

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday 9th February 2016 at Pippbrook, Dorking, from 7.00pm to 7.41pm

Present:

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

Non-Executive Members: Councillors Stephen Cooksey, David Draper and Simon Ling.

65. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 19th January 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

66. Apologies for Absence

None.

67. Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Lucy Botting declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 9, Draft Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), as she had chaired the Bookham Vanguard Forum and had been involved in drafting the NDP.

68. Councillor Question Time

None.

69. Report of the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 26th January and considered four items which were included on the Executive agenda for 9th February 2016. The Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, with the approval of the Leader, undertook to submit feedback to the Executive during their consideration of each report.

70. Month 9 – 2015/16 Business and Budget Monitoring

The Executive considered a report detailing progress during the year to date with regard to the delivery of the Council's priorities and the outcome of the monthly budget monitoring exercise for the end of December 2015. The Executive Member for Finance and Performance highlighted the budget headlines and the progress being made against the 21 performance indicators.

Executive Members welcomed the proposed loan to Dorking Town Partnership to assist in the process for the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID). It was confirmed that the terms of the loan were based on those of the Government scheme. The Executive noted that there was widespread support across the Dorking business community for the development of a BID.

In response to a question from Councillor Simon Ling regarding capital funding for The Pitstop, the executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services advised that capital funding had been set aside for new premises, but suitable premises had not yet been located.

Councillor David Draper questioned the progress with regard to the Meadowbank regeneration and the contractors offer for the works to redevelop Dorking Football Ground. He also queried the other possible delivery options for the project.

The Leader advised that the information regarding the offer was exempt as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Executive Member for Town Centres would respond to Councillor Draper's question following the exclusion of the 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.

In response to Councillor Draper's question, the Executive Member for Town Centres confirmed the position regarding the Meadowbank development and the likely timetable for works.

Councillor Stephen Cooksey asked a number of questions regarding the information contained in the report. With regard to the restructuring of the Economic Development function and the notification of Members, it was noted that the final structure would be subject to staff consultation imminently and that the outcome would be communicated to stakeholders, including Members, once the consultation had concluded. In response to a question on when a proposal relating to the costs of managing and developing Clare House and James House would be submitted to the Council, the Executive Member for Property and Parking advised that it would be included in the agenda for the 23rd February Council meeting. Finally, the Deputy Chief Executive committed to providing a response regarding the Council's current levels of capital reserves to Councillor Cooksey following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council's performance and financial position for the end of December (Month 9) 2015/16 and the contracts set out in Appendix E to the report submitted be noted.
- (2) That the loan of £30,000 to the Dorking Town Partnership, as detailed in paragraph 6 of the report submitted, be approved.

71. Mole Valley District Council Grant Aid Applications

The Executive considered a report on the applications to the Council's Grant Aid programme for 2016/17 and the recommended awards of grant funding.

The Executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services reported that all six grant applications received for 2016/17 had been recommended for approval. Following a concern expressed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting that grants had only been awarded to existing recipients and that it was possible some groups such as arts or sports organisations felt that they were unable to apply, she advised that any group or organisation could apply for a grant as long as the application was in line with the Council's Grants Policy and reflected the Council's priorities.

The Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee had been reassured by the Executive Member regarding the operation of the Grants Policy and the applications process and, as such, confirmed that the Committee had no objections to the Executive approving the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED: That the capital grants and the one and three year revenue grants outlined in Tables 2 and 3 of Appendix A to the report submitted be approved for 2016/17, subject to the necessary budget being committed..

72. 2016/17 Budget and Council Tax Resolution

The Leader reported that, following representations to the Government by the officers and Leader of Mole Valley District Council and a small number of other local authorities, the Council had been notified on 8th February 2016 of significant changes to the background information within the Budget report. As a result he proposed that the final recommendations to the Council be deferred to the special meeting of the Executive scheduled for 22nd February 2016.

