

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - 1 MARCH 2016

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 19 APRIL 2016

(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 Carole King
Cllr Wyatt Ramsdale
Cllr Stefan Reynolds
Cllr Simon Thornton

Apologies

Cllr Tom Martin

Also Present

Councillor John Williamson

139. MINUTES (Agenda item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 February 2016 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

140. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tom Martin.

141. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3)

There were no declarations of interest raised under this heading.

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.

142. WEYDON LANE FORMER LANDFILL SITE - OPTIONS REVIEW (Agenda item 11)

[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)]

142.1 The Weydon Lane SIG met on 3 occasions and considered and consulted on a number of options for the future use of the former landfill site.

1. The high level options considered were:
 - a. Do nothing;
 - b. The Brambleton Park proposals;
 - c. Park & Ride;
 - d. Housing development;
 - e. New location for Farnham Football Club (subject to funding);
 - f. Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS);
2. Each of these options, or a combination of them, has been considered by the SIG with input from interested parties and expert witnesses where appropriate.

Option a. – Doing Nothing

142.2 This option will still incur costs for the Council despite not being developed for an alternative use. This is because the Council has a duty of care to keep the site safe and also safe for persons who enter the site. There is a suggested cost of £71,000 for localised temporary clay-cap augmentation just to keep the current landfill cap viable for interim protection.

142.3 An alternative would be to reinstate the fence boundary using palisade fencing (to keep people out) along with minimal safety works, costs were estimated at £75,000. There is also an ongoing requirement to continue monitoring of the site, which presently costs approximately £21,000 per year. In the longer term, complete re-instatement of the clay cap will be necessary at significant cost. Estimates vary considerably but the range is indicated in (Exempt) Annexe 6.

142.4 Clearly the public have had access to the site for many years (dog walking and short cuts) despite there originally being a fence to keep people out, however the Council have not actively prevented access to site and informal access by the public has continued. So to actively prevent access now, would perhaps provoke a strong reaction from the local public

Option b. – The Brambleton Park Proposals

142.5 The Brambleton Park proposals developed by members of the local community seek to develop the site as a natural park and recreation area, possibly including sports facilities for the local community (see Annexes 2 and 3). This would involve formalising the current informal use which would need planning permission. It would be an acceptable use in planning terms but would be subject to the Council being satisfied that the development would not affect the integrity of the clay cap or impede any subsequent works to maintain and augment the clay cap and monitoring of gas emissions set out in option a above.

142.6 Whilst the proposers estimate that the creation of a natural park would cost in the region of £150,000, this would only include the temporary, localised augmentation of the clay cap and minor landscaping work. Complete

augmentation of the clay cap and creation of a formal park to provide a long term solution is estimated to cost significantly more at around £2.75m. There is not, however, currently any source of funding identified for this proposed use of the site.

142.7 There are also concerns from technical advisers that, in view of the inconsistent and inadequate topsoil cover and the deteriorating condition of the clay cap, planting trees and shrubs would create an unacceptable risk of this penetrating the clay cap and releasing contamination.

Option c. – Park and Ride

142.8 Given the restrictive covenants on the land, it would not be possible to dedicate the whole site to a park and ride facility. Any such facility would have to be combined with recreation facilities and/or public open space. The park and ride option has been considered in this context.

Strategic Transport and Traffic Management considerations.

142.9 In a predominantly rural Borough such as Waverley, it has to be acknowledged that car travel is, and will probably remain, the most important form of transport. The car will continue to be the primary mode of travel for people visiting towns such as Farnham and the particular challenge is therefore to support the regeneration of Farnham whilst balancing the competing demands for a sufficient supply of parking for commuter, retail, leisure, tourist and business needs and at the same time keeping congestion and its related environmental problems in check.

142.10 Ensuring adequate parking supply is available within Farnham to meet demand is fundamental to support the local economy and future growth. The current level of provision in Farnham is 1,793 spaces and occupancy surveys indicate that apart from one or two of the car parks at peak periods, there is still some spare capacity in most of them which should be more than sufficient to meet increased demand from the predicted housing growth in the area for the foreseeable future (Annexe 4). Guidelines suggest there should be at least 10% spare capacity within each town to efficiently manage parking demand, limit search times and reduce unnecessary car use and that long-stay parking arrangements should be located further from the town centres to ensure short-stay parking supply for shoppers and visitors is easily accessible and available in the centre of the town. The current level of spare capacity exceeds 10% and the current charging regime supports this approach.

142.11 There is no obvious unmet demand for parking to serve people coming into Farnham. The only argument for considering the provision of park and ride facilities is about reducing congestion and the associated environmental impact of it.

142.12 Park and ride facilities are only normally provided where demand for parking exceeds supply for significant periods and where there is a need to accommodate more visitors etc. for economic reasons. To be effective in managing parking demand park and ride facilities need to be located on or

easily accessible from all of the primary roads leading into the town. Examples of this radial layout of park and ride sites around the perimeter of a town are seen with Guildford and Salisbury (Annexe 5) where a number of park and ride sites surround the town, capturing motorists as they approach the town from all directions.

142.13 It is also generally recognised that park and ride sites need to cater for 400+ spaces to be financially viable in terms of supporting park and ride bus services and that there needs to be effective access to the sites from various radial routes approaching the town. Such a significant increase in the volume of traffic would have a detrimental impact on the area. It is also generally acknowledged that clear and free flowing vehicle routes would need to be in place to enable an effective and efficient bus service to operate.

142.14 In terms of desirability, the routes taken by motorists travelling to Farnham have been evaluated.

- Traffic from the East arriving on the A31 would naturally enter Farnham via Guildford Road and East Street where there are several car parks available (Riverside 1, 2 and 3 and St James).
- Traffic arriving from the North via Castle Hill would have to enter the town and would have to cross the town and exit it onto the A31 to reach Weydon Lane. In doing so it would pass close to the Upper and Lower Hart, South Street, Central and Wagon Yard car parks most of which have spare capacity throughout most of the day.
- Traffic from the South and South East could access the Weydon Lane site but to do so would have to travel through narrow residential streets.
- Traffic arriving in Farnham from the West and South West would relatively easily access the site by exiting the A31 at the Coxbridge roundabout, travelling along Wrecclesham Road and into Weydon Lane.

142.15 In terms of the Shuttle bus route into and out of Farnham, the shortest route from the site into Farnham would be through the traffic light controlled single carriageway bridge over the railway line leading on to the A31 through a traffic light controlled junction and into a suitable dropping off point in Farnham Town Centre.

Capacity of potential Park and Ride Site

142.16 On the basis that any park and ride facility would have to be subsidiary to recreational or public open space, a rough approximation of the area that could be made available for car parking is 3,060 sq.m. Taking into account the standard sizes for parking bays (disabled parking bays have not been included for this calculation) and also the minimum manoeuvring space required, the number of parking bays which could be accommodated is approximately 121 spaces. The proposed site would not, therefore, meet the recognised viability threshold of 400+ spaces.

Shuttle bus service charges and income

142.17 Most park and ride sites operate on the basis of free parking with charges for using the buses to and from the town. In most cases a frequent service every

ten to fifteen minutes, as a minimum, is necessary to make park and ride an attractive alternative to parking in the town.

- 142.18 Indicative costs of providing a shuttle bus service are around £300 per day to operate. To provide a frequent enough service there would probably need to be a minimum of two minibuses operating which would mean a minimum cost of £600 per day.
- 142.19 The cost of the bus travel in Guildford and Salisbury ranges from £1.80 to £2.50 for an adult (although Salisbury offer a group ticket for £3.50 for up to four people travelling in one car). If full occupancy of the 121 spaces and an average of 2 persons per vehicle was assumed this could potentially generate an income of between £435 and £605 per day which would barely cover the cost of providing the shuttle bus service. Given that the existing car parks already have spare capacity, however, full occupancy seems unlikely and there could also be a reduction in income from the existing car parks if vehicles moved from one to the other. A more realistic figure is probably therefore closer to £250 per day.
- 142.20 At this level the shuttle bus service would have to be subsidised quite heavily and there would be no scope for recovering the construction and maintenance costs of the park and ride car park.

Option d. – Housing Development

- 142.21 The site lies within the urban area and may be acceptable in principle for housing. However this would be dependent on the site being remediated to a level where there would not be unacceptable risks in term of health impacts on future residents. The cost of extensive decontamination to enable the site to be used site for residential development would be so high as to make the site unviable for housing even though it would make a useful contribution to housing supply in an area of high housing need. If the site were to be considered for housing development, the land would also need to be “appropriated for planning purposes” in order to overcome the restrictions and covenants on the Land Registry title.

Option e. – New Location for Farnham Football Club

- 142.22 In planning terms, the use of the site for football pitches is likely to be acceptable, subject to the careful assessment of the siting and impact of floodlights and the decontamination of the site to an acceptable standard for this use. This option would include bringing together the senior Farnham team with the junior team, Bourne Blades that currently train in South Farnham and address the undersupply of playing pitches in the area. The site is big enough to allow for football pitches alongside informal recreation space for local people.
- 142.23 There is a significant cost implication of relocating Farnham Football Club to Weydon Lane which would be expected to be covered by the generation of a capital receipt from their existing site behind the Memorial Hall on West Street, Farnham. By moving the football club to a site that is suitable for recreation purposes, but unsuitable for housing for viability reasons,

potentially makes a suitable site on the edge of the town centre available for residential development.

- 142.24 For this option to proceed, it would be expected that Farnham Football Club would assist in securing funds in addition to the potential capital receipt from their present ground. They will be eligible to apply for external grants from Sport England, Football Foundation and other funders to assist in their relocation and construction of a new pitch, floodlights, stands, carpark and pavilion. The club would require a long term lease in order to meet some of the criteria from external funding partners.
- 142.25 There are significant costs involved in the relocation of the football club, remediation of the Weydon lane site and the provision of a park/open space area. Initial approximate cost proposals have been sought, however, much more detailed investigation and consultation into its feasibility and cost would need to be undertaken in order to accurately assess the financial viability.
- 142.26 The provision of a park/open space alongside the more formal sporting areas is certainly possible. It is difficult to assume the costs involved in the provision as there could be considerable variety of provision to choose from, such a formal areas for instance a playground, or, perhaps more informal such as a wildlife area/grass land. Irrespective of these cost, the remediation cost of the soil and clay cap would still need to be applied.

Option f. – Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS)

- 142.27 The site does not meet the criteria for designation as SANG. Natural England's 'Site Quality Criteria for an Individual SANG' run to 19 in all (14 'must/should have's' + 5 'desirables'). The site is too small to accommodate the requirement for a (minimum) circular 2.3 km walk around the site. It would need to be around 12 ha for such a walk and would appear to be only around 4ha. A SANG should also be perceived as "semi-natural space", or provided as a "naturalistic space with areas of (non-wooded) countryside and dense and scattered trees and shrubs." This is not the case as the site is within the built up area with strong urban characteristics.

Conclusion

- 142.28 Doing Nothing (option a) will result in significant cost to the Council in augmenting the clay cap in both the short term and longer term or securing the site along with ongoing monitoring. The Brambleton Park proposal (option b) is not a viable proposal as there is currently no funding identified to meet the costs. In addition, there are concerns over the potential effect of such development and use of the site and its impact on the integrity of the clay cap which could significantly increase the future maintenance costs for the site.
- 142.29 There would not appear to be the demand for a park and ride facility for Farnham (option c), there is no business case to support it and the Weydon Lane site, on its own, would not provide a suitable location for such a facility either in terms of capacity or its strategic location in relation to the primary routes into the town. Development of the site for Housing (option d) is not a

viable proposition given that this would not generate sufficient funds to pay for the likely remediation costs to make the site suitable for this use.

142.30 Relocating the Football Club and redeveloping their existing site for Housing (including a proportion of affordable housing) (option e) would seem to provide a viable future for the site although further detailed work would be required to fully evaluate the works required, refine the cost estimates and test its viability further. The site does not meet the criteria for designation as a SANGS (option f). On the basis of these findings option 'e' (relocating the football club and using the existing club site for housing development would seem to offer the only viable way forward (subject to a further detailed feasibility study).

142.31 The Executive has considered the findings of the Weydon Lane Special Interest Group and now

RECOMMENDS that

74. a supplementary estimate of £50,000 be approved to undertake a detailed feasibility study into relocating the Farnham Football Club on to the Weydon Lane Site and making available their current site for housing; and

75. Ward Councillors and Farnham Town Council be consulted on this option.

[Reason: to consider the various options for the site and agree a way forward]

143. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Agenda item 14)

At 7.26 pm it was

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 items 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:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (paragraph 3).

144. DISPOSAL OF LAND - FARNCOMBE (Agenda item 15)

The Executive has considered a report on this matter, attached as (Exempt) Annexe 7 and

RECOMMENDS that

76. the recommendations set out in (Exempt) Annexe 7 be approved.

[Reason: to deal with a disposal of land in the Borough]

145. DISPOSAL OF LAND - FARNHAM (Agenda item 16)

The Executive has considered a report on this matter, attached as (Exempt) Annexe 8 and

RECOMMENDS that

77. the recommendations set out in (Exempt) Annexe 8 be approved.

[Reason: to deal with a disposal of land]

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.

146. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME (Agenda item 5)

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

147. BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT (Agenda item 6)

RESOLVED that the report be noted and approval given to

1. the setting aside of £50,000 of the additional car park income generated from the new tariffs into an earmarked reserve at year end be approved to cover the cost of modifying the car park machines;
2. the rescheduling of £40,000 of the 2015/16 budget for Frensham Common Site Facilities Development into 2016/17 be approved, as set out in paragraph 14;
3. the rescheduling of £120,000 of the 2015/16 budget for The Philips Memorial project into 2016/17 be approved, as set out in paragraph 15;
4. the rescheduling for the Customer and Corporate Services projects set out in paragraph 16 be approved;
5. the rescheduling of £50,000 of the 2015/16 budget for the car park rolling programme into 2016/17 be approved, paragraph 17 refers; and
6. a virement of £50,000 from HRA Cyclical and Planned work into HRA Void work be approved, as set out in paragraph 19.

[Reason: to review the 2015/16 budget against the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account forecast]

148. THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA) AVOIDANCE STRATEGY REVIEW: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION (Agenda item 7)

RESOLVED that the draft Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA) Avoidance Strategy (Review) be approved for public consultation.

[Reason: to approve the draft Strategy for the purposes of consultation]

149. APPROVAL TO SUBMIT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR THE CONVERSION OF FOUR COMMUNITY ROOMS (Agenda item 8)

RESOLVED that approval be given to the submission of planning applications to enable the four community rooms at Griggs Meadow, Gorselands, Stonepit Close and Woodyers Close to be converted to provide 5 affordable homes to meet local housing need.

[Reason: to seek approval to submit planning applications]

150. FRENSHAM GREAT POND AND COMMON SITE AMENITIES UPGRADE PROJECT (Agenda item 9)

[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

1. a Common Land consultation be undertaken and an application for Common land consent be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in September 2016;
2. a planning application be submitted for the construction of a new facility, carpark reconfiguration, new play area and the demolition of existing building following the application to PINS; and
3. subject to the above being approved and a satisfactory business case, delegated authority to undertake a construction tender process be given to the Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Operations in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Community Services.

[Reason: to seek various approvals to progress the project further]

151. POST PAYMENT PARKING SCHEME PILOT (Agenda item 10)

[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:-

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RESOLVED that

1. officers be authorised to proceed with the bid for grant funding from the Surrey County Council Town Centre Revitalisation Fund (£250,000 to £350,000) and if unsuccessful proceed with a bid for grant from the Surrey County Council Local Centre Improvement Fund (up to £30,000);
2. subject to obtaining the required external funding, officers be authorised to proceed with the installation of the Post Payment Parking Scheme in Village Way and Stocklund Square car parks in Cranleigh for a trial period of one year; and
3. a review of the impact of the scheme on use and income be carried out at the end of the trial period of one year.

[Reason: to seek approval to undertake a trial scheme in two car parks in Cranleigh]

152. SURRENDER AND RENEWAL OF GROUND LEASE - FARNCOMBE WANDERERS CRICKET PAVILION (Agenda item 12)

[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:-

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RESOLVED that Farncombe Wanderers be permitted to surrender its existing lease and be granted a new lease on terms and conditions set out in the (Exempt) Annexe to the report, with other terms and conditions to be negotiated by the Estates and Valuation Manager.

[Reason: to determine property related matters in the borough]

153. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ACTIONS (Agenda item 13)

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

- i. Tree Risk Management

To authorise a virement of £25,000 to supplement the tree safety budgets in Parks and Countryside and enable urgent tree works to be carried out.

The meeting commenced at 6.45 pm and concluded at 7.36 pm

Chairman