

Summary of Executive Decisions taken on 2 November 2023

Part I

New Procurement Strategy 2023 - 2027 (EX4408) (Item 6.)

Resolved that Executive:

- Review and approve the updated Procurement Strategy.

This decision is eligible to be 'called-in'. However, if the decision has not been 'called-in' by 5.00pm on 10 November 2023, then it will be implemented.

Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report (EX4450) (Item 7.)

Resolved that Executive:

- Note the Annual Progress Report on the Environment Strategy (as included in Appendix C) and agree its publication on the Council's website, and
- Consider and agree the following actions which were set out in support of the declaration of an ecological emergency (at the Full Council meeting held on 5th October 2023):
 - Ensure the Environment Strategy and the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan emphasise the importance of ecological protection alongside Net Zero. *This will be achieved through an update of the Environment Strategy and associated Delivery Plan as set out in the new Council Strategy.*
 - Work with local authorities and other partners in the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Berkshire ensuring the opportunities for biodiversity protection and recovery in West Berkshire are maximised.
 - Introduce a 'Sustainability impact assessment tool'. This will ensure ecological, climate and other sustainability priorities such as health and wellbeing are at the forefront of the decision making and project planning processes within the Council.
 - Develop a Green and Blue Infrastructure framework for the Council to highlight our priorities for ensuring the environment is managed for biodiversity and our residents.
 - Work with residents and campaign groups to encourage action for nature, by promoting relevant initiatives using council communication channels and public education opportunities.

The above actions will form part of the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan. Monitoring of progress will be included in the Annual Progress Reports published each autumn.

If you have any queries regarding these decisions, please contact: Sadie Owen, Principal Democratic Services Officer Tel: (01635) 519052 or e-mail: sadie.owen1@westberks.gov.uk

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Review of the Newbury Sports Hub Development (EX4449) (Item 8.)

Resolved that Executive:

- Considers the evidence provided in answer to the questions of the Scrutiny Commission.
- Notes the financial implications associated with progressing or not progressing the project, with particular reference to the impact on the revenue account.
- Notes that it is proposed that a new annual Stage E review of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) will be undertaken imminently, and this will provide up-to-date data, with regard to the supply and demand of playing pitches in West Berkshire. This review will inform the refresh of the PPS Action Plan.
- In line with the Council Strategy, created by the new administration, and the changing financial environment, it is recommended that the Sports Hub project is closed, in its current proposed form. Pitch provision at the identified site could remain under consideration as part of the refresh of the PPS Action Plan, following the Stage E Review, and the findings of the review will be used to inform the future provision of playing pitches in West Berkshire.

This decision is not subject to call in as:

- *the item has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, or has been the subject of a review undertaken by another body within the preceding six months.*

therefore it will be implemented immediately.

Response to Council Motion on 20mph Speed Limits (EX4435) (Item 9.)

Resolved that:

- New criteria for 20mph speed limits or 20mph zones are agreed with members over the course of the current financial year.
 - Following an initial pilot scheme in Theale and adoption of the new criteria, Officers produce a detailed cost estimate for rolling out 20mph speed limits as described in paragraphs 5.18 to 5.22 and prepare a capital funding bid accordingly, with a view to implementing 20mph speed limits on roads which meet the new criteria over the course of the following 3-4 years, or as finances allow;
 - The Executive considers the future role of the Speed Limit Task Group;
 - The Executive and the Senior Leadership Team support a Constitutional change to remove the requirement for a formal Councillor resolution in order for Officers to be
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permitted to advertise Traffic Regulation Orders.

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Contracts for Award Under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4407) (Item 10.)

Resolved that:

Executive to delegate authority to an individual (Service Lead or Service Director) to proceed with the award of the contract in table [4.7] in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, the s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer following the completion of the appropriate tender process and Procurement Board approval of a Contract Award report.

This decision is eligible to be 'called-in'. However, if the decision has not been 'called-in' by 5.00pm on 10 November 2023, then it will be implemented.

Night Warden Service (EX4456) (Item 11.)

Resolved that Executive:

- To proceed with de-commissioning the service to achieve in year financial savings and financial savings in 2024/25.
- To authorise the payment of redundancy costs, in the event that it is not possible to redeploy staff.

This decision is eligible to be 'called-in'. However, if the decision has not been 'called-in' by 5.00pm on 10 November 2023, then it will be implemented.

Property Investment Strategy Review (EX4402) (Item 12.)

Resolved that:

- The Council disinvests from the commercial property portfolio over the medium financial term (MTFS) in order to generate capital receipts.
- Resulting capital receipts should be applied to future capital financing of the approved capital programme and agreed transformation projects with a view to generating longer term revenue savings.
- Approve the proposed disposal in the Part Two appendix E.

This decision is eligible to be 'called-in'. However, if the decision has not been 'called-in' by 5.00pm on 10 November 2023, then it will be implemented.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution eight Elected Members (Councillors Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Paul Dick, Clive Hooker, Paul Kander, Ross Mackinnon. Biyi

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Oloko and Howard Woollaston) called in the Executive Decision (EX4402) on the basis that they believed that having a publicly stated and explicit strategy to disinvest from the entire portfolio over a specific time period puts the Council at a severe commercial disadvantage when negotiating disposals with potential buyers.

The Members of the Council who submitted the call-in an alternative course of action as follows:

- The decision is not implemented and the Council's Property Investment Strategy reverts to the status quo ante;
 - The Property Investment Board, in line with its current Terms of Reference, may from time to time advise the Executive that particular assets may be disposed of, if capital receipts represent best value for the Council;
 - In the absence of property disposals the Council should continue to benefit from rental income in excess of all costs, and
 - The lack of a hard deadline for disposal of the portfolio will allow the Council to retain a strong hand in commercial negotiations.
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The future of West Street House (EX4319) (Item 13.)

Resolved that Executive:

Resolve to delegate to the Executive Director of Resources, having consulted the Executive Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Services:

(a) Place WSH on the open market for the sale of the freehold of the asset, in its current condition, use (office) and with vacant possession;

(b) To run in parallel an exercise to submit a pre-application to offer a strong indication of the potential for the demolition of WSH and redevelopment;

(c) In circumstances where the freehold sale is proving to be prolonged, and the pre-application offers positive outcome, WBC to:

obtain planning consent for demolition and redevelopment for residential use;

then proceed with the demolition of WSH;

then place WSH on the open market as a vacant brownfield development site with consent attached for residential development.

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