

# Supplementary Items for Executive

Thursday 25 March 2021 at 5.00pm

## Part I

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**Notice of Motion - Safer Streets Champion**

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**Additional Public Questions**

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Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by members of the public in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.

Please note that the list of public questions is shown under item 4 in the agenda pack.

Sarah Clarke  
Service Director (Strategy and Governance)

For further information about these items, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Democratic Services Team on (01635) 519462  
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Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)

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# Agenda Item 3.(a)

## **The following Motion has been submitted by Councillor Lynne Doherty:**

We are all conscious that, whilst extreme occurrences such as the recently reported murder of Sarah Everard in Clapham are thankfully rare, the issue of street harassment generally has been brought into sharp focus. Although West Berkshire has low violent crime rates, many residents may share the anxiety of not being able to walk alone without concern for their safety.

Whilst predominantly affecting women, many people will have experienced street harassment at some point in their lives and may have felt obliged to use avoidance tactics - such as crossing the road, circumventing public spaces, and even not going out alone.

The Government's Crime and Justice Taskforce has said it will take immediate steps following the recent high profile event to give further reassurance to women. Among the proposals is an additional £25m for better lighting, CCTV and a pilot-scheme which would see plain-clothes officers in pubs and clubs. This is to be welcomed.

## **The Executive recognises that:**

- Street harassment is harassment in public areas such as streets, shopping centres, public open spaces and public transport.
- Street harassment may involve sexual harassment, including unwanted sexualised comments, provocative gestures, vehicle honking, being whistled at, stalking, persistent sexual advances, and even being subjected to indecent exposure or touching by strangers.
- Street harassment may also involve other actions or comments and can also frequently include homophobic and transphobic slurs, and verbal abuse referencing race, religion, class and disability.

**The Executive proposes that the Council** creates the role of a Safer Streets Champion, to be notified annually (with other Champions) at the Annual Meeting of Council, and that the Safer Streets Champion should:

- work with our communities to understand their concerns and receive suggestions for how we want to address street harassment;
- work in partnership with Thames Valley Police to explore a potential bid for Safer Streets Fund funding;
- work closely with the Public Protection Partnership, Thames Valley Police, Town Centre managers and others to challenge and eradicate street harassment in our district;
- seek to develop better public awareness of what constitutes street harassment and unacceptable behaviours; and
- work with our three West Berkshire MPs to seek further powers for the Police to be able to take appropriate action where street harassment is witnessed or reported.

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## Item 4a:

### **Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 25 March 2021. Additional questions received in relation to agenda item 9 (Response to the Council Motion relating to the demolition of the former Newbury Football Ground Clubhouse)**

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(n) **Question submitted by Vaughan Miller to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

*"One of the justifications for rejecting the Motion relating to the demolition of the football ground clubhouse states:*

*Council Strategy Priorities: The redevelopment of the London Road Industrial Estate is a key priority for the council and any delay in the demolition of the building and entering into a new single sports use occupancy of the old football pitch could have an impact on the project.*

*Could you please explain what negative impact opening up the ground, for example for youth football, could possibly have on the project?"*

(o) **Question submitted by Gary Norman to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

*"One of your 'justifications' for rejecting the Motion relating to the demolition of the football ground clubhouse states:*

*"Financial: There are ongoing costs associated with the maintenance and security arrangements for the existing structure. These would rise in the event that the proposal as laid out in the motion was accepted."*

*Could you provide current costings and how and why this would rise if the motion was accepted?"*

(p) **Question submitted by Jark Harness to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

*"The report associated with agenda item 9 states that "delays in implementation (to demolish the club house) could have serious financial implications for the Council". Please can you explain what these serious financial implications are?"*

(q) **Question submitted by Paul Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

*"By rejecting the motion (Agenda item 9) outright, prior to any planning applications being heard and contrary to public opinion, has the Council left itself open to a charge of predisposition, predetermination or bias (contrary to Probity in planning: Advice for councillors and officers making planning decisions - Guidance December 2019)?"*

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