

MINUTES  
OF A MEETING OF THE  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WOKING**

held on 11 February 2021

Present:

Cllr Mrs B A Hunwicks (Chair)

Cllr S Hussain (Vice-Chair)

Cllr M Ali	Cllr D Harlow
Cllr S Ashall	Cllr K Howard
Cllr A Azad	Cllr D E Hughes
Cllr T Aziz	Cllr I Johnson
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr D J Bittleston	Cllr R N Leach
Cllr J E Bond	Cllr L S Lyons
Cllr A J Boote	Cllr N Martin
Cllr M A Bridgeman	Cllr R Mohammed
Cllr G G Chrystie	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr G S Cundy	Cllr M I Raja
Cllr K M Davis	Cllr C Rana
Cllr G W Elson	Cllr J R Sanderson
Cllr W P Forster	Cllr M A Whitehand

Also Present: Tim Stokes, Independent Person, and Claire Storey, Independent Co-Opted Member.

**1. MINUTES.**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 3 December 2020, 7 January 2021 and 19 January 2021 be approved and signed as true and correct records.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.**

The Mayor had participated in a range of online events staged by local organisations including coffee mornings, and noted the positive attitude expressed by many for Woking in the recovery over time from Covid and associated restrictions.

The Mayor thanked the Council staff, the Local Resilience Forum and residents for the excellent way in which the Covid testing for the South African variant had been undertaken across areas in Woking in the previous week.

Earlier in the day the Mayor had volunteered at the Woking Vaccination Centre in the Town Centre and had noted how the age range of those receiving the vaccination had clearly gone down in recent weeks, with the majority of those attending aged in the upper sixties. The Centre was well organised and extremely efficient in its approach.

The Mayor noted that the meeting was the last to be attended by the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, before their retirement at the end of March 2021. However, the Mayor proposed that they should be invited back to the Council at its meeting on 8 April 2021 to thank them properly for their service to the Borough.

#### **4. URGENT BUSINESS.**

No items of Urgent Business were considered.

#### **5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, the Leader of the Council, Councillor D J Bittleston, Councillor A Azad, Councillor D Harlow and Councillor C S Kemp declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items under which the Thamesway Group of Companies was discussed, arising from their positions as Directors of the Thamesway Group of Companies. The interest was such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor D J Bittleston declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items under which the Victoria Square Development was discussed, arising from his position as a Director of Victoria Square Woking Limited. The interest was such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor D J Bittleston declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items under which Rutland Woking Limited was discussed, arising from his position as a Director of Rutland Woking Limited. The interest was such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor G S Cundy declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items under which the Brookwood Cemetery was discussed, arising from his position as a Director of Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited, Brookwood Park Limited and Brookwood Cemetery Limited. The interest was such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, and the Director of Housing, Louise Strongitharm, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items under which the Thamesway Group of Companies was discussed, arising from their positions as Directors of the Thamesway Group of Companies. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Director of Community Services, Julie Fisher, declared a disclosable

personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items under which the Victoria Square Development was discussed, arising from their positions as Directors of Victoria Square Woking Limited. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items under which Export House was discussed, arising from their positions as Directors of Export House Limited. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, and Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items under which Brookwood Cemetery was discussed, arising from their positions as Directors of Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited, Brookwood Park Limited and Brookwood Cemetery Limited. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, and the Finance Director, Leigh Clarke, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items under which Dukes Court was discussed, arising from their positions as Directors of Dukes Court Owner T S a r l. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items under which Rutland Woking Limited was discussed, arising from his position as Council appointed alternate Director of Rutland Woking Limited. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor I Johnson declared an interest in respect of the Item 9C – Recommendations of the Executive – Investment Programme 2020-21 to 2024-25 – in light of reference within the report to Woking Football Club. The interest arose from his wife's position as Chairman of Woking Football Club and was such that Councillor Johnson would leave the meeting during the determination of the item should the Football Club be discussed.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor R Mohammed declared an interest in Item 6 – Petition – Taxi Licensing Arrangements – arising from his position as a holder of a taxi operator's licence. The interest was such that Councillor Mohammed left the Chamber during the determination of the item.

Councillor M Ali declared an interest in Agenda Item 6 – Petition – Taxi Licensing Arrangements – following contact with the petitioner in advance of the meeting. The Council was advised by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services that the matter did not constitute an interest within the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct and would not prevent Councillor Ali from speaking and voting on the item.

**6. PETITION - TAXI LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS - APPEARANCES BEFORE THE LICENSING COMMITTEE AND EXTENSION TO THE BTEC DEADLINE WBC21-007.**

The Council received a report on a petition seeking the Borough Council to "implement a system wherein a licensed taxi driver has the opportunity to appear before a Committee and to make necessary adjustments for drivers due to the Covid pandemic". The petition

had been signed by 438 confirmed signatories and 66 unconfirmed signatories and was presented at the meeting. The Mayor welcomed Antony Schiller, representative for the petitioners, to the meeting.

Mr Schiller spoke in support of the petition, and the request to reduce the extent to which applications for licences were determined under authority delegated to Officers. It was noted that petition also sought an extension for the deadline given to drivers to take the BTEC exam and an extension for licences from 6 months to one year, noting the MOT extensions awarded by the Government. Members were invited to ask questions of the petitioner before moving to the debate.

The Council was advised that a report proposing changes to the scheme of delegations had been due to be considered by the Licensing Committee in January 2021. The report, which had recommended changes to the scheme of delegations to allow certain applications to be determined by the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee, had, however, been deferred in light of the petition. In regard to request to extend the deadline for the BTEC qualification, it was noted that the issue had been addressed and that the Licensing Committee had recently agreed to extend the deadline from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2023. The question of extending the licence period had also been addressed and accordingly the only outstanding issue raised in the petition was the extent of the scheme of delegations, which was scheduled to be determined at the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.

The Mayor thanked Mr Schiller for attending the meeting on behalf of the Petitioners and advised that, in view of the details set out in the report and the comments of Members of the Council, the Council was being asked to note the comments of Officers and agree that the matter should be referred to the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Officer comments set out in the report be noted; and
- (ii) the points raised by the Petition be referred to the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.

**7. QUESTIONS.**

Copies of questions submitted under Standing Order 8.1 together with draft replies had been issued prior to the meeting. The replies were confirmed by Members of the Executive, supplementary questions were asked and replies given.

**8. COUNCIL TAX 2021-22 WBC21-008.**

The Mayor set out the procedure to be adopted in determining the Council Tax for 2021-22 and the Recommendations of the Executive. The Mayor would take the report on Council Tax first, together with the recommendations of the Executive on 4 February 2021 relating to the General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators, Housing Revenue Account Budgets, the Investment Programme and the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies.

The remaining recommendations from the meetings of the Executive on 14 January 2021 and 4 February 2021 would be considered once the Council Tax for 2021-22 had been

determined. A procedure note had been prepared which clearly set out all the recommendations before the Council.

Councillor Ayesha Azad moved and Councillor Simon Ashall seconded the reception and adoption of the report and recommendations of the meeting of the Executive held on 14 January 2021 and 4 February 2021.

**GENERAL FUND, SERVICES PLANS, BUDGETS AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021-22, HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS 2021-22, INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2020-21 TO 2024-25, CAPITAL, INVESTMENT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND COUNCIL TAX 2021-22**

The Council had before it the recommendations of the Executive for the General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2021-22, the Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2021-22, the Investment Programme 2020-21 to 2024-25, and the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies. A report on the 2021-22 Council Tax was also before the Council.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Azad, and Councillor Ashall made a statement on the Budget for 2021-22. Councillor A-M Barker, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor T Aziz, Leader of the Labour Group, and Councillor J Bond, Leader of the Independent Group, were invited to respond to the budget statement.

Following the statements by the Group Leaders, there was an opportunity for Councillors to raise any points in respect of the Council Tax proposals and associated recommendations of the Executive. Following discussion, the recommendations before the Council were agreed unanimously.

**GENERAL FUND, SERVICE PLANS, BUDGETS AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021-22**

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Revenue Estimates and Human Resource requirements for 2021/22 be approved;
- (ii) a Band D Council Tax for the Borough of Woking for 2021/22 of £250.46 be approved; and
- (iii) the Prudential Indicators at Appendix 3 to the report be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Final Government Settlement.

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS 2021-22**

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved; and
- (ii) with effect from 5 April 2021, rents be increased by 1.5%.

## **INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2020-21 TO 2024-25**

### RESOLVED

- That (i) the Investment Programme 2020/21 to 2024/25 be approved subject to reports on projects where appropriate;
- (ii) the proposed financing arrangements be approved;
- (iii) Thameswey Developments Ltd be authorised to take long term annuity funding, up to 50 years, for the Sheerwater project through its £115m facility with loans permitted to transfer to Thameswey Housing Ltd as the project progresses. The total long term loans drawn by the Thameswey Group for the Sheerwater project should not exceed the long term facility of £290m previously agreed (excluding THL revolving facility and TEL facility); and
- (iv) a capital grant of £300,000 and revenue grant of £150,000 for 2021/22 be approved for Brookwood Cemetery.

## **CAPITAL, INVESTMENT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

### RESOLVED

- That (ii) the Capital and Investment Strategies for 2021/22 be approved; and
- (iii) the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators set out in table 1 of Section 4 of the Treasury Management Strategy and the MRP policy set out in Appendix A be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Revenue Support Grant Settlement.

## **COUNCIL TAX 2021-22**

### RESOLVED

- That (i) the revenue estimates for 2021/22, as submitted, be approved.
- (ii) it be noted that the Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with the terms of his delegated authority, has calculated the following amount for the year 2021/22 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act) as:-
- a) 40,343.00 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities

(Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year;

- (iii) the Council calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2021/22 is £10,104,461.
- (iv) the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
- a) £159,616,895 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act;
  - b) £149,512,434 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act;
  - c) £10,104,461 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4 a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4 b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year;
  - d) £250.46 being the amount at 4 c) above divided by the amount at 2 a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31 B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year;
- (v) it be noted for the year 2021/22 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings in the Council's area as shown in the table below.
- (vi) the Council, in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of council tax for the year 2021/22 for its area and for each of the categories of dwellings :-

<b>Valuation Band</b>	<b>Surrey County Council Basic</b>	<b>Adult Social Care</b>	<b>Total Surrey County Council</b>	<b>Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner</b>	<b>Woking Borough Council</b>	<b>Aggregate of Council Tax Requirements</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
A	940.05	92.67	1,032.72	190.38	166.97	1,390.07
B	1,096.72	108.12	1,204.84	222.11	194.80	1,621.75
C	1,253.40	123.56	1,376.96	253.84	222.63	1,853.43
D	1,410.07	139.01	1,549.08	285.57	250.46	2,085.11

E	1,723.42	169.90	1,893.32	349.03	306.12	2,548.47
F	2,036.77	200.79	2,237.56	412.49	361.78	3,011.83
G	2,350.12	231.68	2,581.80	475.95	417.43	3,475.18
H	2,820.14	278.02	3,098.16	571.14	500.92	4,170.22

(vii) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52 ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE WBC21-006.**

The remaining recommendations from the meetings of the Executive held on 14 January 2021 and 4 February 2021, aside from those considered as part of the Council Tax 2021-22 recommendations, were before the Council.

**EXECUTIVE – 4 FEBRUARY 2021**

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE**

The Council considered the recommendation of the Executive which would result in the Housing Management and Asset Management Services being brought back in-house and housing repairs and maintenance works and services being procured through third party contractors from 1 April 2022 subject to tenant and leaseholder consultation.

The proposals were welcomed by the Councillors and, following the Portfolio Holder's reply to points raised, the recommendations were agreed.

RESOLVED

That the proposal to bring Housing Management and Asset Management services back in-house and procure Housing Repairs and Maintenance works and services through third party contractors from 1 April 2022 be approved.

**EXECUTIVE – 14 January 2021**

**NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR T AZIZ - VIABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOMES**

At its meeting on 3 December 2020, the Council had received a notice of motion from Councillor Aziz on the viability of affordable homes. The motion had been considered by the Executive in January 2021 which had been broadly supportive of the Motion and its purpose to maintain a panel of consultants, rather than to rely on a single consultant to determine viability. The Executive had agreed that the Motion would be re-drafted outside of the meeting, to be agreed with the Leader of the Council and Councillor Aziz. The revised motion stated that:

“This Motion proposes that the Council maintains a select list of at least three suitably qualified companies to undertake the viability assessments of Planning Applications and ensure that they are used equally provided they have not been used by the applicant.”

The revised wording of the motion was welcomed and was agreed as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

That the Council maintains a select list of at least three suitably qualified companies to undertake the viability assessments of Planning Applications and ensure that they are used equally provided they have not been used by the applicant.

**10. VICTORIA SQUARE UPDATE WBC21-010.**

The Council was presented with a report which provided an update on the Victoria Square development, in particular the financial position of the project following extensive work establishing the likely final cost of the project. The work had taken into account a range of activities the Council would normally have financed by the Council but due to the significant revenue impacts of Covid could not prudently do so. The Council was requested to approve an overall Project Budget and Loan Facility of £700m, full details of which were outlined in the report.

The report included Project Mandates for the two elements of the increased project cost that were optional, namely Woking Town Centre Wayfinding (£1m) and Lockfield Drive/Victoria Way Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge (£6m).

The report was debated by the Council and Councillor Barker moved and Councillor Chrystie seconded the following amendment to address some of the concerns voiced (additional wording highlighted in italics):

- (i) a provision of £1m be included in the project cost for Woking Town Centre Wayfinding, with implementation being subject to formal approval of detailed proposals by the Executive;
- (ii) a provision of £6m be included in the project cost for Lockfield Drive/Victoria Arch Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge, with implementation being subject to:
  - (a) *seeking at least partial grant funding to reduce Victoria Square Woking Limited's contribution;*
  - (b) *confirming the route proposed is the optimum solution;*
  - (c) formal approval of detailed proposals by the Executive;
- (iii) the Victoria Square Project Budget and Loan Facility be increased to £700m; and
- (iv) *in order to achieve a final outcome as far below £700m as possible, Officers come back to the Victoria Square Oversight Panel and subsequently to Council with details of efficiency savings that can be made without compromising the quality of the final product.*

The amendment was welcomed by Councillor Bittleston, Portfolio Holder, and was discussed by the Councillors, with a number welcoming the additional recommendations. Councillor Bittleston responded to the points raised, confirming that neither the timeframe for the development nor the risks had not increased, before the Mayor confirmed the recommendations before the Council.

RESOLVED

- That (i) a provision of £1m be included in the project cost for Woking Town Centre Wayfinding, with implementation being subject to formal approval of detailed proposals by the Executive;
- (ii) a provision of £6m be included in the project cost for Lockfield Drive/Victoria Arch Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge, with implementation being subject to:
- (a) seeking at least partial grant funding to reduce Victoria Square Woking Limited's contribution;
  - (b) confirming the route proposed is the optimum solution;
  - (c) formal approval of detailed proposals by the Executive;
- (iii) the Victoria Square Project Budget and Loan Facility be increased to £700m; and
- (iv) in order to achieve a final outcome as far below £700m as possible, Officers come back to the Victoria Square Oversight Panel and subsequently to Council with details of efficiency savings that can be made without compromising the quality of the final product.

**11. REDESIGNATION OF WEST BYFLEET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WBC21-005.**

The Council considered a report proposing the re-designation of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum. The Neighbourhood Forum had been designated in March 2014 and the Council was advised that the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 specified that a Neighbourhood Forum ceased to have effect after five years. The report therefore recommended the re-designation of the Forum to ensure that it continued to represent the community in preparing, reviewing or monitoring the delivery of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Plan.

The application had been widely publicised and consulted on, with details published on the Council's website for eight weeks, a press release prepared and notices published in local newspapers. In addition, letters had been sent to all households within the Neighbourhood Area. Twenty one individuals and two organisations had submitted representations, details of which were set out in the report.

The proposals were welcomed by the Council, with appreciation expressed for those residents who had worked hard to develop the Neighbourhood Plan and submit the application for redesignation.

RESOLVED

- That (i) pursuant to Section 61F(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) the Council approves the re-designation of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum for a further period of 5 years for the purposes of supporting the future review of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Plan and to ensure the effective delivery of its requirements; and
- (ii) the effective date for the re-designation of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum should be the date of the Council's decision on the application, in this regard, 11 February 2021.

**12. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS 2021-22 WBC21-009.**

Following the appointment of Julie Fisher as Chief Executive with effect from 1 April 2021 by the Council at its meeting on 19 January 2021, the Council considered a report which recommended that Julie Fisher should be appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer, the Returning Officer for local government elections and the Head of Paid Service from the start of her term of office.

RESOLVED

That, with effect from 1 April 2021:

- (i) Julie Fisher be appointed Electoral Registration Officer under Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983;
- (ii) Julie Fisher be appointed Returning Officer for local government elections under Section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983; and
- (iii) Julie Fisher be designated Head of Paid Service under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

**13. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021-22 AND GENDER PAY GAP DATA WBC21-001.**

Councillor Azad introduced the report on the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22 and the gender pay gap data, noting that the gender pay gap data was based on the snap-shot date of 31 March 2020.

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Pay Policy Statement be approved for publication;
- (ii) the Gender Pay Gap data be approved for publication; and
- (iii) the Ethnicity Pay Gap data be noted.

