

# Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at Pippbrook, Dorking, from 7.00pm to 8.50pm

Present:

Executive Members: Councillors Vivienne Michael (Leader/Chairman), Charles Yarwood (Deputy Leader), Lucy Botting, Lynne Brooks, Duncan Irvine, Howard Jones and Corinna Osborne-Patterson

Non Executive Members: Margaret Cooksey, Stephen Cooksey, David Draper, David Harper, Chris Hunt, Paul Kennedy, Simon Ling and Sarah Seed.

## 50. Minutes

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016 and the Special Executive meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

## 51. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Michelle Watson.

## 52. Disclosure of Interests

None

## 53. Councillor Question Time

(1) Councillor David Harper asked the following question:

“How many houses would need to be built in each year of the 4 year period of this budget setting to retain the £400K earned currently from the new homes bonus? By year please 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021?”

*Councillor Duncan Irvine, Executive Member for Planning, responded as follows:*

The total New Homes Bonus received by the Council in the current year, (2015/16), was £1.3m and approximately 400 new homes would need to be built in each of the next four years, to maintain New Homes Bonus at this level.

The new scheme will be phased in over the next four years, such that MVDC's income from New Homes Bonus will fall by around £0.4m per annum in 2017/18 and by a further £0.8m per annum over the subsequent three years. In total, by the time the scheme was fully phased in, MVDC's annual allocation from the New Homes Bonus was likely to be less than £0.1m per annum, a total reduction in funding of £1.2m per annum.

The revised scheme for the New Homes Bonus, introduced by the Government for 2017/18 and beyond, requires a 'baseline' increase of 0.4% in the overall housing stock, before New Homes Bonus was payable. The actual annual increase in the housing stock in Mole Valley was currently broadly equivalent to the 0.4% baseline, or around 150 homes per year. Consequently, if this level of delivery of new homes continues, the Council will receive minimal, or no future allocations of New Homes Bonus.

Councillor Harper asked a supplementary question regarding setting house building targets at a level to maintain Council income.

The Executive Member advised that any target for building new homes would be based upon what was needed for the district and it would be unwise to set targets based on possible grant funding given the changing nature of funding from central Government.

## 54. Report of the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and considered nine items which were included

on the Executive agenda for 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, with the approval of the Leader, undertook to submit feedback on these items to the Executive during their consideration of each report.

#### **55. Month 9 2016/17—Business & Budget Monitoring**

In the absence of the Executive Member for Environment, the Leader of the Council highlighted MVDC's current performance in waste and recycling, as the latest figures from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) confirmed that the Council's recycling figures were the eleventh highest in the country and the second highest in Surrey.

It was also highlighted that MVDC continued to take a robust approach to enforcement action, with the development of an Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Strategy due to be launched later in the year. This Strategy would place an emphasis on environmental anti-social behaviour, such as fly tipping.

A question was raised about the current level of fly tipping in the district and whether the changes introduced by Surrey County Council at their Community Recycling Centres had led to an increase in the number of incidents. The Leader of the Council advised that the latest statistics did not indicate any significant increase in fly tipping since the changes were introduced in October 2016. It was agreed that future statistics related to incidents of fly tipping would be shared with all Members.

As the report indicated there would be a predicted overspend of £250,000, which could be attributed to staffing costs, it was questioned what action was being taken to address this issue. Assurance was given that every effort was being made to recruit new staff, but in some areas, such as planning, the difficulty recruiting suitably experienced staff was not unique to Mole Valley and was an issue across the country. The current level of staff turnover at MVDC was averaging between 15 – 17% and benchmarking with other local authorities of a similar size indicated that this was at the lower end of the scale.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council's performance and financial position for the end of October (Month 9) 2016/17 be noted.

#### **56. 2017/18 Budget, Council Tax Resolution, and refreshed Corporate Strategy**

The Executive Member for Finance and Investments introduced the report by highlighting that the proposed budget would allow MVDC to continue to maintain Services at their present level, despite a significant reduction in the grant received from central Government. The proposed budget was balanced, with the forthcoming year starting to see additional income delivered from the Council's new Asset Investment Strategy.

The Chairman of the Standing Budget Panel was in attendance at the meeting to provide feedback on a number of recommendations the Panel had made from their scrutiny of the budget setting process. These recommendations, along with the response of the Executive are appended to these minutes at Appendix 1.

Arising from the report of the Standing Budget Panel report, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the fees and charges principles were revised on an annual basis, but acknowledged there was a need for the process to be more transparent in the future. It was also acknowledged that a targeted 5% increase for fees and charges was not necessarily the right approach as there were areas such as car parking charges, when a more flexible approach was needed.

In response to comments about the accounts for certain areas, it was confirmed that specific accounts would be created for both the Asset Investment Strategy and Transform Leatherhead.

In response to a concern from the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor David Draper, about the charges for the hire of sports pitches, it was confirmed that some of the pitch fees had been adjusted to rectify historic inequalities in the cost of hiring different facilities. The new costs had been benchmarked against the costs for the new Meadowbank facility and the Executive were happy that the proposed fees were set at a sustainable level. It was also highlighted that discussions were being

held with clubs who had long standing booking to negotiate future charges.

In response to concerns raised at the Scrutiny Committee about some of the reworded Priorities in the refreshed Corporate Strategy, the Leader of the Council advised Members that as the Corporate Strategy was now over two years old, some changes were needed to ensure the priorities continued to reflect the needs of local communities. It was highlighted that the change in Corporate Priority 2 from '...safeguarding the greenbelt' to '...balance residents needs with the protection of the Green Belt' had been made to provide scope for the Council to take into account the wishes of local residents, who in some exceptional circumstance may be willing to sacrifice small parcels of green belt land to facilitate the building of much needed housing. The change did not reflect any lessening of the Council's intention to protect the green belt from development under any other circumstances.

In response to a question about the change to Corporate Priority 8 '...Promote the culture and economy of the market town of Dorking' to '...Support the culture and economy of the market town of Dorking', it was advised that the level of support provided by the Council to promote Dorking town centre, had increased in the past year with the development of the Economic Development Team. The wording change reflected that there was now the potential introduction of a Business Improvement District in Dorking, who would lead on promoting the town, supported by the Council.

In response to a question about the change to Corporate Priority 12 '...protecting the standard of services' to '...protecting services', the Leader advised that there was no intention of reducing the standard of the Council's services and that, in fact, the standard of many services was improving.

**RESOLVED:** The Executive recommends to Council:-

- i. That the refreshed version of the Corporate Strategy 2015-19 be endorsed
- ii. That the proposed budget for 2017/18 be set at £9,430,000
- iii. That the Band D Council Tax for 2017/18 be set at £168.56, representing a 3.0% increase on 2016/17, in line with the Government announcement that Council Tax can be increased, without triggering a referendum, by up to 2.0% or £5.00 (on a Band D property), whichever is the higher.
- iv. That the Capital Programme for 2017/18 be approved
- v. That the Section 151 Officer's statement concerning the 2017/18 budget and the medium term financial outlook for the Council be noted
- vi. That the Council decide whether to increase Members' Allowances in line with the Local Pay Award for staff

## **57. Asset Investment Criteria**

The Executive Member for Finance and Investments reminded Members that the Asset Investment Strategy had been agreed by the Council in October 2016, subject to a review of the Asset Investment Criteria by the Scrutiny Committee. This had now been completed and the Executive were happy that the criteria used to guide the purchase of investments for the Strategy was significantly robust.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee noted that the criteria set a minimum score of 100 for a potential investment to be considered, unless the yield was high enough and the additional risk could be balanced within the portfolio. It was questioned whether this would lead to the purchase of investments with greater risk potential, but the Executive Member for Finance and Investments provided reassurance that any investment would be stringently checked before any purchase was decided upon.

