

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - 9 APRIL 2024

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

Present

Cllr Paul Follows (Chair)	Cllr Mark Merryweather
Cllr Tony Fairclough (Vice Chair)	Cllr George Murray
Cllr Janet Crowe	Cllr Paul Rivers
Cllr Victoria Kiehl	Cllr Liz Townsend

Apologies

Cllr Kika Mirylees and Cllr Steve Williams

Also Present

Borough Councillors Robini and Weldon
Haslemere Town Councillors Bayliss and Matthes

EXE 152/23 MINUTES (Agenda item 2)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 March 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

EXE 153/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

EXE 154/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4)

There were none.

EXE 155/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 5)

There were none.

EXE 156/23 LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' UPDATES (Agenda item 6)

The Leader and Executive Members welcomed Cllr Janet Crowe to the Executive as Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing. The Leader expressed his thanks to Cllr Nick Palmer for his tenure as an Executive Member. Portfolio Holders then provided updates on their respective portfolios.

The Deputy Leader, Cllr Fairclough, apologised for the inconvenience to car park users due to technical complications with the initial implementation of revised car parking charges.

EXE 157/23 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
(Agenda item 7)

No formal recommendations had been received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Leader addressed the comments that had been circulated and urged that the Committees should make recommendations, rather than provide comments and stressed that the onus was on all members to engage constructively. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees had not been forming Informal Working Groups to engage with policy development or in depth reviews and consequentially, Executive Working Groups had to be formed instead.

Councillor Liz Townsend was disappointed with the comments requesting further consultation on the LCWIP and countered that consultation led by Surrey County Council had been thorough, and no further consultation was necessary. Executive Members concurred, and emphasized that the provision of comments was unnecessary as they would be available in the minutes of respective committee meetings.

EXE 158/23 UPDATE ON THE FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE GUILDFORD AND WAVERLEY COLLABORATION (Agenda item 8)

The Leader advised that this agenda item was withdrawn.

EXE 159/23 NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2024-32
(Agenda item 9)

Councillor Liz Townsend, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development introduced the report which sought endorsement of the new Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 32 and its supporting evidence base together with approval for the forthcoming consultation on the draft Action Plan with strategic partners; and to recommend that Council notes its adoption. Officers were thanked for their work in developing the Strategy and Action Plan.

Executive Members' statements in support of the recommendations included:

- Welcoming the emphasis on addressing climate change
- Acknowledging that engagement would take place with Towns and Parishes and the Business Improvement Districts; and
- That the evidence base set out the economic strengths and challenges for the Borough.

Having noted the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services, the Executive **RESOLVED** to adopt the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2024-32 and **RECOMMEND** that it be **presented to Full Council on 23 April 2024**.

Reason: To ensure that the borough has an up-to-date Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan that provides clear vision of how Waverley can achieve a green, creative and sustainable economy.

EXE 160/23 FAIRGROUND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (Agenda item 10)

Councillor Mark Merryweather, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Property introduced the report which sought approval to proceed with the Fairground Development Project. Councillor Merryweather summarised the background to the project including the allocation of the site in Local Plan Part 2, together with the housing ambitions set out in the Corporate Strategy. Five options had been assessed and a mixed use development of retail space and 32 residential homes at Waverley rent was proposed. The recommended scheme would be self-funding with the retail element generating revenue income for the general fund, and the residential homes would be operated within the Council's estate of 5,000 homes.

The report set out the agreed objectives and parameters on which to procure a development partner and instruct independent professional experts to proceed with design work. Concerns and competing priorities would be addressed through the design stage and then consultation, prior to any planning application. Councillor Merryweather emphasised that progress would require further Executive, and Council approval. Officers were thanked for bring forward deliverable and sustainable options aligned to the Local Plan and Corporate Strategy.

The Leader invited non-voting visiting Members of the Council in attendance as observers to speak. Councillors Robini and Weldon spoke or had provided written commentary, as Haslemere ward councillors and queried:

- Where the displaced cars would park?
- How traffic congestion would be mitigated?
- Whether the housing allocation would be retained for local people?
- When public consultation would start?

The Leader invited comments from Haslemere Town Councillors Bayliss and Matthes, in attendance as observers, who queried whether it was felt that the consultation would have a meaningful impact as the report was specific about both the number of properties and that a supermarket would be provided, rather than seeking to consult on the broad aspirations for the site.

Councillor Merryweather, The Leader and Officers in attendance responded accordingly:

- A complete parking assessment of the broader area would be undertaken as part of the next phase and would be articulated through the brief to secure a development partner
- Traffic congestion was a matter for Surrey County Council about which WBC would continue to engage with Haslemere Town Council and Surrey County Council
- The houses would be retained by the Council and would be subject to Waverley's allocation policy
- The Council had to strike a balance to ensure that enough information would be available for the consultation to be meaningful

- The Council was committed to engaging as openly and transparently as possible and had considered professional advice on a range of options, of which 5 were set out in the report; and
- The Local Plan had already been the product of many years of consultation, and the Council was now progressing the delivery of its Corporate Strategy commitments, which included financial sustainability.