The Executive Member for Finance and Performance reported that a balanced budget and a Council Tax increase of 1.95% were being proposed. The Executive welcomed the amendments to the budget settlement and noted that the budget proposals would not impact on the Council's front-line services.

The Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee highlighted a concern expressed at the Committee that the Council had only responded to the outcome of the Revenue Support Grant settlement through an existing officer led consultation process and it had been suggested that the Administration should consider providing their own robust response.

The Leader advised that this had not in fact been the case, and he had, along with a number of other Council Leaders, responded to the Government. That response had been listened to as evidenced by the amended settlement.

The Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee also reported that a concern had been expressed with regard to the staff pay award which was being set at 1% and which in light of the increase in the National Insurance contributions for employees would result in a reduction in take home salaries. It had also been suggested that the salaries offered by Mole Valley District Council in comparison to other local authorities and the private sector may be a contributing factor to the 15% staff turnover rate. Finally the Vice-Chairman sought a response from the Executive Member to a concern that the charge for a Community Centre had increased by 8% which was above the Council's targeted 5% average increase for fees and charges.

With regard to turnover figures, the Leader advised that the average tenure of staff at Mole Valley District Council was 7 years, a perfectly acceptable figure.

In response to the concern regarding the 8% increase in charges for a Community Centre, the Executive Member for Finance and Performance confirmed that if the increase were reduced to 5% this would result in a saving of only 13p. She was minded, therefore, to continue with the proposed figure as this would be more convenient for service users and budgeting.

The Executive noted that a revised report including the recent amendments to the settlement would be submitted to the special meeting of the Executive on 22nd February for consideration.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the recommendations to Council in respect of the 2016/17 Budget be deferred to the special meeting of the Executive on 22nd February 2016.

73. Draft Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Executive considered a report which recommended the next stages in the development and adoption of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Bookham.

The Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee had no objections to the Executive accepting the recommendations set out in the report.

The Leader thanked those involved in producing the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan and commended the Planning Policy Team for their hard work in supporting the development of the draft Plan.

RESOLVED: That in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 16 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations:

- (1) The draft Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan, attached at Annex 1 to the report submitted, be publicised on the Mole Valley District Council website.
- (2) All households and businesses in the Neighbourhood Area be notified by letter of the publication of the draft Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan and told where and when it can be inspected, how to make representations on the Plan's proposals and the date by which representations must be submitted.

- (3) Those bodies referred to in the Bookham Neighbourhood Forum's Consultation Statement be notified that the Plan has been received.
- (4) Comments on Policies BKH1, BKH3 and BKIN4 be submitted to the independent examiner of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.11 of the report submitted.
- (5) As soon as possible after the period for the receipt of representations, arrangements be made for the draft Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan to be independently examined.

74. Framework Agreement for Bed and Breakfast Accommodation

The Executive considered a report proposing a framework agreement and procurement exercise for bed and breakfast accommodation in Surrey. The Executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services advised that the aim of the framework agreement was to improve prices and standards and offer the opportunity to procure new suppliers.

The Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Committee had no objections to the Executive accepting the recommendations set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council procure and establish a framework agreement for purchasing temporary bed and breakfast accommodation for statutory homeless households.
- (2) That the framework agreement be developed in partnership with the Borough Councils of Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Reigate and Banstead and Spelthorne and Tandridge District Council, and that Mole Valley District Council is the lead authority.
- (3) That the initial procurement timetable and process be approved.
- (4) That permission be given to commence the procurement process.
- (5) That the focus of the procurement process be to deliver value for money and the provision of bed and breakfast accommodation that is of appropriate quality and safe.

75. Aviation Working Group – Terms of Reference

In light of recent developments and consultations regarding aviation matters, it was proposed that the Aviation Working Group be re-established. The Leader confirmed that the Conservative nominations for the Group were Councillors Seed, Michael and Yarwood.

RESOLVED: That an Aviation Working Group be re-established with the Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted.