

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 27 JULY 2017

Councillors Present: Dominic Boeck, Anthony Chadley, Keith Chopping, Jeanette Clifford, Hilary Cole, Lynne Doherty, Marcus Franks, James Fredrickson, Graham Jones and Rick Jones

Also Present: John Ashworth (Corporate Director - Environment), Thomas Bailey (Senior Contracts and Commissioning Officer), Joanne Bassett (Public Relations Assistant), Mel Brain (Housing Strategy and Operations Manager), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Rachael Wardell (Corporate Director - Communities), Jon Winstanley (Projects Manager - Highways & Transport), Councillor Lee Dillon, Councillor Billy Drummond, Gabrielle Mancini (Group Executive - Conservatives), Linda Pye (Principal Policy Officer) and Councillor Emma Webster

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Mollie Lock and Councillor Alan Macro

PART I

13. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2017 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

14. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Marcus Franks and Lee Dillon declared an interest in Agenda Items 10 and 15, and reported that, as their interest was a disclosable pecuniary interest or an other registrable interest, they would be leaving the meeting during the course of consideration of the matter.

15. Public Questions

A full transcription of the public and Member question and answer sessions are available from the following link: [Transcription of Q&As](#).

(a) **Question submitted by Mrs Diana Pattenden to the Portfolio Holders for Children, Education & Young People and Culture & Environment**

A question standing in the name of Mrs Diana Pattenden on the subject of the Waterside Centre was answered by the Executive Member for Culture and Environment.

(b) **Question submitted by Mr Simon Pike to the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport**

A question standing in the name of Mr Simon Pike on the subject of the survey completed by Ipsos Mori on public transport and roads would receive a written response from the Executive Member for Highways and Transport as he was not present to ask his question.

16. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

17. Key Accountable Performance 2016/17: Quarter Four (EX3112)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 6) which outlined quarter four outturns for the Key Accountable Measures which monitored performance against the 2016/17 Council Performance Framework; provided assurance to the Executive that the objectives set out in the Council Strategy and other areas of significant activity were being managed effectively; and which presented, by exception, those measures that were RAG rated 'red' (not achieved) and provided information on any remedial actions taken and the impact of that action.

Appendix D set out the Key Accountable Measures by Strategic Priority and Appendix E highlighted the Exception Reports. Performance had been good in a number of areas and in particular Adult Social Care, protecting children, bin collection and street cleaning and collecting Council Tax and Business Rates.

Despite the major financial challenges which the Council had faced in 2016/17 the past year's performance had remained good but some areas in the Council Strategy remained challenging. However, it was noted that challenging targets had been set from the outset. There were 14 'red' indicators and the actions to improve performance were set out in the Exception reports in Appendix E.

Following a discussion at Corporate Board it was proposed that the following measures which were 'red' RAG rated should be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission for further review:

- Council tax and business rates collections – the target was not achieved by 0.6% in relation to council tax collection and actions had been put in to replace the IT servers, increase staff recruitment and support and the drafting of a new recovery and write off policy to collect outstanding debt.
- Timeliness of adult social care long term cases – compared to the previous year the service had less capacity available to conduct reviews and was planning to adopt a proportional approach (based on the level of need of each client) in terms of the way the reviews were conducted.
- Enable more affordable housing completions – work continued to support this area however, more solutions were required relating to the housing affordability in the district.

Councillor Keith Chopping stated that it was proposed to amend the wording of recommendation 2.4 so that it read 'to task OSMC to assess if additional solutions could be adopted to improve housing affordability in the District'.

Councillor Lee Dillon referred to page 39 of the agenda where it was noted that the Ofsted Rating for the Children and Families Service had improved and the service was no longer considered to be 'inadequate'. Councillor Graham Jones thanked the Portfolio Holder and the Service for all their hard work in achieving a 'good' rating. This was the first time an authority had made the jump from 'inadequate' straight to 'good'. Councillor Lee Dillon welcomed the improvements in Children's Services and also gave her thanks to the team as this was quite an achievement.

Councillor Marcus Franks referred to page 22 of the agenda in respect of the devolution agenda. Following the District/Parish Conference a Parish Council workshop had been delivered to provide further advice and promotion of devolution opportunities. The Parish Portal had been launched and a number of proposals were coming forward. He also advised that the new Multi-agency Building Communities Together Team was working well.

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Councillor Lee Dillon agreed with the amendment to recommendation 2.4 as he was in support of greater scrutiny by OSMC as they often came up with solutions for improvement. He recognised that a number of targets had been missed and agreed that some of the targets had been particularly challenging. However, the Affordable Housing outcome of 166 was way below the average annual level of 200 and this was an area where improvement was required. In respect of Communities Helping Themselves there was an issue in respect of long term financial sustainability especial for small rural Parish Councils. He felt that over the next couple of years how the Council worked with Parish Councils would be particularly important.

Councillor Graham Jones confirmed that he was glad that the Council had set itself challenging targets. He agreed that the target around Affordable Housing had been particularly challenging which to some degree was down to market conditions. He stated that the devolution agenda required a mindset change in regard to Parish Councils but it was voluntary and the Council always encouraged the smaller Parish Councils to work together.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) Progress against the Key Accountable Measures and the key achievements in all service areas be noted;
- (2) Areas reported as 'red' to be reviewed to ensure that appropriate action was in place. The following areas be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) for further analysis and improvement actions:
 - (a) the percentages of Council Tax and Business Rates collection,
 - (b) the timeliness of reviews for the long term adult social care clients and the 'front door' pressures for Adult Social Care service.
- (3) The actions and progress made to reduce the delayed transfer of care from hospital (DTCOC) be noted;
- (4) To task OSMC to assess if additional solutions could be adopted to improve housing affordability in the District.

Other options considered: None

18. A339/Bear Lane Improvements (EX3318)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 7) which outlined the results of the public consultation into the proposed highway improvement project and which sought approval of an appropriate way forward. The report proposed that "Option 3" be progressed for the A339/Bear Lane improvements and associated highway improvement works, subject to amendments made following the consultation. This amended, proposed, scheme involved:

- (1) Retaining the on-street parking on Cheap Street (south);
- (2) Replacing the "give way" priority junction at the Cheap Street/Market Street junction with a new traffic signal controlled junction incorporating controlled pedestrian crossings on all arms and a "no-entry" restriction which prevented access (except cycles) to Cheap Street (south);
- (3) Removing the existing pedestrian crossings on Cheap Street (north) and Market Street (these would be replaced by the crossings at the above junction); and
- (4) Not implementing the proposed mini roundabout or pedestrian crossing on Cheap Street (south).

Councillor Jeanette Clifford confirmed that the goal was to improve traffic flows on the A339 as this was a road on which the whole district depended upon. As part of the s106 Agreement the developer of the Racecourse had committed to fund various off-site highway improvements in order to mitigate the effect of additional traffic resulting from

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the development. A contribution of £900k had been received in order to improve the A339/Bear Lane roundabout (Sainsbury's roundabout). She referred to the recently completed new junction which had been provided on the A339 into the London Road Industrial Estate. This was a project which had been completed on time and to budget. The Sainsbury's roundabout was simply not big enough and often resulted in queuing traffic on the roundabout. Traffic modelling had been undertaken and a number of options had been taken out to a comprehensive consultation exercise. The plan which was being put to the Executive that evening was even better than had originally been proposed. A large number of respondents to the consultation had called for the retention of parking along Cheap Street and consequently Officer's had come up with a way to achieve this. This showed that the Council did respond positively to responses received through the consultation process. Councillor Clifford felt that this was a good scheme which had been designed and modelled by experts and would help to keep traffic moving.

Councillor James Fredrickson said that this was the second large infrastructure project in the Northcroft Ward. There had been a lot of cynicism around the London Road Industrial Estate junction but it had much improved the traffic flow and the success of that encouraged him that the project would improve safety and movement around the Sainsbury's roundabout and that it would be completed on time. The improvements would release traffic and reduce air pollution in that area. The consultation exercise had been extensive and he thanked the press and the Communications Team for all their hard work around that. He confirmed that the Council had listened to the feedback received and where possible had accommodated changes to the scheme. There would be pain whilst construction of the junction was taking place but there would be a long term benefit.

