

DRAFT

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

EXECUTIVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3 APRIL 2025

Councillors Present: Jeff Brooks (Chairman), Patrick Clark, Heather Codling, Iain Cottingham, Nigel Foot, Denise Gaines (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Gourley, Justin Pemberton and Vicky Poole

Also Present: ,

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting:

Councillor(s) Absent:

PART I

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 13 February and 19 March 2025 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

Councillor Dominic Boeck referred to the minutes of 19 March and clarified his comment relating to Ridgeway Council. His query was how children and young people would fare under a new local authority, regardless of the available options for local government reorganisation.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

3. Public Questions

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

4. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

5. Contract for Award Under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4662)

Councillor Iain Cottingham introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 6), which provided details of forthcoming supply, service and works contract awards that would have a contract value in excess of £2.5m, and as such would require approval from Executive during the next quarter.

Councillor Heather Codling reported that work was progressing well with the Falkland Modular Replacement and that construction would commence in the summer.

Councillor Jeff Brooks seconded the recommendation within the report.

Recommendation: (Vote to be taken in Part II)

- Executive to delegate authority to an individual (Service Director) to proceed with the award of the contract in the table below in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Portfolio Holder, following the completion of the appropriate procurement process and Procurement Board approval of a Contract Award report.

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Contract Title	Service Area	Budget (inc. tolerance)	Contract planned start date	Procurement Process	Evaluation weightings	Proposed Contract Term (years)	Estimated contract term award value	Tender Status
Royal Berkshire Archives Extension	Communities and Wellbeing	The project is budget £2,508,000. This comprises contributions from 6 Local Authorities.	July 2025	Restricted Tender	60% Price 40% Quality (including 10% Social Value)	1 Year	£2,445,600	Tender published in February 2025
Falkland Modular Replacement	Education	£3,656,342	25th July 2025	Restricted Tender	60% Price 40% Quality (including 10% Social Value)	1 Year	£3,381,669	Tender published in February 2025

6. 2024/25 Performance Report Q3 (EX4542)

Councillor Jeff Brooks introduced a report (Agenda Item 7), which provided assurance that the priority areas in the Council Strategy 2023-2027 were being managed effectively, and where performance had fallen below the expected level, presented information on the remedial action taken and the impact of that action.

Councillor Brooks highlighted the change in presentation which he hoped made the report more accessible and commented that lack of data should be a rare occurrence in future reports. Councillor Brooks noted that Executive Directors had been urged to reduce the number of red RAG rated performance indicators by the following quarter.

Councillor Dominic Boeck agreed that the presentation had improved but suggested that the layout of Appendix A was difficult to read. Councillor Brooks queried whether Appendix A added any substance to the report.

Councillor Boeck referred to performance indicator 37 which referred to the percentage of Children in Care who had three or more placements during the past year and queried why the target had not been met. Councillor Heather Codling reported that there were a variety of reasons for placement movement, but that the area was scrutinised regularly by the team's performance board and Corporate Parent Panel and was an improving area.

Councillor Brooks commented that future reports would include a trend arrow with the year-to-date data.

RESOLVED that: Executive

- Note the progress made in delivering the Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2023-2027 priorities scheduled for this financial year.
- Review those areas where performance is below target i.e., reporting as 'Red' or 'Amber, and note that the appropriate remedial action is in place.
- Note that whilst the review process of the measures of the Council Strategy Delivery Plan is ongoing, this report presents performance results against the measures currently in place – noting pending recommendations where those exist - and in accordance with the established reporting guidelines, which classify the measures into High Priority and Business as Usual, with the latter reported by exception.

7. Waste Management Strategy

Councillor Stuart Gourley introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 8), which sought approval for the adoption of the Council's new Waste Management Strategy. Councillor Gourley recognised the importance of the waste service to residents but suggested that this should not restrict looking to improve the efficiency of the service and striving for the disposal of waste and recycling to be the most effective and efficient that it could be.

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It was highlighted that the Strategy set out the Council's key priorities and themes until 2032. It was noted that there had been considerable consultation with several stakeholders, including public consultation, public meetings and review by Scrutiny Commission. Councillor Gourley thanked all residents that had participated in the consultation.

