

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - 30 MARCH 2021

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 20 APRIL 2021

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

Present

Cllr John Ward (Chairman)	Cllr Mark Merryweather
Cllr Paul Follows (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Nick Palmer
Cllr Peter Clark	Cllr Anne-Marie Rosoman
Cllr Andy MacLeod	Cllr Liz Townsend
Cllr Michaela Martin	Cllr Steve Williams

Also Present

Councillor Carole Cockburn, Councillor John Gray, Councillor Joan Heagin and Councillor David Beaman

EXE 83/20 MINUTES (Agenda item 2)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 March 2021 were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.

EXE 84/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3)

The Leader declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 12, the Electric Vehicle Strategy, as he owned an EV car. He abstained from the vote.

EXE 85/20 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4)

The Executive received the following question in accordance with Procedure Rule 10:

(i) From Charles Collins, Savills:

“Given the closure of the LPP2 public consultation 2 months ago and the Local Development Scheme indicating adoption of LPP2 by January/ February 2022, what deadline has been set to submit LPP2 to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination? Are you able to advise what committee stages are required in advance?”

Response from Cllr Andy MacLeod, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy:

“The Council has received over 1100 comments as a result of the public consultation which have raised a number of different issues. These are currently being considered. The Council will submit the Local Plan for its examination as soon as this has been done with the intention that the Plan will still be adopted early in 2022. However, if this requires a

change to the timetable we will set this out in an updated Local Development Scheme that will be published. The decision to submit the Local Plan for its examination is a decision of the full Council following the recommendation of the Council's Executive."

EXE 86/20 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 5)

There were no questions from Members.

EXE 87/20 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 government had declined to extend the regulations enabling remote meetings to take place, therefore after 7 May councillors would need to attend meetings in person, in the Council Chamber. There were concerns over the potential health risks for councillors and officers, and therefore the Annual Council was being brought forward to 27 April, and as much business as possible was being directed to the scheduled Council meeting on 20 April.
- The government was running a consultation on the future of the New Homes Bonus, and the council would be submitting a response which would highlight the shortcomings in the underlying assumptions of the proposals.
- A Transport Projects Officer had been recruited to the Sustainability Team to help develop the council's work on reducing carbon emissions and promoting active and sustainable travel.
- The Chairman of Waverley's Tenants Panel, Terry Daubney, had joined the National Housing Ombudsman's Resident Panel, so Waverley now had two representatives on that panel. They would also be part of Waverley's new housing complaints group.
- The Tenants Panel had held an on-line open meeting, with more than 30 tenants attending, who gave constructive and some critical feedback to officers. The Head of Housing Operations had prepared a leaflet which would be sent to all tenants concerning the repairs and maintenance service. The Housing Team and contractors took the complaints very seriously and were working hard to meeting tenants' expectations of service.
- The Brightwells Yard development in Farnham remained on track to open in September, with M&S possibly opening a little earlier. A very positive meeting had been held with Reel about the plans for the cinema which was due to open in December. Crest were changing the energy system for the flats from gas boilers to electric, and would be installing solar panels on the roofs. Crest had started marketing the flats and selling off plan.
- The consultation on the proposed Public Space Protection Order would close on Friday. There had been positive feedback so far, although there was some debate around the exact wording. Any further comments would be welcomed.
- Leisure Centres were on track to re-open on 12 April, subject to final confirmation from the government on 5 April. Outdoor pitches were open at The Edge and the Leisure Team had put together a full programme of activities for the Easter break, both online and the outdoors. Final arrangements were in place for the launch of the Godalming Park Run at Broadwater Park.

- Careline continued to provide invaluable peace of mind to residents and their families. There were 1,660 clients in Waverley and in January 2021, 2,260 calls were received with an ambulance despatched on 45 occasions as a result. In February, 1,910 calls were received, of which 49 required ambulance assistance.
- Threats to cyber-security continued to be a challenge for organisations, and the council was very serious about its responsibilities to protect IT systems and residents' data.

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.

