

# **EXECUTIVE**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2020**

**Councillors Present:** Steve Ardagh-Walter, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Hilary Cole, Lynne Doherty, Rick Jones, Ross Mackinnon and Richard Somner

**Also Present:** John Ashworth (Corporate Director - Environment), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Sarah Clarke (Service Director (Strategy and Governance)), Tess Ethelston (Group Executive (Cons)), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director - Resources), Olivia Lewis (Group Executive (Lib Dem)), Andy Sharp (Executive Director (People)), Councillor Adrian Abbs, Councillor Phil Barnett, Councillor Jeff Brooks, Councillor Carlyne Culver, Councillor Lee Dillon, Councillor Owen Jeffery, Councillor Alan Macro, Councillor David Marsh, Councillor Steve Masters, Councillor Erik Pattenden, Linda Pye (Principal Policy Officer), Councillor Martha Vickers and Councillor Tony Vickers

**Apologies for inability to attend the meeting:** Councillor Howard Woollaston

### **PART I**

#### **82. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

#### **83. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Lee Dillon declared an interest in Agenda Item (14), but reported that, as his interest was a personal or an other registrable interest, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

#### **84. 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 to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Planning by Mr Ian Morrin**

A question standing in the name of Mr Ian Morrin on the subject of the delivery of the Grazeley project was answered by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Planning.

(b) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Planning by Mr Alan Pearce**

A question standing in the name of Mr Alan Pearce on the subject of the development of the old Newbury Weekly News site was answered by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Planning.

(c) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Planning by Mr Lee McDougall**

A question standing in the name of Mr Lee McDougall on the subject of the funds currently held through the Community Infrastructure Levy or s106 contributions would be sent a written response by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Planning.

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(d) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Wellbeing by Mr Paul Morgan**

A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan on the subject of what requirements brief had been given to Avison Young in relation to the location/relocation of the football ground at Faraday Road was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

(e) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Wellbeing by Mr Paul Morgan**

A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan on the subject of the anticipated cost and completion timescales for the brief given to Avison Young was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

(f) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance by Mr John Stewart**

A question standing in the name of Mr John Stewart on the subject of the expenditure in the last 10 years on maintaining and keeping the Faraday Road Football Ground in a "good and decent state" was answered by the Executive Member for Finance.

(g) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Community Wellbeing by Mr John Stewart**

A question standing in the name of Mr John Stewart on the subject of the why the Council could not re-open the football ground at Faraday Road for organised community 11-a-side football was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

(h) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Community Wellbeing by Mr Paul Morgan**

A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan on the subject of the detail behind the proposal to put fencing around the abandoned grass area at the Faraday Football Ground instead of the unpopular "expensive" MUGA was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

(i) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Community Wellbeing by Mr Paul Morgan**

A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan on the subject of what consultation had taken place in order to justify another policy change with respect to the Faraday Football Ground Asset of Community Value was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

(j) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Community Wellbeing by Mr Jack Harkness**

A question standing in the name of Mr Jack Harkness on the subject of whether Northcroft was a viable location for the re-provision of the existing Faraday Road football stadium was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

### 85. **Petitions**

A petition consisting of 377 signatures was presented by Kathryn Bowie requesting that the Council install a footpath in Sulham Hill, Tilehurst to enable residents to safely and inclusively access the recreation ground. There was an entrance to the Cornwell Centre and recreation ground from Sulham Hill. The grass verge on this stretch of road was muddy and slippery. This entrance was well used as had been reflected in the number of signatures received on the petition. Tilehurst Parish Council was in the process of changing the style to an A Frame which would make the entrance more inclusive and

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would provide a disabled access. However, work could not currently take place on this due to the muddy conditions. Kathryn Bowie asked for the grass verge to be replaced with a footpath which would mean that the recreation ground could be accessed by all users. There was a safer route into the recreation ground via Clements Mead but residents continued to use the entrance off of Sulham Hill. She felt that access via the grass verge was an accident waiting to happen as the 30mph speed limit did not come into force until after the entrance to the site.

