsfold Park Garden Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted.

Reason: The SPD provides further guidance about the Council’s approach to the Dunsfold Park Garden Village, specifically the future masterplan and design of the new development to support the delivery of the new village based on garden community principles.

The SPD clearly defines what is required from new development on site and what the Council aspires to achieve on the site, building on the work undertaken to date. It will be instrumental when negotiating with the promoter, landowner and future developers as the site is brought forward. It is also expected that the production of this document will assist the preparation of planning submissions, manage expectations and support the earliest delivery of the village.

The Council cannot introduce new planning policy through a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), rather this SPD is intended to build on the existing adopted policies pertaining to the site, which fall within the statutory development plan (namely SS7 and SS7A of the Waverley Local Plan Part 1 'Strategic Policies and Sites' 2018).

This recommendation follows a four-week public consultation that has been undertaken in accordance with Regulation 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations").

EXE 87/21 WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL EMERGENCY PLAN (Agenda item 13)

The Leader presented the report, which set out the Council's Emergency Plan as required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

RESOLVED

- a) **That the Executive recommend approval and adoption of the attached Emergency Plan.**
- b) **That authority to make minor consequential grammatical and technical changes to the text, contact details etc. be delegated to the Head of Service in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.**

Reason: To ensure the Council has a robust Emergency Plan in place in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

EXE 88/21 ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23 (Agenda item 15)

The Leader presented the report, which set out the Council's Pay Policy Statement which it was required to review on an annual basis.

Councillor Hyman spoke on the report and asked why there was no reference in the statement to those working from home following the pandemic and whether the Council could consider recruiting from other parts of the country. In response, the Leader advised that there was no need to have a different pay structure for staff working from home. Work was dependant on objectives and was not location specific. Councillor Townsend clarified that those staff working from home were carrying out the same job as they would be if they were working from the office. She welcomed the Council's dedicated officers who were achieving for residents every day. Councillor Merryweather challenged with the implication that the Council could save money by employing cheaper staff who lived in other areas of the country.

RESOLVED

That the Executive recommend to Council that the Pay Policy Statement for the 2022/23 financial year, attached at Annexe 1, be approved.

Reason: To comply with the Localism Act 2011 (Sections 38 and 39).

PART II - MATTERS OF REPORT

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

EXE 89/21 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (Agenda item 7)

The Leader introduced the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny meetings which had taken place in January. The Executive had discussed all the recommendations at their informal meeting, however not been able to discuss them in detail with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen at their scheduled meeting as only the Vice-Chairman of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been in attendance.

The Leader addressed the recommendations as follows:

- P22-0125-7.1 – The Executive welcomed the endorsement.
- P22-0125-7.2 – The Executive was always looking at ways in which new income could be generated and car parks usage could be maximised.
- P22-0125-7.3 – The checks on the fees for planning and green waste had been carried out and he assured the meeting that budget papers went through a series of checks.
- P22-0125-9.1 – The Executive welcomed the endorsement.
- P22-0125-9.2 – The Executive agreed and supported the proposal.
- P22-0125-10 – There had been significant clarification since the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and there was no intention to force Members to go paperless, only an initiative to provide the appropriate technology for those who did wish to go paperless; and to enable Members to explore technology they might not have been previously aware of.
- S22-0124-7 – The Executive agreed that hyperlinks would be a useful addition and suggested further discussion with both the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on any further presentational improvements which could be made. As it had not been possible to discuss the recommendations with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, it had not been possible to clarify what further changes were required.
- S22-0124–8.1 – There had been external validation of the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan
- S22-0124–8.2 – The Executive would welcome suggestions for additional SMART targets.
- S22-0124–8.3 – The Executive agreed with the recommendation and a series of briefings would be arranged on this technology, the first being on Ground and Air Source Heat Pumps in the near future. The Asset Management Strategy made clear that these measures would evolve over time.

- S22-0124–8.4 – Climate change communications were given “gold” status as one of the top priorities and therefore there would be more of these communications. He welcomed any suggestions for any other issues which should be communicated and offered to share the climate change communications plan with those Councillors who were interested.
- S22-0124–8.5 - The Executive confirmed that the draft Asset Management Strategy specifically addressed this concern and would be available for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shortly.

EXE 90/21 CARBON NEUTRALITY ACTION PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE (Agenda item 12)

Councillor Williams presented the report which set out the first full reporting year of the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan, which was an exceptional year due to the pandemic. He thanked officers for their work on the plan, which was a live document taking into account changing technologies and noted the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He welcomed the independent rating of the plan by Climate Emergency UK which place Waverley’s Plan 5th highest 2nd tier authority in the UK. He welcomed the commitment of the Council to the climate change agenda. The Leader thanked Cllr Williams and the officers for their work and welcomed the rating for the plan.

Councillor Mulliner spoke on the item and encouraged the updating of the table on page 450 with a figure adjusted to something more realistic; and a similar chart for the trajectory for council housing. He also felt that there should have been mention of the COP26 summit in the document.

Councillor Seaborne echoed the comments made by Councillor Mulliner and asked for clarification on when there would be a trajectory that was based on data rather theory and the costs of retrofitting the council housing stock. In response Councillor Williams advised that leisure centres were a significant contributor to carbon emissions and the Council was in the process of planning for a zero carbon leisure centre in Cranleigh; and that the Council was in the process of planning for the decarbonisation of its housing stock.

RESOLVED

- a. **That the progress made on the CNAP during 2021 attached in Annexe 1 be noted.**
- b. **That the content of the version 2022 of the CNAP as presented in Annexe 2 be endorsed.**

Reason: To ensure that the Executive is up to date with the council’s progress on its response to the Climate Emergency and to request support on the direction of travel over the next year.

EXE 91/21 SERVICE PLAN 2022-25 (3 YEAR ROLLING PLANS) (Agenda item 14)

The Leader of the Council presented the report which set out the three year rolling service plans.

Councillor Hyman spoke on the report and sought clarification on the statutory requirement for the Council to have an air quality action plan and that this could not

be delegated to the Farnham Infrastructure Board. The Leader advised that the plan was owned by the Council, however it was felt that the Farnham Infrastructure Board was the most appropriate place to discuss the plan, rather than the former Farnham Air Quality Board.

RESOLVED

- a) That the comments and recommendations received from the Overview & Scrutiny Committees are noted; and**
b) That the Service Plans 2022-25 proposals, as set out at Annexe 1, for implementation from 1 April 2022 be approved.

Reason: The annual review process of service plans is a subject of internal as well as external scrutiny in which the O&S committees play a crucial role. The scrutiny committees review the proposals and pass their comments and recommendations to the Executive for their consideration ahead of the approval process.

EXE 92/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Agenda item 16)

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 item(s) 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 at the meeting in the revised Part 1 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).

EXE 93/21 PROPERTY MATTERS - PROPERTY ACQUISITION (Agenda item 17)

RESOLVED that the recommendations as set out in the exempt report be approved.

Reason: The reasons are set out in the exempt report.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 9.12 pm

Chairman