EXE 88/20 **COUNCIL TAX EXEMPTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE** (Agenda item 7)

- 88.1 Cllr Merryweather presented the proposal for Waverley to introduce a new Council Tax exemption category for young people leaving the care of the local authority, after being in care for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday. Waverley was keen to work jointly with Surrey Council to support care leavers living independently for the first time. One of the ways in which the council could help support our Surrey Care Leavers as Corporate Parents as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 was to exempt all Care Leavers from their Council Tax responsibilities.
- 88.2 The Executive RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to Council the creation of a new Council Tax exemption for Care Leavers to be applied until the age of 25.

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.

EXE 89/20 **INSURANCE COLLABORATION** (Agenda item 8)

- 89.1 Cllr Merryweather introduced the proposal for Waverley to enter into an insurance collaboration led by the London Borough of Sutton (LBS), including five Surrey Districts and Boroughs, to manage insurance administration, jointly procure insurance and pool the insurance policies excess (deductibles). This proposal would secure a significant cost saving through economies of scale, increased administrative capacity, expertise, and improved business continuity without impacting on the council's overall insured risk exposure.
- 89.2 Cllr Joan Heagin expressed her reservations about the proposed arrangement, but recognised that there were also benefits for the council,

and she urged the council to be an active partner in the collaboration to ensure that benefits and risks were fully understood. Members noted that three other Surrey districts that had been in the arrangement for some time had provided positive feedback on their experience.

- 89.3 The Executive RESOLVED to approve the collaborative agreement to join the integrated insurance service led by London Borough of Sutton.

EXE 90/20 REQUEST FOR SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE FOR RULE 6 REPRESENTATION AT PLANNING APPEAL LODGED BY UKOG (234) LTD IN RESPECT OF DRILLING FOR HYDROCARBON MINERALS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE (Agenda item 9)

- 90.1 Cllr Palmer introduced the request for a supplementary estimate, to fund the council's Rule 6 representation at the planning appeal lodged by UKOG (234) Ltd.
- 90.2 Cllr John Gray thanked the Executive for their continued support for local residents, businesses, and the parish councils in opposing plans by UKOG to carry out exploratory drilling activity in the Dunsfold area. Being a Rule 6 party at the appeal would allow the council to strengthen its support to Surrey County Council in defending the refusal of the planning application, and achieve a positive outcome.
- 90.3 Executive Members emphasised the importance of Waverley continuing its community leadership role on this issue, which had commenced with the Listening Panel held in the summer of 2019 and sustained through two Surrey County Council planning committee meetings.
- 90.4 The Executive RESOLVED to approve a supplementary estimate for £30,000 to meet the fees of the external consultants, to be met from the revenue reserve fund.

EXE 91/20 REVIEW OF REFUSE AND RECYCLING BIN PROVISION (Agenda item 10)

- 90.1 Cllr Williams introduced the proposal that revised the bin provision policy, following a review of the current policy on domestic waste bin provision and the environmental and budget implications thereof. The report proposed a new policy and charging mechanism for all bins and waste and recycling containers. In addition, there was a proposal for moving to smaller bins for residual waste in order to encourage a reduction for waste that goes for disposal, in support of both the Council's environmental aspirations and likely future Government waste strategies. The proposal included a phased approach to implementation, with an associated communication strategy, in order to maintain residents' support of the Council's efforts to maximise reuse and recycling and to minimise residual waste.
- 90.2 Members emphasised the importance of communications to support changing residents' behaviour, and recognised the financial pressures on the council that prevented refuse and recycling bins being provided free of charge.

90.3 The Executive RESOLVED that:

1. To approve the revised bin provision policy as set out in paragraph 8 of the agenda report.
2. As part of the procurement of any new Bins, consideration is given to the purchase of containers which maximise the use of recycled materials.
3. Delegated authority is given to the Head of Environmental and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, to implement the Policy and its operational management as soon as practicable.
4. The s151 Officer uses his delegated authority to approve any fees laid out in this report, which are inconsistent with the schedule of fees and charges previously approved in the Council's Budget for the 2021-22 financial year.

EXE 92/20 PROPERTY MATTER - PLOT 5 WHEELER STREET NURSERIES, WITLEY GU5 8QP: GRANT OF NEW LEASE FOR TWO GARAGES TO LANDSPEED HOMES LIMITED (Agenda item 11)

92.1 Cllr Merryweather introduced the proposal to grant two leases of one garage each at Plot 5 Wheeler Street Nurseries, Witley from the council to Landspeed Homes Limited. This would simplify the freehold and leasehold arrangements between the council and Landspeed in relation to a block of garages benefiting affordable housing provided by the council and Landspeed.

