

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WOKING

held on 28 September 2017

Present:

Cllr A E Murray (Mayor)	
Cllr G S Cundy (Deputy Mayor)	
Cllr Mrs H J Addison	Cllr D Harlow
Cllr M Ali	Cllr K Howard
Cllr A Azad	Cllr D E Hughes
Cllr T Aziz	Cllr S Hussain
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr I Johnson
Cllr D J Bittleston	Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr A J Boote	Cllr J Kingsbury
Cllr A C L Bowes	Cllr R Mohammed
Cllr M A Bridgeman	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr G G Chrystie	Cllr M Pengelly
Cllr K Davis	Cllr M I Raja
Cllr W P Forster	Cllr C Rana
Cllr M A Whitehand	

Absent: Councillors J E Bond, I Eastwood and Mrs B A Hunwicks, and Claire Storey, Independent Co-opted Member.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 20 July 2017 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors J E Bond, I Eastwood and Mrs B A Hunwicks, and Claire Storey, Independent Co-opted Member.

3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on the recent engagements he had attended across the Borough and beyond. These included a visit to Woking's twin town of Rastatt in Germany, attendance at the Civic Services of other Mayors and taking part in an alms giving ceremony with Buddhists in the Town Square. The Mayor had also attended the 2017 Scout Handicamp in Tilford, raised the flag on Merchant Seaman's Day, observed the Battle of Britain Remembrance Day and observed the Beating of the Retreat at Pirbright.

4. 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, Councillor C S Kemp and Councillor J Kingsbury

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 J Kingsbury 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 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 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 Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, declared an 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 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 any items under which Brookwood Cemetery is 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.

Although not a formal interest under the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor A-M Barker declared an interest in Item 8 – Recommendations of the Executive and Item 11 – Land Management – Acquisition of Woking Town Centre Property – arising from a relative's employment by a company, Ernst & Young, referred to in the report before the Council. The interest was such that speaking and voting were permissible.

5. QUESTIONS

Copies of questions submitted under Standing Order 8.1 together with draft replies were laid upon the table. The replies were confirmed by Members of the Executive, supplementary questions were asked and replies given.

6. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2016-17

The Mayor outlined the approach to be taken in dealing with the Statement of Accounts and the recommendation of the Standards and Audit Committee in regard to the Report to those Charged with Governance (ISA 260) 2016/17. On behalf of the Standards and Audit Committee, Councillor J Kingsbury moved and Councillor A Murray seconded the receipt of the Committee's recommendation.

Councillor Azad introduced the Statement of Accounts and drew the Council's attention to the expectation of the Council's external auditors, KPMG, that an unqualified audit opinion would be issued. Following a discussion of the key points arising from the accounts, Councillor Azad responded to the questions raised, including on the areas of debt written off and capital commitments. It was further noted that the external auditor would change in 2018.

The Council was asked to agree the recommendation in the report before them together with the recommendation of the Standards and Audit Committee. WBC17-026

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 be approved; and
- (ii) the Report To Those Charged with Governance (ISA 260) 2016/17 and the Management Representation letter be received.

7. ELECTORAL INTEGRITY PILOTS 2018 – ID PROPOSALS

The Mayor drew attention to a supplementary report before the Council which highlighted changes to the published proposals, drawn up following feedback from the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group. The Mayor provided the Members with an opportunity to read the report, before asking Councillor Bittleston to introduce the proposals.

The revised proposals were welcomed. A number of further suggestions in respect of ID requirements were put forward, including the option to use Student ID cards, together with ideas for communicating the ID requirement to newly registered individuals. The suggestions would be further explored by Officers. Concern was expressed over the continuing susceptibility of postal votes to fraud, though it was noted that the pilot was limited to voting at the polling station.

WBC17-029

RESOLVED

That the Council agrees to be part of the 2018 Integrity Pilots subject to the ID requirements for electors being one of the following forms of photographic ID:

- UK Passport
- EU Passport
- Commonwealth Passport
- UK Photo Driving Licence (including provisional licence)
- EU Photo Driving Licence
- Surrey Senior Bus Pass
- Surrey Disabled People's Bus Pass
- Surrey Student Fare Card
- 16-25 Railcard
- Rail Season Ticket Photocard
- Local Electoral Card

8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor D J Bittleston moved and Councillor C S Kemp seconded the reception and adoption of the report and recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 14 September 2017 in respect of the acquisition of a Woking Town Centre property.

A supplementary report was tabled and the Mayor allowed a few minutes for the Members to read the document.

EXECUTIVE – 14 SEPTEMBER 2017

Councillor Bittleston briefly introduced the item before the Mayor advised that, following an indication from the Members of the Council that they wished to debate the item in detail, the matter would be determined under Agenda Item 12 in Part II of the meeting.

WBC17-027

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

The Mayor reported that no Motions had been received in accordance with Standing Order 5.0.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded that the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item.

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 11 in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

11. LAND MANAGEMENT - ACQUISITION OF WOKING TOWN CENTRE PROPERTY

The Council had before it the recommendations of the Executive, as set out in the Executive report of 14 September and in the supplementary report tabled before Council. The proposals were welcomed and it was WBC17-027

RESOLVED

That the recommendations of the Executive, as set out in the Executive report of 14 September 2017 and the Supplementary report tabled before Council, be agreed.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 8.41pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____