

# Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at Pippbrook, Dorking, from 7.00pm to 8.10pm

Present:

Executive Members: Councillors James Friend (Leader/Chairman), Lucy Botting, Lynne Brooks, Howard Jones, Paul Newman, Corinna Osborne-Patterson, Sarah Seed and Charles Yarwood.

Non-Executive Members: Councillors Stephen Cooksey, Rosemary Dickson, David Draper, Simon Ling, Philippa Shimmin and Chris Townsend.

## 4. Minutes

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader/Chairman.

## 5. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Vivienne Michael.

## 6. Disclosure of Interests

None

## 7. Councillor Question Time

(1) Councillor Philippa Shimmin asked the following question:

'I am concerned about the future of Leatherhead Community Centre which is a Mole Valley District Council asset but is falling into a serious state of disrepair. It now has limited use - it has a bar, hosts the Foodbank, acts as temporary accommodation for a playgroup and is the venue for occasional jumble sales. Its future as a community asset is being totally ignored by the Council and officers have not been able to give me any assurance about its future.

Would the Executive Member for Property and Parking please indicate what plans the Council has for the future of this building, whether it is intended that it should remain a community asset with funds being made available for repair and restoration and the expected timescale for any improvement work?'

Councillor Charles Yarwood, Executive Member for Property and Parking, responded as follows:

The Council has been monitoring, for a considerable period, the occupier's response to maintenance and other tenancy management issues. Only in March was the final payment made in respect of works completed as part of the tri-partite funding with Surrey County Council.

Officers have been in dialogue with the occupiers and it is only fair to say have been disappointed with the responses. In light of these additional concerns, I would think it's time now to invite local Members to get together with officers to decide an acceptable way forward for this facility.

Councillor Shimmin asked a supplementary question regarding the timescale for such action.

The Executive Member advised that the timing was for the local Members to determine, but that they should arrange to get together as soon as possible.

## 8. Report of the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 2<sup>nd</sup> June and considered a number of items which were included on the Executive agenda for 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, with the approval of the Leader, undertook to submit feedback to the Executive during their consideration of each report. The Committee had also received a presentation from Ride London which highlighted

the different communication methods being used this year to raise awareness of the cycle races with both residents and local businesses, including guidance for local residents affected by the road closures and also advice for business on how to get involved with the event and take advantage of the increased number of visitors to the area and any associated economic benefits. Overall, the Committee had been satisfied from the presentation that the organiser of Ride London had learnt from last year's event and it was hoped that the event on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August would be a success for the district.

Finally, the Committee had discussed the Action Plan for the Joint Waste Strategy and, whilst making minor suggestions on the Action Plan, had supported the document and its intended aims.

**9. The Process for Procuring a Principal Contractor for the Refurbishment of the Pippbrook Civic Offices, Dorking [KEY DECISION]**

Following its decision of 9<sup>th</sup> September 2014 that the existing offices at Pippbrook should be refurbished, the Executive considered a report setting out the process and recommendations for procuring a suitable principal contractor for the construction phase.

The Executive Member for Property and Parking introduced the report, outlining the principal benefits of procuring works through the Scape Framework Agreement. In response to a query raised by the Scrutiny Committee regarding the cost/quality weighting, the Executive Member confirmed that cost and quality were weighted equally at 50% for each. The quality weighting was then split further, with 40% for the qualitative questionnaire and 10% at interview.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee had no major objections to the suggested process set out in the report and thanked the Executive Member for his response regarding the cost/quality weighting.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the procurement of the principal contractor for the refurbishment of the Pippbrook Civic Offices via the Scape Framework Agreement, as detailed in the report submitted, be approved.
- (2) That a report which sets out the offer made by the principal contractor to refurbish the Pippbrook Civic Offices be presented to the Executive in October 2015.

**10. Capel Parish Council application for designation of Neighbourhood Area**

A report seeking delegated authority to determine Capel Parish Council's application to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area was considered by the Executive.

The Executive Member for Planning explained the rationale behind the recommended delegation and confirmed that a report would be submitted to the September meeting of the Executive on the public consultation and the outcome of the application.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee advised that the Committee had been supportive of the recommended course of action and had felt that it may help to clarify this stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process for some residents who had raised concerns with local Members. It was noted that a further report on the consultation and outcome would be submitted to the Executive in September and the Committee had asked that the report also be provided to its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

The Chairman noted the importance of this stage of the Neighbourhood Planning process as the basis for the future development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That delegated powers be granted to the Corporate Head of Service for Planning to determine the application for designation of Capel Parish as a Neighbourhood Area, following

consultation with the Executive Members for Planning, Community Engagement & Resident Services and Rural Economies & Cycling and the Ward members for Capel, Leigh and Newdigate, Beare Green and Leith Hill.

- (2) That a full report on the public consultation, views expressed and the outcome of the application be submitted to the September meeting of the Executive.

## **11. Redevelopment of the Meadowbank Football Ground, Meadowbank [KEY DECISION]**

The Executive considered a report on the redevelopment of the Meadowbank Football Ground. Revised recommendations were tabled.

The Executive Member for Town Centres advised that approval of the recommendations would enable delivery of the project for the beginning of the 2016/17 season. The Executive Member reported that the development included a very significant community element which would be of huge benefit to the town and users of the recreation ground. The Executive noted that due to the heavily oversubscribed alternative facilities in the Dorking area, the Dorking Community Youth Football Group, an umbrella group for a large number of local youth teams, had expressed an interest in using the new pitch at Meadowbank for as many sessions as possible on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The Executive Member explained that recommendation 3 remained in the report as the level of community use of the facility, and that of the Surrey County Football Association (SCFA) who would hold the head-lease, would preclude its full-time use by two adult football clubs. The Council was intending to negotiate around a 25 year sub-lease, and it was unlikely that Dorking Wanderers would accept a sub-lease of this length. The Executive Member also noted that 3G artificial pitches were currently not approved for use at all levels of football. He advised that approval of this recommendation would not preclude Dorking Wanderers from agreeing a sub-lease with SCFA or negotiating a short-term agreement with Dorking FC regarding part-time usage. In addition, the scope for providing an alternative ground/pitch for Dorking Wanderers within the Dorking area would be examined.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that Committee Members had largely supported the recommendations in the original report in respect of the scope of the works, the granting of the head lease to Surrey County Football Association and the acceptance of the Sport England Lottery Grant, with the Committee recognising that the project represented an excellent opportunity for a much needed community sporting facility in the centre of Dorking. It was also accepted that by granting a head lease to the Surrey County Football Association it would provide the Council with additional security for its investment as well as putting in place at the facility an organisation that had the ability to mediate between any football clubs wanting to use the ground.

Despite the Scrutiny Committee's positive endorsement for the overall project, significant concern had, however, been voiced across the Chamber with regard to the recommendation that the existing agreement with Dorking Football Club should be replaced with a sub-lease (recommendation 3 in the original report). While the Committee accepted that Dorking Football Club should be able to use the ground, it was felt that as one of the main reasons for developing the facility was to provide Dorking with a community sporting facility, it was essential that the other main football club in the town, Dorking Wanderers Football Club, was given equal opportunity to share the ground. If a sub-lease were granted to Dorking Football Club before an agreement had been reached between both clubs to share the ground, it this would give Dorking Football Club an unfair advantage over Dorking Wanderers Football Club in any negotiations. Given the strong views expressed by the Committee, including local Members whose Wards would be directly impacted by any decision, the Committee agreed that the Executive should be asked to reconsider this recommendation and either remove it from the report until a ground share arrangement could be reached or reword the recommendation to grant a sub-lease to both clubs. The Chairman thanked the Executive Member for his responses to the concerns expressed by the Committee, however he expressed the hope that the Executive would take into consideration the view of the Scrutiny Committee before making its decision.

Councillors David Draper and Stephen Cooksey both expressed concerns with recommendation 3 of the report as it appeared to exclude Dorking Wanderers from using the facility, which was contrary to the intent of the initial reports to the Executive on this subject. Both Members stressed that the facility should be available to the whole community.

In response to a question from Councillor Simon Ling, the Chairman confirmed that the sinking fund referred to in paragraph 1.31 of the report was an annual set aside and that the surplus figure referred to in paragraph 1.32 included the deduction of the sinking fund. The Chairman also advised that he had met with a representative of Westhumble Residents' Association and was facilitating a meeting between Dorking FC and Dorking Wanderers the following week. He acknowledged that trying to reach common ground between both clubs was a key aim, but also stressed the importance of maintaining the pace of the project. Executive Members emphasised the importance of communities outside Dorking being able to use the new facilities at Meadowbank and the health and well-being opportunities presented. The Chairman concluded that two of the Executive's objectives were to enable Dorking FC to return to its long term home under a viable sub-lease and to maximise the community and well-being use of the facility. He confirmed that recommendation 5 gave a clear undertaking that the facility should serve the community as a whole.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the scope of works as set out in the report submitted be approved and Surrey County Football Association (SCFA) be granted the head-lease of football facilities and offices at Meadowbank Football Ground.
- (2) That the acceptance of the Sport England/Lottery Grant be approved.
- (3) That a viable long term sub-lease for the use of Meadowbank be offered to Dorking Football Club, enabling the Club to return to its long term home.
- (4) That the negotiation of the detailed terms of this lease (acceptable to Mole Valley District Council and SCFA) be delegated to officers, in consultation with the Leader and the Executive Member for Town Centres.
- (5) That officers be authorised to work with SCFA to develop a range of agreements (and potentially further sub-leases) with other adult and junior football clubs in order to maximise utilisation of the Meadowbank facility.