Councillor Adrian Abbs commented that he would not be recommending the Strategy for approval if he had remained Portfolio Holder for Climate Action, Recycling and Biodiversity. He noted that the overwhelming feedback from residents was not to move to a three-weekly collection. Councillor Abbs queried why the Council was not considering alternatives, and why the Council was requiring residents to separate more waste when there were barriers to doing so. Councillor Gourley responded that the number of kerbside containers had not increased, and that the recently launched pots, tubs and trays would be contained by the existing plastic collection boxes.

Councillor Abbs queried why a report on alternatives had not been produced. Councillor Gourley responded that he preferred that the Council took the approach of recycling responsibly to ensure that the recycling remained in the UK. He commented that the better the quality of the recycling, the better the reuse value would be.

Councillor Abbs queried why there had been a public consultation when the response had been ignored. Councillor Gourley noted that the response to the consultation reflected that over 50% of residents could support a three-weekly collection.

Councillor Abbs suggested that it would be difficult to persuade people to use real nappies rather than disposable ones. Councillor Gourley understood the challenge but stated that the technology of reusable nappies had improved significantly. Councillor Gourley acknowledged that disposable nappies would still be preferred and urged that they be disposed of responsibly in a nappy sack and then a black bin.

Councillor Abbs suggested that it would be difficult to change residents' habits. Councillor Gourley recognised that it may be difficult but suggested that there had probably been similar conversations when the change to fortnightly collections had been implemented. Councillor Gourley further noted that West Berkshire was not an outlier in moving to three-weekly collections.

Councillor Jo Stewart referred to the action plan and the starting date of 2026 for strengthening the commitment to combat littering and fly tipping, and queried whether it could commence sooner, with a campaign aimed at schools. Councillor Gourley reported that schools had been requested to develop an environment action plan, which would allow for close liaison with the Council and allow for some influence to highlight specific issues.

Councillor Richard Somner commented that he was speaking on behalf of the 71% of residents that did not support three weekly collections and queried whether performance would be monitored. Councillor Somner queried the timescale for reversing the decision, should the new collection rota fail. Councillor Gourley acknowledged that it would be important to monitor the change and review the Service, but that a reasonable timeframe for bedding in and supporting the change would be required before any rash decisions were made to reverse.

In response to Councillor Abbs' earlier comments, Councillor Nigel Foot suggested that it was possible to change people's attitudes, particularly by engaging with younger people.

In response to a query from Councillor Iain Cottingham as to how to improve the current 42% black bin recycling rate, Councillor Gourley noted that WBC were the seventeenth highest improved local authority out of 320. However, he acknowledged that the Council were still in the top twenty-five of worst Council's in terms of rubbish per household and

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consequently there was a need to shift the focus from putting everything in a black bin to recycling.

Councillor Dominic Boeck queried whether the 42% figure was currently recycled by West Berkshire Council. Councillor Gourley clarified that the figure did not relate to what was currently being done but referred to 42% of black bin bag contents that could be recycled through one of the suggested routes.

Councillor Denise Gaines seconded the recommendation within the report, noting that the Strategy applied to the next eight years and set out clearly the priorities and intentions of the Council. Councillor Gaines noted that technology was always developing and in the future the level of recycling could vastly improve. Councillor Gaines also suggested that people could be persuaded to change habits through education and involving children.

RESOLVED that:

- The recommendation is to approve the adoption of the new Waste Management Strategy, attached as Appendix C.
- This decision includes endorsing the strategic actions outlined in the strategy to improve waste management across West Berkshire. Key elements include:
 - changing the frequency of black bin collections from once every fortnight to once every three weeks
 - reviewing the container provision for recyclable waste
 - implementing broader measures to reduce waste, improve recycling rates, and enhance the improving the local street scene.

8. Members' Questions

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

9. 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 6 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.

10. Contract for Award Under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4662)

(Paragraph 6 – information relating to proposed action to be taken by the Local Authority)

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 11), which related to the forthcoming supply, service and works contract awards that would have a contract value in excess of £2.5m and as such would require approval from Executive during the next quarter.

RESOLVED that: the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

Other options considered: the approval of a consolidated contract award report is considered the most efficient was of meeting the governance requirements of the Constitution, therefore no alternative proposals are being made.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.05 pm)

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CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature