

MINUTES  
OF A MEETING OF THE  
**EXECUTIVE**

held on 1 February 2018  
Present:

Cllr D J Bittleston (Chairman)  
Cllr C S Kemp (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A Azad                      Cllr S Hussain  
Cllr A C L Bowes              Cllr M Pengelly  
Cllr Mrs B A Hunwicks

Also Present: Councillors A-M Barker, J E Bond, A J Boote, K Howard and D E Hughes

**1. MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 18 January 2018 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**2. URGENT BUSINESS**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor D J Bittleston, announced the good news that the Council had been awarded £9.384m towards the Sheerwater project following a successful Infrastructure Bid. It was noted that it was one of two Infrastructure Bids awarded in Surrey.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, the Leader of the Council, Councillor D J Bittleston, Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks and Councillor C S Kemp declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute item 4 – General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2018-19, minute item 5 – Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2018-19, minute item 6 – Investment Programme 2017-18 to 2020-21, minute item 9 – Earn your Deposit Scheme, minute item 11 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information and minute item 12 – Monitoring Reports – Projects arising from their positions as Directors of the Thamesway Group of Companies. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with Officer Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, Strategic Director, Sue Barham and Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant, declared an interest in minute item 4 – General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2018-19, minute item 5 – Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2018-19, minute item 6 – Investment Programme 2017-18 to 2020-21, minute item 9 – Earn your Deposit Scheme, minute item 11 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information and minute item 12 – Monitoring Reports – Projects arising from their positions as Directors of the Thamesway Group of Companies. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan declared an interest in minute item 4 – General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2018-19, minute item 6 – Investment Programme 2017-18 to 2020-21, minute item 7 – Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2018-19, minute item 11 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information and minute item 12 – Monitoring Reports – Projects arising from his position as a Director of Victoria Square Woking Limited. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, and Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant, declared an interest in minute item 4 – General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2018-19, minute item 6 – Investment Programme 2017-18 to 2020-21 and minute item 11 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information arising from their positions as Directors of Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited, Brookwood Park Limited and Brookwood Cemetery Limited. The interests were such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared an interest in minute item 4 – General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2018-19, minute item 6 – Investment Programme 2017-18 to 2020-21, minute item 11 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information and minute item 12 – Monitoring Reports – Projects arising from their positions as Directors of Export House Limited. The interests were such that speaking was permissible.

#### **4. GENERAL FUND, SERVICE PLANS, BUDGETS AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2018-19**

Councillor A Azad, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Financial Planning and Policy, introduced the report outlining the proposed General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2018-19. Attention was drawn to two impactful measures in the report. Firstly, the Government's announcement that Surrey had been included as one of the ten new Business Rates pilot areas for 2018-19. It was noted that the pilot would mean that a greater proportion of Business Rates income would be retained in Surrey. Secondly, the Executive was informed that the Government had increased the Council Tax Referendum limit from 2% to 3%.

Councillor Azad reported that the General Fund Budget proposed an increase in Council Tax of 2.98% for 2018-19 which resulted in a Band D Council Tax figure for 2018-19 of £233.46 or an increase of £6.75 per annum at Band D.

The Executive welcomed the news that the provisional Government settlement, announced on 19 December 2017, had not introduced any significant changes to the New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme. It was noted that the grant awarded to the Council for 2018-19 was

£1.386m.

Councillor Azad advised the Executive that there was currently no resolution to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and that, going forward, reviews would be taking place.

Following a question regarding cost pressures on the Council's pay budget, the Portfolio Holder reported that £575k of the costs had been included in the budget resulting in a pressure within the salary budgets of £710k. The Executive was advised that the pay budgets always included a vacancy management savings target which reflected that the full staffing structure was never in place, and noted that there were also routine vacancies. The Portfolio Holder explained that the position would require careful management during the year and highlighted that employee costs were reported monthly in the Green Book.

Following a question regarding meeting homelessness needs as the Sheerwater development progressed, the Executive was informed that the development would be a slow managed progression over approximately 113 months. Councillor C S Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Housing, confirmed that managing homelessness was a key priority and reported that Officers were looking at new ways of providing temporary accommodation in the Borough as well as undertaking work regarding the Homelessness Reduction Act.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

- That (i) the Revenue Estimates and Human Resource requirements for 2018/19 be approved;**
- (ii) a Band D Council Tax for the Borough of Woking for 2018/19 of £233.46 be approved;**
- (iii) the Finance Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be authorised to approve the terms of the Surrey Business Rates Pilot on behalf of the Council and to sign the Memorandum of Understanding;**
- (iv) 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;**
- (v) the Service Plans for 2018/19 at Appendix 4 to the report be approved; and**
- (vi) the Food Safety Plan and Health and Safety Plan at Appendix 4a and 4b to the report be approved.**

Reason: To recommend that Council approves the resources necessary to implement its Service Plans and objectives and raises the necessary revenue through the determination of Council Tax for 2018/19.

## **5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS 2018-19**

The Executive received the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budgets 2018-19 for recommendation to Council. It was noted that New Vision Homes (NVH) had undertaken a review of the service charge for 2018-19. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the saving to the HRA following a review of how management and administration overheads were allocated would have no impact for tenants, other than increasing the resources available in the HRA.

Following a question regarding the recovery of service charges, it was noted that the changes to service charges would come into effect from 1 August 2018. The Executive was advised that the changes would be communicated with tenants via various methods, such as the NVH website and newsletters. It was noted that consultation had also taken place with Leaseholders. The Executive was advised that there was no major disparity in the Borough as a result of the changes.

Regarding representations to the Government regarding Right to Buy (RTB) funds, the Leader of the Council advised that a response had been received from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government which stated that Government officials would be asked to discuss the Council's proposal with Council Officers in more detail.

### **RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That (i) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2018/19, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and**

**(ii) with effect from 2 April 2018, rents be increased by 4% for Shared Ownership properties and be reduced by 1% for all other tenancies.**

Reason: To recommend that the Council approves the resources necessary to implement its objectives and to enable the Council to determine charges to tenants for 2018/19.

## **6. INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2017-18 TO 2020-21**

The Executive received the Investment Programme 2017-18 to 2020-21 which set out the capital and one off investments required to deliver the Council's key strategies and objectives. Discussion ensued on the availability of flood prevention funds for Hoe Valley, Old Woking and Byfleet. Officers reported that an application had been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funding towards the Hoe Valley Flood Alleviation and Prevention Scheme. The Executive noted that the projects were long lived and that it was not possible to guarantee that grant funding would be available, however Officers were working to find funding sources from as many sources as possible.

Following a question regarding tenders for the Sheerwater Regeneration scheme, it was explained that an update paper on the scheme would be received at Council on 8 February 2018 which would provide clarification on tenders.

Regarding the Phoenix Cultural Centre, Officers advised that the Centre had access to the venue concerned but the lease had not been completed. It was noted that a confidential Executive report had been received at a previous meeting in respect of the complications.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That (i) the Investment Programme 2017/18 to 2020/21 be approved, subject to reports on projects where appropriate; and**

**(ii) the proposed financing arrangements be approved.**

Reason: To recommend to the Council that it approves the capital resources for 2017/18 onwards considered necessary to support its service plans and objectives.

**7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2018-19**

The Executive received a report which set out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2018-19 and recommended to Council that the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy be adopted. The Executive was informed that the outcome of recent Government consultations would be incorporated into the Strategy in due course.

**RESOLVED**

That (i) the Treasury Management Strategy set out in the report be approved; and

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That (ii) the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators set out in table 2 of Section 4 and the MRP policy set out in Appendix A to the report be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Revenue Support Grant Settlement.**

Reason: To determine the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19 and to recommend to Council the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators and MRP Strategy to be adopted.

**8. DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKFORCE POLICY**

The Executive received a report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the adoption of the Domestic Abuse Workforce Policy. It was noted that implementation of the Policy would enable the Council to provide support and protection for its employees who might be the target of domestic abuse and to raise awareness amongst all employees.

Following a question regarding online safeguarding training, it was noted that online training was mandatory for all staff with a refresher programme every three years. It was noted that the provision of safeguarding training as part of the Members Training programme had previously been discussed, and it was agreed that Officers would investigate providing online safeguarding training for Members.

Following a suggestion that a route map be used to make the Policy clearer on who best to contact for further help and advice, Officers agreed to consider the suggestion with HR colleagues.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That the Domestic Abuse Workforce Policy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted.**

Reason: To recommend to Council that the Domestic Abuse Workforce Policy be adopted.

**9. EARN YOUR DEPOSIT SCHEME**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the introduction of an “Earn your Deposit” scheme to help people who rented properties from Thameswey Housing Limited (THL) to earn a deposit to enable them to buy their first home. A correction to paragraph 1.1 on page 3 of the report was highlighted and it was noted that the Council had provided 430 new homes, at the equivalent of affordable and social rent, in the past three years. The Executive welcomed the news that 58% of the total housing provided by the Council over that period had been at the equivalent of social and affordable rent.

Members were supportive of the forward thinking proposal set out in the report, noting that it was the first such scheme in the country. Discussion ensued on the criteria for good behaviour, potential abuse of the scheme, the use of an external body for appeals and the effect on Council borrowing. Regarding good behaviour of tenants, the Executive was advised that flexibility would be required although it would be necessary to put in some form of control. The Leader of the Council expressed willingness to discuss the suggestion of an independent appeal process going forward.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That Thameswey Housing Limited introduces an “Earn your Deposit” scheme, as outlined in the report.**

Reason: To instruct Thameswey Housing Limited (THL) to introduce an “Earn your Deposit” Scheme to enable people who rent from THL to earn a deposit and move to a home they could own.

**10. POTENTIAL EXPANSION OF THE JOINT WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACT**

The Executive received a report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the extension of the Joint Waste Collection Contract in order to admit Tandridge District Council. It was noted that Tandridge District Council had not yet resolved to join the Contract, however it was necessary for each Partner Authority to seek approval to the admission of Tandridge to the Joint Contract.

Following a question regarding China's recent refusal to import plastics recycling, the Executive was advised that Surrey County Council currently sent plastics recycling to Turkey, China and the Netherlands. The Portfolio Holder for Waste and Recycling, Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks, advised that other outlets were being explored and that the Surrey Waste Partnership was aware of the problems concerning plastics. It was noted that a Government strategy regarding plastics was due in July 2018.

In light of the recent collapse of Carillion, Members noted that the partnership between Amey and Carillion was not in relation to waste but concerned national housing contracts with the Ministry of Defence. It was further reported that Amey was owned by Ferrovial, a leading infrastructure management company.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That Tandridge District Council be admitted to the Joint Waste Collection Contract on the basis that no existing partner is financially disadvantaged.**

Reason: To determine whether or not the Joint Waste Collection Contract could be extended to admit Tandridge District Council.

**11. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION**

The Executive considered the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book), December 2017. Discussion ensued on the number of affordable homes delivered on page 7 of the Green Book. The Leader of the Council advised that further information had been requested on how the figures were calculated and the information would be included in the Leader's presentation to February Council regarding the Earn your Deposit scheme.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information, December 2017, be received.**

Reason: To manage the performance of the Council.

**12. MONITORING REPORTS - PROJECTS**

The Executive received a quarterly monitoring report on the progress of projects in the interest of financial prudence and to ensure open and transparent corporate governance. Discussion ensued on the SharePoint projects report, including West Byfleet Play Area Improvements and Hoe Valley Flood Alleviation and Enhancement Appraisal. Regarding West Byfleet Play Area Improvements, Officers advised that the County Council had agreed to extend its funding and that works should take place in spring/early summer 2018. Regarding Hoe Valley Flood Alleviation and Enhancement Appraisal, it was reported that the Hoe Valley consultation had fed into the detailed design work and Officers were currently pursuing a HLF application. It was noted that the application would be presented to Heritage England the following week. Officers undertook to find out if a summary of the HLF application could be circulated to Members.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be received.

Reason: To monitor the position of active projects on SharePoint.

<p><b>This document was published on Friday 2 February 2018 and the decisions within it will be implemented on Monday 12 February 2018, subject to call-in.</b></p>
---

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 8.01 pm

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

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