92.2 The Executive RESOLVED to:

- approve grant of two garage leases to Landspeed Homes Ltd; and
- Delegate authority to officers to finalise the heads of terms and complete the necessary legal documents with the prospective tenant with detailed terms and conditions to be agreed by the Strategic Director, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).

EXE 93/20 ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY (Agenda item 12)

93.1 Cllr Williams introduced the Electric Vehicle Strategy in the context of the climate emergency, the council's climate emergency declaration, and the need to reduce carbon emissions across Waverley, aiming for a net zero carbon target by 2030. Half of carbon emissions were due to petrol and diesel vehicles, so promoting a dramatic modal shift in methods of transport was imperative including enabling take-up of electric vehicles by expanding the network of electric vehicle charging points in order to anticipate and shape demand.

93.2 Cllr Cockburn, whilst recognising the importance of the climate emergency, was concerned about the council assuming responsibility for providing electric vehicle charging points. She was particularly concerned about the visual impact of electric charging stations being installed in car parks within the Farnham Conservation Area, and the policy being developed without talking to the local town and parish councils.

93.3 Executive Members endorsed the policy, and confirmed that town councils had been engaged in developing the proposals. It was noted however, that electric vehicles did have environmental challenges in relation to the manufacture and disposal of batteries, and the generation of electricity.

93.4 The Executive RESOLVED to adopt the Electric Vehicle Strategy.

EXE 94/20 SERVICE PLANS 2021-2024 (Agenda item 13)

94.1 The Leader introduced the three-year rolling Service Plans for April 2021 to March 2024 for approval. The Service Plans had been prepared by Heads of Service, in collaboration with their teams and Portfolio Holders, to set out the service objectives for the coming three years in line with the [Corporate Strategy 2020-2025](#) and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

94.2 The Executive RESOLVED that the Service Plans 2021-2024 be approved.

EXE 95/20 ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT - COVID BUSINESS SUPPORT PROPOSALS 2021-22 (Agenda item 14)

95.1 Cllr Townsend introduced proposals to allocate funds from the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) for wider business support activities. The Government had distributed billions of pounds of support to businesses during the pandemic through local authorities. Waverley had paid over £22m of Covid support business grants to businesses in the Borough between April and October 2020.

95.2 Since the November 2020 lockdown and subsequent statutory restrictions, Waverley had operated a further six separate business support schemes allocating government funding. One of the schemes was the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) which covered the period November 2020 to March 2022 and was targeted mainly at businesses that did not meet the criteria for the other specific support packages. The government guidance enabled local authorities to allocate part of this funding towards wider business support measures to help its business community recover. Waverley had received an initial £2.5m of funding and was required by government to set a discretionary grants scheme and decide how much money to allocate to wider business support.

95.3 The proposed allocation of £0.5m from the first tranche of funding for wider business support measures would be targeted at: support for key sectors (Retail/tourism- visitor economy/ hospitality/ leisure/ events); Business diversification and start up; Digital connectivity; and, Business intelligence.

95.4 Executive Members thanked officers in the Finance Team for their work in distributing government grants to businesses at short notice, and managing the different schemes; and the Economic Development Team for their work with Chambers of Commerce and Town Councils supporting local businesses.

95.5 The Executive RESOLVED to:

1. Approve the allocation of £0.5m from the ARG first tranche of £2.5m received to wider business support measures with the balance and subsequent tranches being allocated to direct business grants alongside other grant schemes.
2. Approve the proposed four priority areas for strategic business support and the indicative initial spending plan set out in Annexe 1.
3. Delegate to the Strategic Director in consultation with the portfolio holders for finance and economic development, the spending of the wider support funding on specific business support projects and initiatives during 2021/22, having regard to the plan set out at Annexe 1.
4. Request officers to monitor activity and spending and report to councillors as part of the quarterly performance reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive and to review the agreed proposals in six months, seeking approval if material changes are required.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.38 pm

Chairman