The petition was referred to Transport and Countryside for a response.

### 86. **Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2020/21(C3809)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 6) concerning the proposed Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2020/21 as required by the Local Government Act 2003.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon stated that the report set out the direction for investment and the parameters around borrowing requirements.

Councillor Owen Jeffery referred to paragraph 5.4 on page 18 of the agenda and he asked if the word 'therefore' could be replaced with the word 'has'. This was agreed.

Councillor Carlyne Culver referred to the table in paragraph 5.9, page 19 of the agenda, and noted that two of the columns in relation to Capital Receipts were empty and she asked if figures could be included. She also asked where funds would be coming from in 2021/22. It was confirmed that this had been included in the Council's borrowing limits.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed Investment and Borrowing Strategy to recommended to Council for approval.

**Other options considered:** Not applicable.

### 87. **Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2023/24 (C3810)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 7) concerning the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a rolling four year strategy which is built to ensure that the financial resources, both revenue and capital, are available to deliver the Council Strategy. The MTFS should be read in conjunction with the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, and the Investment and Borrowing Strategy.

The aim of the MTFS was to allocate available resources focussing on those determined as most critical in supporting the Council's priorities and statutory responsibilities. It also ensured that capital investment was affordable and that the Council had sufficient levels of reserves.

**RESOLVED** that it be recommended that Council approves and adopts the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2023/24.

**Other options considered:** Not applicable.

### 88. **Capital Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 (C3811)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 8) concerning the Capital Strategy covering financial years 2020/21 -2022/23 and supporting funding framework, providing a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk was managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

Councillor David Marsh raised a number of specific issues in relation to the Capital Programme which Councillor Lynne Doherty advised should be raised in the Council discussion on 3 March 2020.

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**RESOLVED** that it be recommended that Council formally agree and adopt the proposed Capital Strategy.

**Other options considered:** Not applicable.

### 89. Revenue Budget 2020/21 (C3812)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 9) concerning the 2020/21 Revenue Budget, which proposed a Council Tax requirement of £102.06m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1.99% and a 2% adult social care Council Tax Precept. The Council Tax increase would raise £2.1m and the precept would raise a further £2.1m ring-fenced for adult social care. This report also proposed the Fees and Charges for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix F and the Parish Expenses as set out in Appendix G and recommended the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E.

Councillor Graham Bridgman referred to page 146 of the agenda which related to the fees for Private Hire Operators. These were currently out for consultation and therefore this section would need to be updated for the Council meeting on 3 March 2020.

**RESOLVED** that it be recommended that Council approves:

- (1) The 2020/21 Council Tax requirement of £102.06 million, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1.99% with a 2% Council Tax Precept ring-fenced for adult social care.
- (2) The Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix F and that the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required.
- (3) The Parish Expenses of £xxxx as set out in Appendix G.
- (4) It be noted that the following amounts for the year 2020/21 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (by the Localism Act 2011):
  - (a) £65,205.90 being the amount calculated by the Council, (Item T) in accordance with regulation 31B of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), as its council tax base for the year (the number of properties paying council tax).
  - (b) Part of the Council's area as per Appendix K being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept related.
- (5) Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish precepts) is £xxxxxxx.
- (6) The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, amended by the Localism Act 2011:
  - (a) £xxxxxxx being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2), (a) to (f) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish councils.
  - (b) £xxxxxxx being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3), (a) to (d) of the Act.
  - (c) £xxxxxxx being the amount by which the aggregate at 7(a) above, exceeds the aggregate at 7(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with the Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R).

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- (d) £xxxx being the amount at 7(c) above (Item R), all divided by 5(a) above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the 'basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts)'.
- (e) £xxxxx being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix K).
- (f) £1565.26 being the amount at 7(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 7(e) above by the amount at 5(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relates.
- (7) It be noted that for the year 2020/21, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley & The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service had issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Councils area as indicated in Appendix K.
- (8) The Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables in Appendix K as the amounts of Council Tax for 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

**Other options considered:** Not applicable.

### 90. **Capital Financial Performance Report 2019/20 Quarter Three (EX3801)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 10) concerning the financial performance report provided to Members on a quarterly basis reports on the under or over spends against the Council's approved capital budget. This report presented the Quarter Three financial position for 2019/20.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon confirmed that there had been little change since in the position since Quarter Two. At the end of Quarter Three expenditure of £4.7m had been forecast against a revised budget of £91.8m which meant that there was an overall underspend of £46.1m. It had been agreed that £46.7m of the approved Capital Programme would be re-profiled into 2020/21 which included the £35m Commercial Property budget and the underspends detailed in the report.

Councillor Jeff Brooks noted that there had been around £11.7m of the Capital Programme carried forward and he asked why there had been such a high level of slippage. Councillor Mackinnon confirmed that £3m had been in relation to the Sandleford access improvements and the rest was for Newbury Rail Station improvements and a number of school projects. Councillor Brooks was particularly concerned about the slippage in relation to schools and asked if he could have a written response on that issue.

Councillor Alan Macro asked if the slippage would jeopardise any of the external funding. Councillor Ross Mackinnon confirmed that to his knowledge this would not be the case and that all spend would be within timescales.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

- The Capital Financial Performance report be noted;
- A written response to be provided to Councillor Jeff Brooks in relation to the reasons for the slippage in the Schools Capital Programme.

**Other options considered:** Not applicable.

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### 91. **2019/20 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Three (EX3797)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 11) concerning the in-year financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets as at Quarter Three of 2019/20.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon confirmed that the Quarter Three overspend position was similar to that at Quarter Two. The forecast was for an overspend of £252k but £144k of that amount had been provided for in reserves which if used would bring the forecast to an overspend of £108k. This showed an excellent level of financial control.

Councillor Alan Macro referred to page 171 of the agenda and in particular to the £300k pressure from reduced car parking income. He noted that this was in part due to difficulty in recruiting enforcement officers and he asked what was being done to address the problems with recruitment. Councillor Mackinnon confirmed that he would ensure that Councillor Macro received a written response. Councillor Richard Somner advised that a strategy had been developed which had been through the Transport Advisory Group and which would look into the specifics around the difficulties in recruiting in this area.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

- The Quarter Three forecast of £252k over spend be noted.
- It be noted that £144k of the forecast over spend had been provided for in reserves, which if used would bring the forecast down to an over spend of £108k;
- Councillor Alan Macro to receive a written response as to the actions being taken to address the difficulty of recruiting Civil Enforcement Officers.

**Other options considered:** None.

### 92. **Treasury Management 2019/20 Mid Year Performance Report (EX3871)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 12) concerning treasury management activity and performance of the Council's investments as at 30th November 2019.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon confirmed that the Council had been able to borrow at low rates and that the returns on borrowing had been higher than forecast.

**RESOLVED that** the report be noted.

**Other options considered:** None.

### 93. **Council Strategy Delivery Plan (EX3815)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 13) concerning the proposed performance measures and associated targets to be used as part of the Council Strategy Delivery Plan in order to monitor the progress of the Council Strategy 2019/23 delivery.

Councillor Lynne Doherty explained that the Delivery Plan followed on from the Council Strategy and included a breakdown of performance measures and targets to enable the Council to monitor the delivery of the priorities. It would be used as a working tool to track progress. Some of the objectives included stretched targets which showed that the Council was aiming high and was looking for continuous improvement. It aimed to be a best practice authority and therefore some of the wins would not be easy in terms of delivery. Portfolio Holders would be responsible for their areas and the Delivery Plan would be fed back into Executive meetings to monitor progress.

Councillor Alan Macro referred to Commitment 3.2 – Ensure our planning policies enable start-up and growth of businesses in the District. He stated that this was a good aim but he was not sure how that could be measured. Councillor Hilary Cole advised that this was just a place marker at this stage and discussions were still ongoing as to how that

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could best be measured. Nick Carter confirmed that Economic Development was a key priority and targets would be brought to OSMC for discussion in the first instance.

Councillor Lee Dillon referred to Commitment 5.3(a) regarding the installation of 2 megawatts of solar panels. It was noted that the governance of that would be through the Environment Board which was a non-public meeting. He asked if that could be reported through Executive. Councillor Lynne Doherty confirmed that all the measures would be reported through the Executive on a regular basis. She personally thanked the work undertaken by the OSMC and the number of recommendations which had come through that committee and which had been accepted.

Councillor Jeff Brooks noted that one of the commitments referred to retaining the top 10 businesses in the district and he hoped to see that also reflected in the Economic Development Strategy.

Councillor Erik Pattenden noted that the Council Strategy had identified Greenham and Thatcham North as amongst some of the most deprived areas in the country although they had not specifically been referred to in the Delivery Plan. He asked how these areas would benefit. Councillor Lynne Doherty advised that work around the wider detrimental areas would come through the Health and Wellbeing Board. Councillor Rick Jones agreed that one of the major objectives for the Board was to look at equality across the district. Councillor Doherty added that the intention had been to get away from naming individual areas. Councillor Dominic Boeck confirmed that this was a complex picture with a range of influences and therefore it was necessary to look across the whole piece.

Councillor Steve Masters thanked the Executive for all the work which had been undertaken on this. The stretch targets were welcomed. He referred to the declaration of a Climate Emergency with a 2030 target and he asked whether that was something that needed to be measured. Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter confirmed that this was something that he was conscious of. It was a strategic priority for this Administration and would be repeated in any refresh of the four year strategy. Councillor Masters suggested that there should be a target for the Council to ensure that its own estate was zero carbon during the current Administration. Councillor Lynne Doherty confirmed that the KPI's in the Delivery Plan were those that would be reported to the Executive but sat underneath was a suite of measures that Corporate Board had responsibility for. Just because they were not in this list did not mean that they were not happening. Councillor Masters asked if those measures could come through the Environment Board and Councillor Doherty responded that there was no reason why they could not be reported through that Board.

**RESOLVED** that the performance measures and targets to be used for reporting at Executive level as part of the 2019/20 Council Strategy Delivery Plan be approved.

**Other options considered:** The Delivery Plan was produced as a result of the Full Council's decision in May 2019 to adopt the Council Strategy 2019/23. The production of the plan was based on an iterative process with the consultation and engagement of Officers and Members (including OSMC) and as a result there were no alternative options suggested.

### 94. **West Berkshire Playing Pitch Strategy (EX3870)**

*(Councillor Lee Dillon declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 14 by virtue of the fact that he was a founder member of Parklife Rovers who played football at Brimpton. However, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.)*

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The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 14) concerning the adoption of a Playing Pitch Strategy for West Berkshire.

Councillor Rick Jones stated that the Playing Pitch Strategy was an evidence based document that Sport England recommended that Councils produced in order to guide investment, development and improvement in pitch sport facilities and which also met the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. It would also provide the information to inform responses to proposals and to assist when dealing with Statutory Consultees on matters impacting on playing pitches. It was stressed that this was a district wide document and not just a Council strategy and Councillor Jones welcomed its publication.

Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter agreed that this was an extensive and polished strategy with a lot of depth which would provide a rationale when considering proposals. Councillor Rick Jones added that for the first time a survey had been undertaken to consider what pitches were good and what could be improved. It would be a valuable tool for the Planners to use and which could be embedded into new developments. It would also inform Council decisions around need in the Capital Strategy. Cricket and hockey pitches appeared to be well provided and there was high demand for football and rugby pitches. Adult usage was declining but use by younger children was increasing. It would therefore be necessary to work with schools in terms of provision as more artificial pitches were required.

Councillor Dominic Boeck was pleased to see that a further £40m would be spent enhancing schools and their facilities and he felt that the Playing Pitch Strategy would mirror that. He did question the ability to deliver as it was not possible for the Council to do it all. The Council only owned 30% of football sites. The Council did unlock grant funding where it could and hopefully this could be used to fund 3G pitches whilst working with schools to make sure that this happened.

Councillor Richard Somner asked what would happen next but he noted that the number one priority would be to replace the football provision at Faraday Road. Councillor Rick Jones stated that the Playing Pitch Strategy would input into the Leisure Strategy. The Council would start discussions with schools around the 3G provision. The next stage would be to engage with partners on where the need was and to also put the Strategy into the Planning process.

Councillor Erik Pattenden noted that the Strategy highlighted the fact that there was a large deficit of pitches and he therefore questioned whether the closure of Faraday Road now seemed to be a good idea. He also asked when the action plan would be implemented. Councillor Rick Jones responded that the Playing Pitch Strategy illustrated that one additional pitch alone would not address the problem. The action plan committed the Council to follow the Strategy and a large number of the actions the Council would not be able to do on its own. As mentioned previously a lot of the recreation grounds and pitches were not actually owned by the Council.

Councillor Lee Dillon referred to page 354 which mentioned Henwick Worthy Sports Ground and the fact that a master plan would be required for the site. However, this site was co-owned by Thatcham Town Council and that had not been referenced in the Strategy. The site was currently at capacity and it would be necessary to prioritise the different sports which were played on that site. He was aware of the practicalities as he was a member of the Management Committee.

Councillor Adrian Abbs stated that the one thing that the Council had control of it had closed. Councillor Rick Jones confirmed that he had answered that question on numerous occasions. It had been necessary to work to a brief which said that Faraday



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Road was not available. Councillor Lynne Doherty agreed that this was an issue that had been going on for a long period of time and multiple discussions had taken place on it. Councillor David Marsh responded that despite a number of discussions taking place in respect of Faraday Road there had still not been an acceptable answer. He also referred to page 33 of the Strategy which stated that the replacement site for Faraday Road would be no more than a 20 minute drive away. A 20 minute drive might differ depending on the time of the day and could potentially be a long way away from Newbury. Councillor Rick Jones replied that this was the requirement from Sports England and was not the standard that the Council had adopted. Debate had taken place and it had been agreed that the best location was not right in the town centre due to traffic congestion but on the other hand it should not be too far away and therefore a balance would need to be struck although there was a limit as to what was available.

Councillor Tony Vickers said that high level sport was going to Brimpton and the community use to Northcroft (which was currently flooded). He asked if Northcroft could be discounted. Councillor Rick Jones advised that Brimpton was not figured in the way that it had been interpreted and he also understood the issues around the use of Northcroft.

**RESOLVED** that the Playing Pitch Strategy for West Berkshire be approved.

**Other options considered:** Not adopting the Playing Pitch Strategy – this would lead to a position whereby independently acquired evidence could not be used to support actions in relation to proposals – leading to more issues in relation to statutory consultations (especially with Sport England) and increased risk of challenge to decisions. The alternative would be to pay for evidence to be collected on a case by case basis which would increase cost and not allow proposals and their impact to be viewed on a district wide level.

### 95. **Consent for Transport for the South East Becoming a Sub-National Transport Body (EX3791)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 15) concerning the plans for Transport for the South East (TfSE) becoming a Sub-national Transport Body (STB).

Councillor Richard Somner reported that becoming a STB would ensure that West Berkshire was inclusive in the wider group which would ensure that it had a voice in any decisions being made.

Councillor Alan Macro stated that West Berkshire had different transport problems than other areas such as Slough or Reading and he would not want to see West Berkshire's voice diluted. Councillor Somner responded that West Berkshire's voice would be more diluted if it was not part of the wider group where it could work as part of a stronger unit. He did accept that the traffic problems in West Berkshire might be different to other areas though.

**RESOLVED that:**

- It be agreed that as a constituent authority, West Berkshire Council formally gave its consent to TfSE seeking statutory status and becoming a Sub-national Transport Body based on the Proposal to Government included at Appendix D.
- It was also agreed that delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Transport & Countryside to agree any minor changes that TfSE might make to their proposal for the final submission to Government.

**Other options considered:** Two other options had been considered:

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- (i) West Berkshire Council did not support TfSE's plans to seek statutory status as a sub-national transport body.
- (ii) West Berkshire Council supported TfSE's proposals on the condition that certain aspects of its plans were amended prior to it submitting the proposal to Government.

The two options above had been discounted for the following reasons:

- (i) If the Council refused to support TfSE's proposal, this would block TfSE being able to seek statutory status and becoming a sub-national transport body (STB). The Act under which STBs could be created required an STB to have the consent of all its constituent authorities. There were no fundamental reasons why the Council should not lend its support to TfSE's proposals.
- (ii) TfSE had been operating as a shadow body since June 2017. They had worked successfully to bring authorities together, worked collaboratively and had built consensus. They had shared their draft plans with the constituent authorities and had engaged with West Berkshire Council through the BLTB and by presenting to the Transport Advisory Group in February 2019. They had conducted a formal consultation on their proposals and had taken comments on board throughout all these stages. The final proposal had been amended to reflect the responses received and it was therefore considered that there was no need to request any further amendments.

### 96. **Members' 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 to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care by Councillor Owen Jeffery**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Owen Jeffery on the subject of the average number of empty bed nights in West Berkshire Council care homes in December 2019 was answered by the Executive Member for Adult Social Care.

- (b) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Countryside by Councillor David Marsh**

A question standing in the name of Councillor David Marsh on the subject of the current amount of tree cover in West Berkshire and how much of this was on council-owned land was answered by the Executive Member for Transport and Countryside.

- (c) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Countryside by Councillor David Marsh**

A question standing in the name of Councillor David Marsh on the subject of the number of trees the Council had or would plant on an annual basis between 2015 and 2021 was answered by the Executive Member for Transport and Countryside.

- (d) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Countryside by Councillor Adrian Abbs**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of the maintenance programme for drains was answered by the Executive Member for Transport and Countryside.

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(e) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Countryside by Councillor Adrian Abbs**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of the maintenance programme for paths was answered by the Executive Member for Transport and Countryside.

(f) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Countryside by Councillor Adrian Abbs**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of the enforcement of hedge trimming was answered by the Executive Member for Transport and Countryside.

(g) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Councillor Martha Vickers**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Martha Vickers on the subject of whether the MP for Newbury, who was vice chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Environment, would challenge the Government on its commitment to Climate Change was answered by the Executive Member for Environment.

(h) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Community Wellbeing by Councillor Martha Vickers**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Martha Vickers on the subject of why the item on the proposed merger of local CCGs which was discussed at the recent Health and Wellbeing Board, was given a time slot of barely two minutes was answered by the Executive Member for Public Health and Community Wellbeing.

(i) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Councillor Martha Vickers**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Martha Vickers on the subject of what plans were in place to reduce food waste and to ensure that existing food recycling facilities were used correctly was answered by the Executive Member for Environment.

(j) **Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Countryside by Councillor Tony Vickers**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Tony Vickers on the subject of what evidence there was that the Newbury Car Club had been a success or otherwise was answered by the Executive Member for Transport and Countryside.

### 97. **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 Paragraph 3 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.

### 98. **Contract Award for the Provision of Education Packages for Young People with Severe Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (EX3861)**

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 18) concerning the tender process that had been undertaken and sought delegated authority to award the contract.

**RESOLVED** that delegated authority be given to the Head of Education Services to award the contract to the successful bidder.

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**Other options considered:**

Do nothing and allow the current contract to expire – this would create a significant budget pressure to the Council as spot purchase arrangements would cost significantly more.

Contract extension – the current contract had already been extended for the maximum term of two years, as per contract terms, therefore this was not a viable option.

*(The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 7.03pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature** .....