Executive Members' statements in support of the recommendations included:

- The site presented an opportunity for the Council to deliver its own housing development on a brownfield site, which would when completed provide jobs for local people
- Residents and community groups would greatly benefit from the delivery of a new Community Hub; and
- The proposal represented an exciting, progressive development, marking the end of the beginning for the project.

The Leader advised that items 10 and 11 were linked projects and therefore the recommendations for item 11 would be taken en bloc immediately after item 10.

The Executive **RESOLVED** to:

- I. Proceed with option A of the Business case for the Fairground Development Project.
- II. Progress a competitive dialogue process for the purpose of procuring a development partner for the project.
- III. Procure the relevant consultancy services for the project.
- IV. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director - Place in consultation with the Executive Director of Legal Services and Democratic Support and the relevant portfolio holder to approve all procurement documents.
- V. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director - Place, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Legal & Democratic Service and Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets to approve and award of consultancy services contracts.
- VI. Receive a report and recommendations once the procurement process has been completed.

That the Executive **RECOMMENDED** that Full Council approves:

1. **A Budget estimate of £21,408,334 for the capital works to complete the project including an allocation of £280,410 for the procurement of the required services for the next stage of the project.**

Reasons:

- a) To proceed with the Fairground Development Project in line with the Business Case at Appendix 1.
- b) To give authority to officers to undertake the next steps of procurement (a Competitive Dialogue Process), and once complete, return to Executive to report the outcome of the process.

EXE 161/23 WEYDOWN ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (Agenda item 11)

Having previously advised that items 10 and 11 were linked projects, the Leader moved the revised recommendations en bloc.

The Executive **RESOLVED** to approve:

- I. A Supplementary Budget of £223,298 for the purposes of progressing Weydown Road Community Hub Option B to submission of planning application (RIBA stage 3) and associated site surveys.
- II. Progression of the Weydown Road Community Hub project to submission of a Planning Application.
- III. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director - Place to submit the required planning applications for this project on behalf of the Council.
- IV. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director - Place in consultation with the Strategic Director, Legal & Democratic Services to implement the procurement strategy, and award the consultancy services contracts.
- V. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director - Place in consultation with Strategic Director, Legal & Democratic Services and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets to approve and implement a procurement strategy for the construction contracts associated with this project.

Reason: To progress the project to relocate the Haslemere Youth Hub from the Fairground site.

EXE 162/23 DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL OWNED ASSETS - SHARED OWNERSHIP HOMES, OCKFORD RIDGE. (Agenda item 12)

Councillor Paul Rivers, Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing expressed his pride with the progress of the Ockford Ridge development in Godalming and was pleased that two properties were now in a position to be sold as affordable shared ownership homes. The Leader praised the delivery of high quality homes in the area and conveyed thanks on behalf of the Executive to Officers for their work.

The Executive **RESOLVED** to approve:

- I. The sale of two shared ownership homes at Ockford Ridge, Godalming (Site C), on the terms set out in Exempt Annexe 1 and delegate to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services authority to approve and sign/seal the final form of the agreements.
- II. To delegate authority to the Head of Housing Services in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Housing (Delivery and Operations) to approve the future sale of percentage shares in the properties referred to in Exempt Annexe 1 up to and including 100% tenant ownership.

Reasons: As set out in the Report.

EXE 163/23 EXTENSION OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) (Agenda item 13)

Deputy Leader Councillor Fairclough introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Mirylees. Engagement and consultation had included Members, Town and Parish Councils, local businesses, police, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and Safer Waverley partners and stakeholders. Feedback was in support for the PSPO to be extended in terms of duration and to cover other areas within Waverley. Councillor Fairclough urged those experiencing anti-social behaviour to continue to report matters to the police.

Executive Members statements in support of the recommendations included:

- Fines should be reviewed to be more of a deterrent
- Youth service provision should be supported and its outreach extended; and
- Expressing thanks to the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer for the experience and guidance provided.

The Executive **RESOLVED** to note the report on the extension of the PSPO in light of the evaluation and consultation conclusions.

Reason: Full Council delegated authority to extend the PSPO to the Executive Head of Community Services. In order to assist with approval, views of the Executive were sought.

EXE 164/23 HASLEMERE LEISURE CENTRE (THE HERONS) LEASE (Agenda item 15)

The Leader advised that this agenda item was withdrawn.

The meeting commenced at 6.10 pm and concluded at 7.59 pm

Chairman