It was also confirmed that a separate company was being set up to administer the Asset Investment Strategy. This would include the employment of the necessary specialist advisors to guide the Strategy, as required.

**RESOLVED:** That the Asset Investment Criteria be endorsed

## **58. Mole Valley District Council Grant Aid Applications**

During her introduction of the report, the Executive Member for Wellbeing reassured Members that the Council would be maintaining its current level of grant funding, despite the challenging financial climate and a reducing grant from central Government. It was recognised that voluntary and faith sector charities provided significant benefit to the district, particularly in improving the social wellbeing of the most vulnerable residents in Mole Valley. As such a key proposal for 2017/18 was the creation of a Small Community Fund of £18,500 which would be available for charities to apply for funding for projects in the local area.

As there was only a finite amount of money available for grants, difficult decisions had to be made, including the decision on the funding level for Citizens Advice Mole Valley (CAMV). The value of the support provided for local residents by CAMV was recognised by the Executive, and Members and Officers had been working with CAMV over the past few years to help them to continue to deliver their core services at their present level. MVDC would be guaranteeing funding for CAMV over the next three years, with a grant of £120,000 in 2017/18, £110,000 in 2018/19 and £100,000 in 2019/20, as well continuing to provide rent free accommodation in Dorking and Business Rate Relief. MVDC would also continue to work with CAMV to ensure the future sustainability of the service.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that Members had been delighted with the creation of the much needed Small Community Fund, but had been disappointed that this seemed to have been created at the expense of CAMV, with a concern that this may mean they would be unable to maintain their current level of service provision. The Executive Member for Wellbeing and the Leader of the Council both highlighted that the Council had been working with CAMV for the past few years to reduce their reliance on the grant from MVDC, which was at a higher level than provided by other local authorities in Surrey. In light of the Council's own Revenue Support Grant from central Government being reduced to zero over the next few years, it was a significant achievement to be able to maintain the total amount of funding currently available for grants.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the capital grants and the one and three year revenue grants are approved for 2017/18 subject to the necessary budget being committed.
2. That the establishment of the Small Community Fund is approved.

## **59. Thomas Flack Trust Fund Applications**

The Executive Member for Finance and Investments advised Members that as there had been a significant capital expenditure in the past year to bring one of the properties own by the Trust up to the expected standard, it had resulted in a reduced amount of money being available for grants, but a range of grants were still being awarded. Going forward it was being recommended that a sinking fund of £10,000 per year be created to cover future repairs and renovations.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the views of the Thomas Flack Working Group are taken into account and the grants for the financial year 2017/18 are approved.
2. That the views of the Thomas Flack Working Group are taken into account and the agreement between the Council's Housing Department and the Thomas Flack Trust Fund is approved.
3. That the views of the Thomas Flack Working Group are taken into account and £10,000 per annum is now allocated to a sinking fund to cover any major works which may need to be carried out on the Thomas Flack Trust Fund properties going forward.

## **60. Community Transport Review**

The Executive Member for Wellbeing introduced the report by thanking the Scrutiny Committee for

their comments, which had been taken on board and fed into the final report. From the review it was clear that Dial a Ride was a well managed service, much appreciated by its users. The next steps would be the development of options for the Service over the next 6 – 10 month, with the process including a period of consultation. The final recommendations would be brought to the Scrutiny Committee for comments, prior to going to the Executive for a decision.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee raised a question from his meeting about the reporting of £200,000 in the budget for 2017/18 for a replacement Dial a Ride vehicle, as it seemed that similar amounts had not been budgeted in subsequent years. The Executive Member for Finance and Investments advised that because of depreciating values, the purchase of new vehicles for the Service was under review as there may be other more cost effective methods of providing new vehicles.