Councillor Lee Dillon asked what about commuters accessing the station. Councillor Jeanette Clifford responded that a balance needed to be struck. A large number of comments had been received about the loss of parking in Cheap Street and that needed to be balanced against the small number of commuters who accessed the station via Cheap Street South. Traffic counts had been undertaken and at peak time only 49 vehicles accessed the station in that way. There were alternative routes via the A339 and also along Bartholomew Street/Station Road. The balance was therefore in favour of retaining the parking along Cheap Street.

Councillor Billy Drummond agreed that the London Road Industrial Estate junction appeared to be working well. He asked whether there was a whole strategy in terms of the improvements along the A339. Councillor Jeanette Clifford stated that work would also take place on the Robin Hood roundabout when funding was available but at present the Council were doing what they could with the resources that they had. All junctions had been considered together in terms of modelling but the reality of the situation was around the funding.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The A339/Bear Lane Improvements and associated highway improvement works to be progressed, albeit with some changes to the proposals advertised in the consultation. The amended scheme was described as "Option 3" in Appendix A to this report, and involved:
 - (a) Retaining the on-street parking on Cheap Street (south);
 - (b) Replacing the "give way" priority junction at the Cheap Street/Market Street junction with a new traffic signal controlled junction incorporating controlled pedestrian crossings on all arms and a "no-entry" restriction which prevented access (except cycles) to Cheap Street (south);

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- (c) Removing the existing pedestrian crossings on Cheap Street (north) and Market Street (these would be replaced by the crossings at the above junction);
 - (d) Not implementing the proposed mini roundabout or pedestrian crossing on Cheap Street (south).
- (2) That Traffic Regulation Orders to give effect to the various traffic restrictions required to deliver the project were taken to statutory advertisement and consultation, with any objections received being reported to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport for Individual Decision.
- (3) If approved, the revised proposal detailed in Paragraph 2.1 would be assessed by the VISSIM traffic modelling software prior to construction to check that the benefits were similar to the benefits of the original proposals.
- (4) If approved, an assessment of the air quality implications of the revised scheme was carried out.

Reason for the decision to be taken: To report the results of the public consultation into the proposed highway improvement project and approve an appropriate way forward.

Other options considered:

Option 1 - Implement the proposals unaltered.

Option 2 - Implement the proposals, with the following amendments:

- (1) Retain the on-street parking on Cheap Street (south);
- (2) Retain the current “give way” priority junction at the Cheap Street/Market Street junction but implement a “no-entry” restriction which prevents access (except cycles) to Cheap Street (south);
- (3) Do not implement the proposed mini roundabout or pedestrian crossing on Cheap Street (south).

Option 4 - “Do minimum”:

- (1) Replace the traffic signals at the A339/Bear Lane junction with new equipment and implement a new control strategy;
- (2) Add the third lane to the northbound approach to the A339/Bear Lane junction;
- (3) Do not implement any of the other proposals

19. Prospect Place - Land Disposal (EX3351)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 8) which sought authority from the Executive to dispose of the freehold of land at Prospect Place, Newbury.

The tenant had approached the Council with a proposal to acquire the freehold of the land they leased and the adjacent piece of land also owned by the Council. The land had no current operational use by the Council and had remained largely unused for a number of years. The site comprised 989sq.m. (0.25 acres).

Councillor Lee Dillon asked regardless of the figure agreed did the Council have a view on how the capital receipt would be used. It was confirmed that there was no plan for use of the capital receipt at this stage.

RESOLVED that West Berkshire Council disposes of its freehold interest in the land at Prospect Place, Newbury.

Reason for the decision: To obtain authority to dispose of the freehold of land at Prospect Place Newbury.

Options for consideration:

- (1) Continue to lease the site and consider selling the adjoining plot separately.

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This option was unlikely to be attractive to prospective purchasers due to the proximity to an adjacent sub station and unlikely to realise a capital receipt any greater than that offered.

- (2) Sovereign Housing Association had been approached to establish if there was any interest in developing the land adjacent to the sub-station. Sovereign had confirmed the site was too small for them to develop.

20. **Purchase of Accommodation for the purpose of providing Temporary Accommodation (EX3355)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 9) which sought approval for the purchase of residential property for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation to meet statutory housing duties.

In July 2016 the Executive had approved a capital fund of £3m to allow the purchase of 21 units of for temporary accommodation to replace units which were due to be lost.

RESOLVED that the purchase of identified accommodation be approved.

Reason for the decision to be taken: To seek approval for the purchase of residential property for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation to meet statutory housing duties.

Other options considered: The Council withdraws from the purchase. This was not the preferred option as the Council needed to replace temporary accommodation that was due to be redeveloped. It would be difficult to source alternative freehold units and housing management costs would be higher in dispersed units.

21. **Extra Care Services Tender Award (EX3356)**

(Councillors Marcus Franks and Lee Dillon declared an interest in Agenda Item 10, due to the fact that their employer might secure a potential benefit from the decision. As their interest was a disclosable pecuniary interest or an other registrable interest, they left the meeting during the course of consideration of and voting on the matter).

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 10) to inform the Executive of the tender process and to seek delegated authority to award the contract for Extra Care Services.

Councillor Rick Jones stated that there were three extra care schemes in West Berkshire operated by three different registered social landlords. The schemes were designed to enable independent living to clients which also had a care need. The current contracts were scheduled to end at different times and Commercial Board had agreed that all the contracts would be retendered in line with one of the contract's end date of 8th July 2016.

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to enter into the contract.

Reason for the decision to be taken: to award the Extra Care Services contract.

Other option considered: Not award contract and seek alternative arrangements, would be challenging given the notice period given to incumbent providers and lack of alternative provision for residents.

(Councillors Marcus Franks and Lee Dillon rejoined the meeting).

22. **Members' Questions**

A full transcription of the public and Member question and answer sessions are available from the following link: [Transcription of Q&As](#).

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(a) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Young People submitted by Councillor Lee Dillon**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Lee Dillon on the subject of the catchment area for Highwood Copse Primary School was answered by the Executive Member for Children and Young People.

(b) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience and Partnerships submitted by Councillor Lee Dillon**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Lee Dillon on the subject of emergency housing provision was answered by the Executive Member for Community Resilience and Partnerships.

Councillor Lee Dillon in his supplementary question referred to the rehousing side, after the immediate emergency and, given some of the facilities the Council had in West Berkshire for a disaster to happen, he was pleased to hear that the Council had plans in place. He asked if the Portfolio Holder be happy to share those with him so that he could look at them in more detail? The Portfolio Holder confirmed that he would be prepared to let Councillor Dillon have sight of the plans.

(c) **Question to be answered by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Leisure submitted by Councillor Lee Dillon**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Lee Dillon on the subject of the reduction in homelessness across West Berkshire was answered by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Leisure.

23. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the under-mentioned item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as contained in Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006. Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution also refers.

24. **Prospect Place - Land Disposal (EX3351)**

(Paragraph 3 – information relating to the financial/ business affairs of a particular person)

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 13) which sought approval to dispose of the freehold for land at Prospect Place.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

Reason for the decision: as outlined in the exempt report.

Other options considered: as outlined in the exempt report.

25. **Purchase of Accommodation for the Purpose of Providing Temporary Accommodation (EX3355)**

(Paragraph 3 – information relating to the financial/ business affairs of a particular person)

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 14) concerning the purchase of accommodation to provide temporary accommodation.

Councillor Lee Dillon asked how quickly this accommodation would become operational. Councillor Cole advised that once the Fire Risk Assessments had been completed then it was hoped that the accommodation would be available quite quickly.

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Councillor Cole stated that this was Mel Brain's last day in post and on behalf of the Executive she wished her every success in her new role and the family move to Cornwall.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

Reason for the decision: as outlined in the exempt report.

Other options considered: as outlined in the exempt report.

26. Extra Care Services Tender Award (EX3356)

(Councillors Marcus Franks and Lee Dillon declared an interest in Agenda Item 15, due to the fact that their employer might secure a potential benefit from the decision. As their interest was a disclosable pecuniary interest or an other registrable interest, they left the meeting during the course of consideration of and voting on the matter).

(Paragraph 5 – information relating to legal privilege)

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 15) concerning the Extra Care Services Tender Award.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

Reason for the decision: as outlined in the exempt report.

Other options considered: as outlined in the exempt report.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 5.45pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature