

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE

held on 16 January 2020

Present:

Cllr D J Bittleston (Chairman)

Cllr A Azad (Vice-Chair)

Cllr G S Cundy

Cllr D Harlow

Cllr K M Davis

Also Present: Councillors A-M Barker, W P Forster, K Howard, D E Hughes,
Mrs B A Hunwicks, S Hussain, L S Lyons, M I Raja and C Rana.

Absent: Councillor C S Kemp.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 21 November
2019 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C S Kemp.

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, Councillor D J Bittleston declared a
non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council-
appointed director. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor A Azad declared a non-
pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-
appointed director. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

The interest of Councillor C S Kemp was referred to in the agenda but it should be noted that Councillor Kemp sent apologies to the meeting.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor D Harlow declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The interests were 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 concerning the companies of which he was a Council-appointed director. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council-appointed director. The interests were such that Mr Morgan could advise the Executive on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council-appointed director. The interests were such that Mr Spinks could advise the Executive on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council-appointed director. The interests were such that Mr Bryant could advise the Executive on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Finance Director, Leigh Clarke, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The interests were such that Mrs Clarke could advise the Executive on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Housing, Louise Strongitharm, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The interests were such that Mrs Strongitharm could advise the Executive on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Finance Director, Leigh Clarke, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GolDev Woking Limited development. The interest arises from (i) her husband having a small shareholding in Woking Football Club and (ii) being a Council-appointed director of Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited. The interest was such that Mrs Clarke could advise the Executive on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Peter Bryant, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GolDev Woking Limited development. The interest arises from (i) him being a member of the Cards Trust (the supporters' club for Woking Football Club), (ii) providing occasional unpaid assistance to Woking Football Club, e.g. acting as returning officer at the election of directors and (iii) being a Council-appointed director of Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited. The interest was such that Mr Bryant could advise the Executive on those items.

5. PETITION - TAXI RANK ACCESSIBILITY EXE20-009

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bittleston, reported that a petition had been submitted in accordance with the Council's scheme for dealing with petitions, requesting that the taxi rank be moved closer to the train station in order to improve taxi accessibility.

The petition contained 184 signatures in the following terms:

"We the undersigned petition Woking Borough Council to:

'Put in measures to improve taxi accessibility'

The distance from the train station to the taxi rank is an access issue for less-abled people and also inconveniences customers on rainy days. We would like the rank to be moved closer to the station.

The current route taxi drivers have to take does not let them travel straight through the High Street, and instead involves going around Victoria Way to get to places such as Goldsworth Road and Old Woking. This indirect route impacts negatively on fares for customers and makes journeys longer than necessary. We are requesting that taxis be allowed to access bus lanes through the High Street, a practice already in place in several cities and towns across the country.

We request that where WBC can make the change they do so. Where WBC cannot make the change directly then the council strongly recommends to the relevant parties that these amendments are made."

The Leader of the Council advised that, on Friday 10 January 2020, the Petitioner had brought in a further 285 signatures in paper form to the Civic Offices and had requested that the petition be considered by Full Council. The Leader explained that the request had been refused by Democratic Services as the petition had already been published as an item on the Executive Agenda. Subsequently, on Monday 13 January 2020, the Petitioner emailed the Council to request that the petition be withdrawn.

In view of the number of signatures received, the Portfolio Holder for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing, Councillor Harlow, stated that she had asked Officers to look at how the new road layout north of the station, which incorporated the repositioned taxi rank, was working and whether any improvements could be made to assist both taxi drivers and disabled passengers. It was noted that the Portfolio Holder would report back to the Executive once Officers had concluded the review.

RESOLVED

- That (i) Officers undertake a review of the new road layout north of Woking Station to look at how it was working and whether any improvements could be made to assist both taxi drivers and disabled passengers; and
- (ii) the Portfolio Holder for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing report back to the Executive following the conclusion of the review.

Reason: To agree a response to the petition.

6. QUESTIONS

The Chairman reported that questions had been submitted by Mr Lorin Adams, Ms Judy Adams and Mr Reece Adams under Section 3 of the Executive Procedure Rules regarding the Council's level of debt, the extent of Officer powers, the release and format of information provided to the public, Woking Football Club development proposals and the Constitution. A copy of the questions together with the replies was before the Executive. The Chairman confirmed the replies and advised that the questioners would be sent a copy of the replies to their questions.

7. RESPONSE TO SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S PRUDENTIAL RIDELONDON-SURREY CONSULTATION EXE20-011

In response to the current public consultation being undertaken by Surrey County Council in respect of the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey events, the Executive received a report which sought approval to make representations to the County Council in support of the continuation of the RideLondon-Surrey events. The Executive noted the importance of RideLondon-Surrey in the Council's Celebrate Woking programme. The Executive welcomed the opportunity to respond positively to the County Council regarding Ride London-Surrey.

RESOLVED

That (i) the Council fully supports the continuation of the RideLondon-Surrey events; and

(ii) the Leader of the Council be authorised to write to Surrey County Council to that effect.

Reason: To enable Surrey County Council to take the view of the Borough Council into account when reaching its decision on the future of RideLondon-Surrey.

8. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION

The Executive considered the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book) November 2019. Following a question regarding appeals allowed against decision to refuse planning applications, the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy, Councillor Cundy, confirmed that there had been no changes to planning guidance nor any new guidance published by the government. It was noted that the Planning Inspectorate had recruited a number of new Planning Inspectors to address a backlog of appeals and that Planning Officers would keep under review any trends in decision making by the Planning Inspectorate.

Regarding food inspections, the Executive was informed that Environmental Health had used external contractors to undertake some food inspections for some time as it was the most effective and efficient use of resources.

The reduction in satisfaction levels with street cleaning was highlighted. The Portfolio Holder for Waste and Recycling, Councillor Davis, advised the Executive that there had been no changes to street cleaning services and that it would be useful to see if a

downward trend was emerging. Councillor Davis commented that fortnightly meetings were held with Serco to discuss service issues. Members also discussed the recent issues with waste collections, including icy conditions, a vehicle breakdown and staff sickness. It was noted that the Portfolio Holder and Joint Waste Solutions would be attending the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2020 for the Joint Waste Management Performance Review item.

Members also discussed legal costs in relation to commercial properties and Dukes Court revenue.

RESOLVED

That the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information, November 2019, be received.

Reason: To manage the performance of the Council.

This document was published on Friday, 17 January 2020 and the decisions within it will be implemented on Monday 27 January 2020, subject to call-in.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 7.20 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____