**14. NOTICES OF MOTION.**

Councillor I Johnson

The following motion was moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Lyons and referred to the Executive on 25 March 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“That the Council, in relation to York Road Project

- a) appreciates the valuable work of the Project to support Woking’s homeless people through its hostel, move on services and day facilities,
- b) recognises the need of the Project to find permanent modern facilities fit for the challenges of the future and
- c) resolves to work with the Project and a developer, potentially as part of the Housing Infrastructure Fund, to provide such facilities in, or near to, the town centre.”

Councillor L S Lyons

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor Morales and referred to the Executive on 25 March 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“Following new practice as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, this Council has operated hugely successfully without the need to print papers and courier them to Members across the Borough.

- (i) As a permanent matter of policy, this Council will operate all public meetings and task group meetings without printed papers, instead distributing them to Members and relevant Officers by electronic digital means.
- (ii) This Council will work towards operating all functions, involving all members of staff and associated contractors, without the need for printed papers.
- (iii) Exceptions may be made for complex planning documents containing diagrams and images, or which may be presented on non-standard paper sizes.
- (iv) Due consideration and exceptions will be made for those Members and Officers with additional physical needs.
- (v) Appropriate training will be offered to Members and Officers to enable them to use electronic digital alternatives to printed papers effectively.”

Councillor L S Lyons

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor Morales and referred to the Executive on 25 March 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“The pedestrian underpass underneath Woking Station has become dilapidated and is in a poor state of repair and decor. It has also become an eyesore in the town centre. At times, it can be unpleasant for pedestrians transiting between south Woking and the town centre.

- (i) This Council will take advantage of the significantly lower numbers of pedestrians using the underpass underneath Woking Station as a result of the current coronavirus restrictions, and arrange for its refurbishment at the earliest opportunity.
- (ii) This Council will seek to make such arrangements with other stakeholders as are necessary to achieve the refurbishments.”

Councillor L S Lyons

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor Morales and referred to the Executive on 25 March 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“CS12 of the Council’s Core Strategy requires that new developments over 15 dwellings will provide at least 40 per cent affordable homes onsite, and that those brought forward by this Council will provide 50 per cent of affordable homes onsite.

- (i) This Council notes that some applicants have successfully avoided having to provide any or all of these affordable homes as a result of viability assessments which have concluded that such a development would not be economically viable, were they to do so.
- (ii) Irrespective of any viability assessment, this Council, along with any of this Council’s arms-length companies (including but not limited to Thameswey), will not have any involvement in a development - save for determining its planning application - unless at least 40 per cent of the homes provided onsite are affordable homes.”

Councillor L S Lyons

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor Morales and referred to the Executive on 25 March 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“In accordance with the Control of Pollution Act (Noise) 1974, construction sites operating in Woking must currently limit site noise to the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturday and not at all on Sunday, with no noise permitted to be audible from the site boundary outside of those hours.

- (i) These times are to be confirmed as a matter of Council policy, and any review of, or amendments to, these times must be determined by the Council.
- (ii) Any permission to vary from these times may only be granted to an applicant with the permission of the Planning Committee.
- (iii) Any such permission by the Planning Committee will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and for a limited and specified period.
- (iv) Permission to vary these times on a single occasion, for a maximum period of one day, may be granted by relevant Officers under delegated powers. Subsequent applications, or applications for longer than one day, must be considered by the Planning Committee.
- (v) On all such instances of permission to vary from these times being granted, residents likely to be affected will be notified by post.

(vi) Works deemed to be an emergency will continue to be exempt from these restrictions.”

**15. STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR DAVID BITTLESTON.**

Councillor Bittleston was invited by the Mayor to make his statement to the Council.

Councillor Bittleston advised that it would appear that he had breached the Members’ Code of Conduct and that he would therefore like to formally apologise for doing so. As a Councillor, he was signed up to the Code of Conduct and he took the commitment very seriously. Councillor Bittleston reported that he had written to the Member concerned to apologise but had also wanted to apologise at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Bittleston stated that his reason for apologising now was that not only was it the right thing to do, but it was also his last opportunity to do so at full Council. Earlier in the month the Government had confirmed that the May elections would proceed as planned and Councillor Bittleston advised that he intended to resign as a Councillor on 30 March 2021.

Following the statement, a number of Councillors expressed dismay over the comments made by Councillor Bittleston in respect of the formal complaint under the Code of Conduct, and considered the apology inappropriate and premature.

Reference to previous complaints under the Code of Conduct was made and the Council’s Monitoring Officer formally advised the Mayor to draw a close the meeting. The Members were therefore informed that no further discussions would be held and that the meeting had concluded.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 11.04 pm

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_