

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2014 at Pippbrook, Dorking from 7.00pm to 10.00pm**

Present: Councillors Stephen Cooksey (Chairman), Margaret Cooksey (substitute for Paul Potter), David Draper, Raj Haque, Mary Huggins, Howard Jones, Paul Potter and Peter Stanyard.

Also present: Councillors Valerie Homewood, Roger Hurst, Vivienne Michael, David Preedy, Philippa Shimmin, Chris Townsend and Charles Yarwood.

### **28. Minutes**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

### **29. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lucy Botting, Mary Cooper (substitute for Paula Hancock), Clare Curran and Paul Potter.

### **30. Disclosure of Interests**

Councillor Phillippa Shimmin declared a non pecuniary interest in **Agenda Item 5 – Circle Housing: Mole Valley** as she was on the board of the Housing Association, but was not required to leave the meeting during consideration thereof.

Councillor Margaret Cooksey declared a non pecuniary interest in **Agenda Item 9 – Sites at West Street, Dorking, Surrey known as The Foundry and Church Street Workshops** as she had had meetings with people that work in the workshops, but was not required to leave the meeting during consideration thereof.

Councillor David Draper declared a non pecuniary interest in **Agenda Item 9 – Sites at West Street, Dorking, Surrey known as The Foundry and Church Street Workshops** as he was a member of the museum in West Street and Dorking Preservation Society.

### **31. RideLondon**

The Committee received a presentation from Kevin Nash, the Route Director for RideLondon on the cycle race event staged earlier in the year. The Council's Strategic Projects Officer, Lucy O'Connell, who was the Council's liaison for the event was also in attendance. During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- Lessons had been learnt from the 2013 event with regards to issues such as emergency access, stewarding, community engagement, business impact and engagement, road closures and access, barriers and signs and communications.
- Delivery improvements had been incorporated into the 2014 event in areas such as emergency access, a more comprehensive community and business engagement programme, planning with communities, road closure reduction in Surrey, bespoke traffic management schemes (e.g. in Dorking, Leatherhead Headley and Westcott), barrier installation and removal and communications to a wider area (2.2 million leaflets were dropped route-wide).
- Following the 2014 event, there had been an extensive debrief, where RideLondon had recognised that there was further work to do to improve local stewarding knowledge, impact on businesses, road closures and local access, efficient collection of barriers and signs, communications and access to information and contingency communications (which had been tested with the heavy rainfall on the 2014 race day).
- In 2015, RideLondon were planning to continue improvements in the following areas: business engagement, local knowledge and community liaison, access and route crossing, communications and online information, information cascade procedures, earlier access to community planning, road closure reduction across Surrey and better signage removal after the event.

The Committee asked Mr Nash a number of questions about future events. Mr Nash confirmed that subject to approval by Surrey County Council's Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> November, the 2015 event would be going ahead using the same route as in 2014. The number of public participants RideLondon were aiming for in 2015 would be around 25,000, whereas the number of professional riders would remain at 150.

Members praised RideLondon's communication with businesses and the engagement with the event that had been encouraged. Mr Nash felt that further could be done in rural areas, for example, alternative routes for customers. A question was also raised concerning a recent letter by Abinger Parish Council with regard to loss of income for local businesses on the day of the ride; whilst RideLondon could not pay compensation, Mr Nash confirmed that he was happy to meet with Abinger Parish Council and all businesses to work through any concerns and issues they had.

The Committee thanked Mr Nash for attending the meeting, and asked if he would return in March/April 2015 to update Members further, to which he agreed.

### **32. Circle Housing: Mole Valley**

The Managing Director of Circle Housing Mole Valley (CHMV), David Searle, and the Chairman, Bob Hughes, attended the meeting to provide the Committee with an annual update on the work of the Housing Association in Mole Valley. During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- CHMV had endeavoured to abide by the principles and promises that were made following the transfer of Mole Valley's housing stock to the housing association seven years ago.
- New homes had been developed, and refurbishments had been completed (or were close to being complete) across the District at Trasher Mead, Rushett Drive, Coningsby and Vincent Lane in Dorking, Whiteway and Middlemead in Bookham and also in Westcott.
- Older People's Housing Strategy was being examined across the CHMV group, and was something the group were committed to maintaining and delivering, despite a reduction in revenue funding in the past 10 years.
- Repairs, maintenance and money advice for tenants were other areas in which CHMV had been striving for improvement; since 2010/11 1,832 residents had been offered money advice and an additional £2.2m additional benefits had been accessed.
- CHMV had also taken part in a number of employment and skills programmes such as the 'Routes to Work' and apprenticeship schemes; as a result of the latter, CHMV now employ two full time apprentices within its repairs and maintenance team.

The Committee asked various questions of Mr Searle and Mr Hughes on a number of subjects, such as timescales for repairs requested by tenants, future development opportunities, provision of elderly people's services and housing and the effect of the bedroom tax.

The Committee thanked Mr Searle and Mr Hughes for attending the meeting.

### **33. Service Update: Partnerships**

The Committee received a presentation from the Partnerships and Development Manager, Patrick McCord, who provided an overview of his service.

During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- The team's budget had improved significantly over the past year due to the re-tendering of the contract for Dorking Sports Centre.
- The team worked on a number of areas as part of the corporate priority around Health and Wellbeing;
  - Community Safety – East Surrey Community Safety Partnership, Safety Advisory Group, Road Closures, CCTV and Anti Social Behaviour

- Youth Development – Youth Voice, Junior Youth Voice, Youth Task Group and Projx
- Sports Development – Surrey Youth games, Inclusive Sports Programme, Workplace Wellbeing, Sports Development in Mole Valley, as well as monitoring and management of Dorking Sports Centre and Leatherhead Leisure Centre
- Community Arts and Development – Arts Alive, support and advice for artists, arts groups and the public, Inclusive Arts Programme, Arts for Wellbeing, First World War Centenary
- Grants – MVDC Revenue Grants, MVDC Capital Grants, Surrey Community Buildings Grants, Thomas Flack Trust Fund

Members noted the points from the presentation and asked a variety of questions on matters such as frequency of meetings with local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), installation of CCTV in South Street in Dorking, the ‘Community Trigger’ scheme for local crime, social or disorder issues and referral of event planning to the Safety Advisory Group (e.g. upcoming sporting events).

The Committee thanked Mr McCord for attending the meeting and giving the service update.

### **34. Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the proposed Children Safeguarding policies and procedures. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

Members felt that the document needed to be looked at again by Officers and further work undertaken on it. Questions were raised on a number of elements, including training, referrals to further guidance online and general comments about the structure of the document.

Detailed notes of each point that was raised by the Committee would be given to Officers for further consideration and action.

The Committee felt very strongly that the issues raised at the meeting should be considered by Officers before the report was seen again by the Executive for approval.

**RESOLVED:** That the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be relayed to the Executive during consideration of the report at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

### **35. Surrey Local Strategic Statement**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the Surrey Local Strategic Statement. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

At the meeting the Leader confirmed that he would keep Members informed of decisions taken that were of interest to the Surrey Partnership, whilst acknowledging that much of the work would be dependent on the future of the local plan.

The duty to cooperate was relevant across the Surrey authorities, but Members also noted that it would be important to extend this to other local authorities such as Horsham, Crawley and West Sussex in respect of the future of Gatwick airport. The duty to co-operate was not, however, a duty to agree, but cooperation did need to be evidenced to the Planning Inspector in the preparation of local plans.

The Committee recommended the report’s approval by the Executive.

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations set out in the report be accepted.

### **36. Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED:** That members of the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular

person (including the authority holding that information) and (the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information).

## **PART II**

### **37. Sites at West Street, Dorking, Surrey known as The Foundry and Church Street Workshops**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the options for The Foundry and Church Street workshop site. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

In order to facilitate in-depth debate of this report, the Committee felt it appropriate to enter into Part 2 for the majority of the discussion.

In general, the Committee had real concerns regarding the potential loss of light industrial land in Dorking for affordable housing, as it was very difficult to find alternative space for industrial use in the town or surrounding areas; once lost, the industrial land would be increasingly difficult to reinstate.

A member of the Committee felt that due to the need for affordable housing in the District, the recommended course of action as detailed in the report was appropriate; however, this view was not shared by all Members of the Committee.

In conclusion, the overall view of the Committee was that it could not support Option 2 as set out in the report unless the Council could guarantee it would be able to supply alternative industrial land to replace the loss of land at The Foundry/Church Street Workshops.

**RESOLVED:** That the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be relayed to the Executive during consideration of the report at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

## **PART I**

### **38. Motion 5/2014**

The Committee had been asked by Council to review Motion 5/2014 which had originally been submitted to a meeting of Council on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2014 by Councillor Stephen Cooksey and seconded by Councillor David Draper. The Committee were asked to advise Council whether the motion should be accepted, rejected or to accept an amended motion.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of Motion 5/2014 be DEFERRED to the next appropriate meeting of the Committee.

### **39. Scrutiny Panel: Terms of Reference**

The Scrutiny Committee received a report setting out proposed terms of reference for the Affordable Housing and Planning Enforcement Panels, along with proposed amendment received from Members. The Committee were asked to approve the final version of these terms of reference.

Members had previously made some comments regarding the terms of reference before the meeting, which could be resolved by further discussions by Officers. An amendment was accepted to the third term of reference for the Planning Enforcement Panel regarding a mechanism for longer term enforcement reporting to Members:

‘3. Ensure appropriate feedback arrangements are in place so customers are kept informed of progress on enforcement cases, and identify a mechanism for reporting to Members on longer term enforcement issues.’

**RESOLVED:** That the Terms of Reference for the Affordable Housing and Planning Enforcement Scrutiny Panels as amended be approved.

### **40. Scrutiny Work Programme 2014 – 2015**

**RESOLVED:** The Committee noted the Work Programme and the Executive Forward Plan.