**RESOLVED:** That the key recommendations of the Community Transport Review, undertaken by Societas Management Ltd be endorsed and used as a basis for future development of the service.

## 61. Rural Community Strategy

The Executive Member for Communities, Services and Housing advised Members in order to develop the Strategy, she had been working with local rural communities and their representatives to ensure the final Strategy addressed the key issues and challenges faced by residents and businesses in these locations.

It was highlighted that there were three main elements to the Rural Communities Strategy: the main strategy document summarising the challenges facing rural communities, which included a strategic vision and aims and a range of priorities and actions. This was supplemented by an Action Plan for 2017/18 and a one page summary of the strategic aims and priorities set within the context of MVDC's vision for the District and Core Values in the Corporate Strategy.

Members' attention was drawn to two particular aspects of the Strategy. The first was the proposal that an Action Plan to deliver the strategy was prepared each year for the subsequent year. The second was that Future Action Plans would be informed by an Annual Rural Community Summit, which would bring together key members of the rural community and crucial delivery agencies. It would be an opportunity to review the preceding year's achievements and identify the priority actions for the forthcoming year. Each year's Action Plan would be reported back to the Scrutiny Committee and signed off by the Executive.

The Executive Member for Communities, Services and Housing also thanked the Members of the Scrutiny Committee who had twice considered the proposed Rural Community Strategy. It was noted that their comments concerning the following had been addressed in the final document:

- Encouraging visitors to the rural areas of the District
- Ensuring Policing levels in the rural areas are appropriate
- Supporting the rural economy
- Improving provision of affordable housing
- Facilitating the delivery of high speed broadband.
- Included a SWOT analysis.

It was noted that there were five changes to the Rural Community Strategy which were set out in an addendum tabled at the meeting. These changes were:-

1. An amendment to the SWOT analysis, revising the reference to EU farm income in the Rural Threats column.
2. An amendment to the Digital Connectivity Action DC 2 of the 2017/18 Action Plan to include a speaker on satellite connections to the internet at the Annual Rural Community Summit.
3. An amendment to the Visitor Economy Action Point VE2 to clarify that minimising the impact of cycling, walking and equestrian activities relates to their consequences for the environment and

residential amenities

4. An amendment to the Community Safety Action Point CS3 to include support for the Mole Valley Rural Crime Panel.
5. An additional Visitor Economy Action Point to reflect the receipt of EAFRD funding to deliver the wheels, feet and hooves initiative.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee advised that they had questioned how day visitors to Mole Valley could be converted to overnight visitors, given the economic benefits this would deliver. The Scrutiny Committee were also concerned about the potential impact on rural businesses from proposed business rate increase, but acknowledged that as the detail of these changes had yet to be announced, it was difficult to estimate the impact at the present time. It was also reported that the Scrutiny Committee had discussed the options for protecting rural community assets, such as pubs and shops from the threat of closure and redevelopment.

Councillor Margaret Cooksey, the Council's representative on the Police and Crime Panel, advised that the Police strategy for tackling rural crime was still under development. It was agreed that this situation would be monitored, as there were areas, such as tackling fly tipping, that required a partnership approach between MVDC and Surrey Police.

**RESOLVED:** That the Mole Valley Rural Community Strategy, including the 2017/18 Action Plan and Summary, annexed to the report be adopted and used to:-

- (1) inform decisions taken by Mole Valley District Council affecting the rural communities in Mole Valley and
- (2) influence the decisions of those organisations providing services to rural communities in Mole Valley.

## **62. Dorking Business Improvement District (BID) Proposal**

The Executive Member for Property, Parking and Economic Development recommended that MVDC endorsed the proposal made by Dorking Town Partnership (DTP) to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) in Dorking. It was noted that the report had been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017, where there had been strong support for it, especially from Dorking Members.

