

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

held on 26 July 2018

Present:

Cllr W P Forster (Chair)  
Cllr Mrs B A Hunwicks (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Mrs H J Addison	Cllr I Eastwood
Cllr M Ali	Cllr D Harlow
Cllr S Ashall	Cllr D E Hughes
Cllr A Azad	Cllr S Hussain
Cllr T Aziz	Cllr I Johnson
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr D J Bittleston	Cllr L S Lyons
Cllr J E Bond	Cllr N Martin
Cllr A J Boote	Cllr R Mohammed
Cllr A C L Bowes	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr M A Bridgeman	Cllr M I Raja
Cllr G G Chrystie	Cllr C Rana
Cllr G S Cundy	Cllr M A Whitehand
Cllr K M Davis	

Absent: Councillor K Howard

**1. MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 17 May and 21 May 2018 be approved and signed as true and correct records.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor K Howard and Claire Storey, Independent Co-Opted Member. It was noted that Councillor Mrs Hunwicks had advised that she would be a few minutes late following a train cancellation.

**3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor report on his engagements over recent months, including a visit to Woking's twin town of Rastatt in Germany, a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, numerous village fetes across the Borough, the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of a local resident and the Civic Celebration at the United Reform Church.

**4. URGENT BUSINESS**

No matters of Urgent Business were received.

## 5. 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 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 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 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 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 Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared an interest 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 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 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 Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant, declared an interest 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 the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant, declared an interest in item 7 – Land Management – Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) arising from him (i) being a member of the Cards Trust, the supporters' club for Woking Football Club, (ii) being a Season Ticket holder, and (iii) providing occasional unpaid assistance to Woking Football Club, e.g. acting as

Returning Officer for the election of directors. The interest did not prevent Mr Bryant from advising the Council on this matter.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Finance Director, Leigh Clarke, declared an interest in item 7 – Land Management – Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) arising from her husband having a small shareholding in the Club. The interest did not prevent Mrs Clarke from advising the Council on this matter.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor I Johnson declared an interest in item 7 – Land Management – Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) arising from his wife's position as Chairman of Woking Football Club. The interest was such that Councillor Johnson left the Chamber during the determination of the item.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor I Eastwood declared an interest in item 7 – Land Management – Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) arising from his position as a minor Shareholder and Member of the Cards Trust of Woking Football Club. The interest was such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor A C L Bowes declared an interest in item 7 – Land Management – Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) arising from a member of his family owning a property within the area of the development. The interest was such that Councillor Bowes left the Chamber during the determination of the item.

It was noted that Councillor K M Davis would declare an interest in item 14 – Victoria Square once it had been resolved to move to Part II of the meeting, press and public excluded.

## **6. 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.

It was noted that, due to an administrative error, the following question from Councillor Lyons had been omitted from the tabled document:

“The current dry weather has caused the various ponds in Woking Park to all but dry up, and revealed a considerable amount of waste and debris which has been dumped in them over time. Could the Council take advantage of this opportunity to clean up the ponds?”

The question was raised at the meeting and the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Kemp, confirmed that the Council would take forward the opportunity and undertook to advise Councillor Lyons of the timescale outside of the meeting.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

The Mayor reported that it was intended to deal with the proposals in respect of Land Management – Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) under Part I of the agenda. In the event any Members wished to discuss any elements deemed confidential, the discussion would be deferred to Part II of the agenda, press and public excluded. Furthermore, the Council was advised that the recommendation from the Standards and

Audit Committee would be dealt with under agenda item 8, Statement of Accounts 2017/18.

Councillor D J Bittleston moved and Councillor A Azad seconded the reception and adoption of the report and recommendations from the meetings of the Executive held on 28 June and 12 July 2018.

**EXECUTIVE – 28 JUNE 2018**

**NOTICE OF MOTION – CLLR A-M BARKER – TACKLING PLASTICS**

Councillor Mrs Hunwicks spoke to the notice of motion submitted to Council by Councillor Barker in April 2018 and considered by the Executive in June. The actions taken by the Council in recent months to reduce the use of single use plastics both at the Civic Offices and elsewhere in the Borough were noted and it was recommended that the motion should not be supported as the action sought had already been taken. Councillor Barker noted the position and welcomed the changes adopted by the Council.

**RESOLVED**

That the Motion be not supported as the action sought by it was already being taken.

**EXECUTIVE – 14 JULY 2018**

**LAND MANAGEMENT – WESTFIELD AVENUE (WOKING FOOTBALL CLUB)**

The Mayor noted that a supplementary report on the Land Management proposals for Westfield Avenue (Woking Football Club) had been tabled following the decision by the Leader of the Council to take the matter under Part I of the agenda, and allowed the Members a few minutes to read the report. The Members welcomed the opportunity to debate the proposals in public, noting that residents would be fully engaged from this early stage onwards.

Councillor Bittleston introduced the report which set out proposals for the construction of a new stadium for Woking Football Club on its existing ground. The new ground would have 10,000 seats and the facilities required to meet the English Football League standards. The cost of the construction was anticipated to be £10m, to be funded from new residential development of 992 units to be constructed at the Kingfield Road site. Land at Egley Road would also be acquired by the Council to site the David Lloyd facility currently at Kingfield together with additional residential accommodation.

It was noted that the proposed developments were subject to planning approval being gained, a planning application for which would be drawn up following the support of the Council that the scheme was viable. The report concluded that the proposed development was viable and that the Council should confirm its agreement to the finding and agree the purchase of the Egley Road land subject to planning approval of the Kingfield Road and Egley Road developments.

The proposals were welcomed by the Council, with attention drawn to the extensive role played by the Football Club in the community and the need for new housing provision. It was further noted that the proposals would not affect the Green Belt. A number of questions were raised in regard to the residential developments, including around the proportion of affordable housing, infrastructure development, the height of the

developments and the size of the units. However, it was noted that the development would be subject to planning approval and would be considered by the Planning Committee in due course. It was further noted that the Council had a good track record of ensuring that the infrastructure was in place for large developments.

In accordance with Standing Order 10.8, the names of Members voting for and against the recommendations were recorded.

In favour: Councillors Mrs H Addison, S Ashall, A Azad, T Aziz, D Bittleston, J Bond, A Boote, M Bridgeman, G Chrystie, G Cundy, K Davis, I Eastwood, D Harlow, Mrs B Hunwicks, S Hussain, C Kemp, L Lyons, N Martin, R Mohammed, M I Raja, C Rana and M Whitehand.

TOTAL in favour – 22

Against: Councillors A-M Barker, D Hughes and L Morales.

TOTAL against – 3

Present not voting: Councillor M Ali.

TOTAL present and not voting – 1

The recommendations were therefore carried by 22 votes to 3 votes.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations to Council set out in the Executive's confidential minute be agreed.

## **8. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2017/18**

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) 2017/18. On behalf of the Standards and Audit Committee, Councillor Whitehand moved and Councillor Ashall seconded the receipt of the Committee's recommendation.

Councillor Azad introduced the Statement of Accounts and drew the Council's attention to the key points arising from the accounts. It was noted that the ISA 260 report was a good report and that the auditor had indicated that they anticipated issuing an unqualified opinion by 31 July 2018 in accordance with the statutory timetable, which had moved two months earlier than in previous years.

The accounts of the Thameswey group of companies, the Brookwood Cemetery companies and the Dukes Court holding company for the year ended 31 December 2017 had been consolidated into the Council's Statement of Accounts to present the Council's full group accounts. Following approval by Council and receipt of the audit opinion, the final Statement of Accounts would be published on the Council's website, together with associated documents.

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

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 be approved; and
- (ii) the Report To Those Charged with Governance (ISA 260) 2017/18 and the Management Representation letter be received.

**9. VOTER ID PILOT REVIEW**

The Council considered a report on the outcome of the Voter ID pilot in May 2018 which had required all electors who had voted at a polling station to bring photographic ID. Over 99% of those voting had brought along the correct form of ID, with photo ID driving licences having proved most popular. A total of 63 Local Elector Cards had been issued, of which 43 had been used on the day.

Looking to the future, the Council was advised that the Cabinet Office had indicated that it was keen to have further pilots in 2019 with a view to refining the systems tested in May. The Cabinet Office had invited expressions of interest from local authorities and the report recommended that Woking Borough sought to participate again.

The outcomes of the May 2018 pilot were discussed and, whilst a few concerns were raised that some voters had chosen not to participate because of the ID requirement or had brought the wrong ID, the report was welcomed. The success of the pilot had in part been due to the extensive publicity undertaken by the Council and the Elections Team was congratulated on its approach.

In accordance with Standing Order 10.8, the names of Members voting for and against the recommendations were recorded.

In favour: Councillors Mrs H Addison, M Ali, S Ashall, A Azad, A-M Barker, D Bittleston, J Bond, A Bowes, G Chrystie, G Cundy, K Davis, I Eastwood, D Harlow, D Hughes, Mrs B Hunwicks, S Hussain, I Johnson, C Kemp, L Lyons, N Martin, R Mohammed, L Morales, M I Raja, C Rana and M Whitehand.

TOTAL in favour – 25

Against: Councillors T Aziz, A Boote and M Bridgeman.

TOTAL against – 3

The recommendations were therefore carried by 25 votes to 3 votes.

RESOLVED

- That (i) the outcome of the 2018 voter ID pilot be noted; and
- (ii) the Council participate in the voter ID pilot in May 2019.

**10. MEMBERSHIP OF THE APPEALS COMMITTEE**

The Council was invited to appoint to the vacancy on the Appeals Committee following the decision of Councillor Bittleston to step down from the position. Councillor Bittleston moved and Councillor Azad seconded the nomination of Councillor Cundy to the vacancy. No further nominations were received and it was therefore

RESOLVED

That Councillor G Cundy be appointed to the Appeals Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

**11. NOTICES OF MOTION**

No notices of motion had been received.

**12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

The Mayor moved and Councillor Mrs Hunwicks seconded that the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Items 13 and 14 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).

**13. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

This matter had been determined earlier in the meeting under Item 7 – Recommendations of the Executive and no further discussion took place.

**14. VICTORIA SQUARE**

The Council had before it recommendations in respect of the Victoria Square development.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations as set out in the confidential minutes of the meeting be agreed.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm  
and ended at 9.32pm

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

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