

MINUTES  
OF A MEETING OF THE  
**EXECUTIVE**

held on 13 September 2018  
Present:

Cllr D J Bittleston (Chairman)  
Cllr A Azad (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A C L Bowes                      Cllr Mrs B A Hunwicks  
Cllr K M Davis                        Cllr C S Kemp  
Cllr D Harlow

Also Present: Councillors S Ashall, A-M Barker, J E Bond, A J Boote, D E Hughes and M I Raja.

The Chairman informed the Executive that Agenda Item No. 8 – West Byfleet Recreation Ground – Children’s Play Area – Consultation Outcome would be brought forward and considered after Agenda Item No. 4 – Declarations of Interest.

**1. MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 July 2018 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant.

**3. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Urgent Business under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, the Leader of the Council, Councillor D J Bittleston, Councillor A Azad, Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks and Councillor C S Kemp declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute item 9 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information arising from their positions as Directors of the Thameswey Group of Companies. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared an interest in minute item 9 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information arising from his position as a Director of the Thamesway Group of Companies. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared an interest in minute item 9 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information 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 was permissible.

In accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared an interest in minute item 9 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information arising from his position as a Director of Export House Limited. The interest was such that speaking was permissible.

**5. WEST BYFLEET RECREATION GROUND - CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA - CONSULTATION OUTCOME EXE18-050**

Following the Executive on 28 June 2018, the Executive received the results of the public consultation which had been undertaken over the summer offering two options to improve play provision at West Byfleet Recreation Ground. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bittleston, expressed his shock, upset and disappointment at some of the nasty social media which had been directed at him, fellow Executive Members and Officers. The Leader commented that most of the respondents to the consultation had behaved reasonably and courteously and it was hoped that in future, similar consultations would be responded to in a polite and proper matter.

The Leader welcomed Mrs Rebecca Bradshaw who had submitted a petition to the Council via Change.org regarding the West Byfleet Playground upgrade and which contained over 2,250 signatures. It was noted that the petition was not considered to be valid by the Council as it was not possible to scrutinise the names and addresses in the petition. However, the Leader considered it to be reasonable to allow a voice to those people who had gone to the trouble of signing the petition. Mrs Bradshaw highlighted that a children's petition had also been created containing some 500 signatures. Copies of both petitions were tabled at the meeting. Mrs Bradshaw welcomed the consultation outcome and looked forward to working with the Council to develop the playground. The Executive thanked Mrs Bradshaw for attending the meeting and bringing the concerns of residents to the attention of the Executive.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Cultural Services, Councillor Kemp, introduced the report on the consultation outcome and thanked Officers for their hard work on the consultation. The Executive was advised that the consultation had resulted in a clear preference from the majority of respondents for Option A which was to extend and refurbish the existing play area. Councillor Kemp therefore recommended that the Executive proceeded with Option A and that the scheme be completed by early Spring 2019. Councillor Kemp explained that it was proposed that Officers would engage with Mrs Bradshaw and Mrs Slaymaker, the two local parents who had successfully applied for additional external funding from Surrey County Council, to agree the final project brief before sending it to potential suppliers. The Executive was advised that Mrs Bradshaw and Mrs Slaymaker would be invited back to help review the proposals submitted by suppliers and to select a preferred supplier to progress the project. Councillor Kemp informed the Executive that it was intended to give a short window of opportunity for the public to

comment on the proposals. If appropriate, small alterations would be made to the final design in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Mrs Bradshaw and Mrs Slaymaker. The Executive noted the very tight timescales to ensure delivery by early Spring 2019 and the requirement to follow the Council's procurement rules. Officers provided a commitment to complete the scheme as quickly as was practicable. The Leader undertook to ensure that Ward Councillors were kept informed of progress.

The Executive agreed to proceed with Option A with the aim of implementing the scheme in early Spring 2019.

**RESOLVED**

- That (i) proposals to extend and refurbish the existing play area at West Byfleet Recreation Ground (Option A) be implemented; and
- (ii) Officers be authorised to finalise the details of the scheme, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, with a view to the scheme being completed by early Spring 2019.

Reason: To improve play provision in accordance with the clearly expressed preference of those responding to the public consultation exercise.

**6. QUESTIONS**

No written questions had been submitted under Section 3 of the Executive Procedure Rules.

**7. BUSINESS RATES RECOVERY POLICY EXE18-052**

The Portfolio Holder for Revenue Collection, Councillor Azad, introduced the report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the adoption of the Business Rates Recovery Policy. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that all people who received business rates bills were treated equally during the billing, collection and recovery process. The Executive noted that the Revenues Team worked hard to engage with residents.

Following a question, the Executive was informed that business rates write-offs were dependant on individual circumstances and not amounts.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

- That (i) the Business Rates Recovery Policy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and**
- (ii) the Policy be implemented with immediate effect.**

Reason: To recommend that Council adopts the Policy in order to increase business rates collection levels further.

**8. COUNCIL TAX RECOVERY POLICY EXE18-053**

The Portfolio Holder for Revenue Collection, Councillor Azad, introduced the report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the adoption of the Council Tax Recovery Policy. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that, as explained under the Business Rates Recovery Policy earlier on the agenda, all people who received council tax bills were treated equally during the billing, collection and recovery process. The Executive was informed that the recovery methods set out in both policies were prescribed in legislation. The importance of engagement was highlighted and it was noted that the Revenues Team worked hard to engage with residents.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

- That (i) the Council Tax Recovery Policy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;**
- (ii) the Policy be implemented with immediate effect; and**
- (iii) the Finance Director be delegated authority to issue civil penalties under Schedule 3 to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (and subsequent Orders).**

Reason: To recommend that Council adopts the Policy in order to increase Council Tax collection levels further.

**9. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION**

The Executive considered the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book), July 2018. Regarding democratic representation on page 12 of the Green Book, the Executive was informed that the overspend of £15,000 in backdated allowances was due to the Independent Remuneration Panel agreeing to review the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) and supporting an increase from £5,000 to £12,000 based on an average figure across Surrey Leaders'. It was noted that the Panel would be undertaking a comprehensive review of all Member allowances to take effect in 2019/20.

Following a question from Councillor Hughes regarding opportunity purchases on page 17 of the Green Book, the Leader agreed to check whether the Council owned other properties in Guildford Road and to provide an answer to Councillor Hughes outside of the meeting.

Regarding car parking and the demolition of the Red Car Park, the Executive was advised that Officers would be managing car parking allocations as a consequence of the demolition of the Red Car Park. It was noted that the public would be made aware when plans were finalised. The Executive was informed that Officers were confident that there were spaces in the Town to accommodate car parking requirements. Officers reported that the demolition plan was currently out to tender and that Members would be made aware as soon as decisions on the demolition had been finalised.

Members discussed affordable homes and the Leader highlighted a presentation by the Chief Executive on Affordable Housing Proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 July 2018. The Executive heard that the Chief Finance Officer had secured the opportunity to bid for more money on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Executive was encouraged to hear that the Leader and Deputy Leader would be meeting the Housing Minister in October.

Members also discussed voids and urgent repairs. Regarding missed food waste collections, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that Officers were in direct communication with Amey to rectify the issues caused by some changes to waste collection rounds.

RESOLVED

That the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information, July 2018, be received.

Reason: To manage the performance of the Council.

**This document was published on Friday, 14 September 2018 and the decisions within it will be implemented on Monday 24 September 2018, subject to call-in.**

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 8.00 pm.

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

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