It was highlighted that the BID could only be formed following consultation and a ballot in which all eligible businesses in the BID area (those who occupy a premise with a rateable value on or over £8,000 or, where any building is empty, those who own it) can vote either for or against the BID. In order for the BID to be successful, the ballot must be won on two counts; a straight majority of votes in favour and by aggregate rateable value; this was known as the "double lock" and ensured that small businesses were not out weighted by big businesses and vice versa.

Should the ballot be in favour of the BID, then its future activities would be funded through a BID Levy which would be based upon levying an additional 2% on top of the rateable value of each relevant business premises. It was estimated that in a full year, this would raise approximately £223,000 or £1.1 million over the four year and ten months that, it was agreed, the BID would run for. The BID can subsequently be renewed for a further period should the businesses desire it, but this would require another ballot at the end of the first five year period to confirm.

MVDC's role in the process could be split into two broad sections. The first was the "process" which involves the legal and statutory duties, which MVDC and DTP are both subject to. It was highlighted that for this aspect MVDC had to be neutral. These duties included:

- Holding the ballot
- Collecting the Levy in the event of a "yes" vote
- Agreeing Operating and Base line agreements with the BID in order to deliver real

improvements over and above the services currently being provided

It was confirmed that the Ballot would be held on 27<sup>th</sup> April and that the ballot would be in the form of a postal ballot, with the result announced on the day after the ballot. In the event of a yes vote, MVDC would, on or soon after the start date, raise the bills and collect the BID Levy and pay it over to DTP. It was also confirm that MVDC could charge for this service.

MVDC's other role was "participation", as the Council was a substantial property owner and ratepayer in the town, it was entitled to vote in the ballot. The recommendation set out in the report was to support the BID and for the Council to cast its vote in favour. MVDC has eleven eligible business premises, which in the event of a "yes" vote, amounted to a cost implication for the Council of approximately £19,000 per year, which could be contained within existing budgets.

It was confirm that MVDC would be entitled to one seat on the board of the BID company (plus an officer observer) and there would also be a Residents Representative, with it proposed that one of the Dorking Members would serve on the board in this capacity.

The Executive Member for Property, Parking and Economic Development advised Members in order to have flexibility to change the timetable, should it be needed, it was proposed that there would be a change to the wording under Recommendation B(iv). The full wording (with the additional wording in italics) for this recommendation would now be as follows:-

*"That authorisation be given to the relevant Corporate Heads to undertake all steps reasonable and, incidentally, necessary to give effect to the Dorking BID as set out in the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 and associated legislation and for the avoidance of doubt the above endorsement, confirmation, approvals and authorisations shall, where the context permits, apply to future changes to all actions or dates whatsoever (if any), as are reasonably required, provided these are compliant with the BID Regulations (or other relevant statutory requirements) and there are no subsequent material changes in policy re A(ii)"*

In addition to this, there were a number other changes set out in an Addendum, including moving the proposed start date back to 1<sup>st</sup> July. This change was intended to mitigate the risk of challenge within the 28 day challenge period and also to enable the Levy software to be purchased and tested to enable the bills to be sent out. Also tabled at the meeting were the following documents:-

- Appendix 1: the final BID Business Plan
- Appendix 2: the BID Proposal
- Appendix 3: the BID Consultation document
- Appendix 4: the Financial Management Arrangements for the BID

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee advised that he was glad the role of the Dorking Members as a Residents Representative had been clarified. He also advised that he agreed that it would be sensible to have flexibility in the timetable, in order to mitigate potential risks.

#### **RESOLVED:**

##### **A Under the process category:**

- i. That the BID Proposal made by Dorking Town Partnership be endorsed;
- ii. That the Executive is satisfied that the Dorking BID proposal does not conflict with any policy formally adopted by and contained within a document published by MVDC;
- iii. That the arrangements for MVDC to operate and manage the Ballot process in accordance with the BID regulations be approved;
- iv. That the arrangements for MVDC (subject to a "yes" vote, at the Ballot) to manage the billing and collection of the BID Levy, and to transfer Levy funds to Dorking Town Partnership (DTP) be

approved;

- v. That authorisation be given to all relevant Corporate Heads in consultation with Legal Services Manager and/or the Section 151 officer to prepare and enter into appropriate legal agreements to give effect to the above and also any relevant and necessary baseline and operating agreements.

**B Under the participation category:**

- i. That authorisation be given to the relevant Corporate Head in consultation with the Section 151 officer and the relevant Executive Member to cast vote(s) in favour of the Dorking BID in the event of a Ballot;
- ii. That authorisation be given, in accordance with MVDC's Protocol for Appointments to Outside Organisations, should an appointment be required prior to, or after, the Annual Meeting of the Council, the relevant Executive Member to act as MVDC's representative on the BID company board of directors.
- iii. That a Residents representative will also be selected from one of the five Dorking Ward members and will be agreed with DTP be noted;
- iv. That authorisation be given to the relevant Corporate Heads to undertake all steps reasonable and, incidentally, necessary to give effect to the Dorking BID as set out in the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 and associated legislation and for the avoidance of doubt the above endorsement, confirmation, approvals and authorisations shall, where the context permits, apply to future changes to all actions or dates whatsoever (if any), as are reasonably required, provided these are compliant with the BID Regulations (or other relevant statutory requirements) and there are no subsequent material changes in policy re A(ii).

**63. Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016**

The Executive Member for Planning advised that local authorities had been required to hold and maintain a Self Build Register since April 2016. New regulations divided the Register into two sections, with the first part including those people who could meet a viability assessment and a local connection test. The second part would include anybody else wanting to register their interest in building their own property. The Part One Register would be used by MVDC as a measure for the amount of land required for self builds, that the Council would need to demonstrate was available in the new Local Plan.

It was also noted that the Council would be able to charge an administration fee to individuals wanting to register and also an annual fee to remain on the Register. These fees had been set at £25 for entry onto the Register and £15 for annual renewal, but as this was a new scheme, these fees would be reviewed to ensure value for money for the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the introduction of a local connection test and a financial viability assessment test as additional eligibility criteria for being entered on Part 1 of Mole Valley District Council's Self-Build and Custom House-Building Register be approved.
2. That those applying for entry to the Register who do not meet the local connection test and/or financial viability assessment will continue to be added to Part 2 of the Register, subject to meeting existing national eligibility tests be noted.
3. That the Corporate Head with responsibility for Planning be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and the Financial Services Manager, to set and periodically review the fees for entry to, and remaining on, the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.

**64. Parish Wards of Beare Green, Capel and Coldharbour Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan**

The Executive Member for Planning advised Members that he was satisfied that the organisers of the NDP had met the requirements needed for the process to move onto the next stage. The next stage would involve MVDC running a six week consultation on the Plan with the local community, followed by the Plan being inspected by an independent examiner.

It was confirmed that the Council had a number of concerns about the proposed content of the NDP and discussions with the organisers had not led to a resolution. MVDC would have the opportunity to relay these concerns to the independent examiner during their consideration of the submitted NDP.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That it be agreed that the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan complies with the procedural requirements for preparation and submission as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
2. That the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan be published for a period of six weeks during which people who live, work or carry out business in the Parish of Capel be consulted and given the opportunity to make representations. Publicity for the consultation will include:
  - Publication of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan on the Mole Valley District Council website and hard copies available for inspection at Pippbrook and Capel Parish Council offices
  - Notification of statutory bodies as required by regulation
  - Notification by letter of all households and businesses in the Capel Neighbourhood Area
3. That Mole Valley District Council makes a representation as part of the consultation process, as described in Annex 4 of the report.
4. That arrangements be made for the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan to be independently examined after the end of the consultation period.
5. That all representations received during the consultation be submitted to the examiner of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### BUDGET 2017/18 – RESPONSE OF THE EXECUTIVE TO THE FINDINGS OF THE STANDING BUDGET PANEL

The 14 conclusions and recommendations of the Standing Budget Panel (SBP) are set out in their report on the 2017/18 Budget. They are summarised below together with the response of the Executive in each case.

1.	The Standing Budget Panel noted that the Fees & Charges Principles are four years old and should be reviewed. Alongside the review, information should be provided to demonstrate compliance with the Principles in the charges set.
----	--

The Executive agree. We will set time aside in next year's budget process for a five yearly review of the Principles.

2.	The SBP found that specific risk implications of the budget are not set out in detail in the report.
----	--

The key risks were identified by each Executive Member in the information prepared for the January meetings of the Standing Budget Panel. Detailed risks will be listed, throughout the year, in the relevant Service Risk Registers which are reviewed monthly.

3.	The annual Revenue Contribution to Capital of £0.4m has been eliminated to balance the impact of the loss of New Homes Bonus.
----	---

The point is accepted by the Executive. Efforts will be made to re-instate this provision in future years, if affordable.

4.	Fewer operational savings were identified for 2017/18 than in previous years.
----	---

The Executive confirm that the focus on efficiency savings will continue, though opportunities are fewer given the amounts identified in previous years.

5.	The inflation provision in the budget is lower than the Bank of England estimates.
----	--

Inflation is provided based on the historical upgrade of CPI from November 2015 to November 2016 (1.2%) rather than estimates of future movement. The main items that are forecast to rise excessively during 2017 – food, fuel and energy – do not represent a large proportion of MVDC's costs.

6.	The SBP noted the possible impact of costs of re-billing following the proposed SCC Council Tax referendum.
----	---

The regulations are clear on this point. If re-billing is required, the costs will be fully rechargeable to Surrey CC.

7a	The SBP outlined the Asset Investment Strategy (AIS) risks and recommended that an early External Audit opinion on the AIS be sought.
----	---

The External Auditors will scrutinise any AIS transactions as part of the 2016/17 Audit. Separate professional financial advice on the Company structure and taxation issues for the AIS was obtained from PriceWaterhouseCoopers during 2016.

7b	The SBP questioned whether it is necessary to raise Environment fees & charges when the Waste contract will save significant amounts?
----	---

The Executive confirm that it is. The Council's overall financial situation requires services to maximise income, in line with the Fees & Charges Principles, where possible.

7c	The SBP noted the potential impact of the Government's benefits cap on expenditure levels through the use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs).
----	---

The level of DHP grant for next year has not yet been notified, but if it is similar to this year, then no budgetary problem is envisaged.

7d	In relation to the freeze on car parking fees & charges, more information on MVDC overall parking finances should be made available.
----	--

The Executive agree. Analysis of the overall position on parking related expenditure is currently being prepared.

7e(i)	The increases in pitch hire charges should be phased in gradually.
-------	--

The new prices are aimed to fully cover costs and to bring the charges into line. The prices quoted will apply for one-off, isolated hiring. For clubs that make regular use of the pitch and commit to a block of bookings, then a lower price can be negotiated. The final price will also depend on agreement on who carries out pitch maintenance.

7e(ii)	In relation to the agreement with Citizens Advice Mole Valley, a set of robust key performance indicators (KPIs) is required.
--------	---

This is accepted by the Executive and is to be agreed with CAMV. The new agreement will be underpinned by a revised Service Level Agreement running from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. As part of this agreement, KPIs will be reviewed.

7f	The SBP noted the potential adverse impact on Planning income of external competition.
----	--

This is acknowledged by the Executive. The 2017/18 budget includes a reduction in the income target of £70,000 to offset the reduced income on planning applications and land charges.

7g	Transform Leatherhead should have standard revenue and capital budget provision for 2017/18 rather than allocations from reserves
----	---

This is agreed by the Executive. A budget will be set up in line with the amounts of allocations from reserves already agreed.