

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at the New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate on 22 July 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors M. A. Brunt (Leader), T. Schofield (Deputy Leader), R. H. Ashford, R. Biggs, N. J. Bramhall, E. Humphreys, V. H. Lewanski and K. Sachdeva.

Also present: Councillors J. C. S. Essex, N. D. Harrison and S. A. Kulka.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Archer and Neame.

14. MINUTES

RESOVLED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 24 June 2021 be approved.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

16. ZERO CARBON RETROFIT - SUPPORTING RAVEN HOUSING TRUST TO IMPROVE LOCAL HOMES

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Brunt, introduced the report by explaining that Raven Housing Trust, the Borough's largest social landlord, had committed to meeting the zero carbon target, passed into law by the Government in 2019, for its Borough homes by retrofitting them to make them more energy efficient for local residents. The cost for Raven of retrofitting local homes was forecast to be more than £97 million.

Raven had requested the Council reinvest capital receipts arising from disposals, in advance of the expiry of the Development Clawback Agreement in March 2022 into home improvements. The increased investment in retrofitting Borough homes would benefit the Borough's residents.

The proposal would support the steps Raven was taking to tackle climate change locally. It would also support delivery of the Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

In response to questions from Visiting Members it was confirmed:

- Raven Housing Trust would be attending the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September and there would be the opportunity for members to ask for details of Raven's plan to deliver
- The Council would continue ongoing discussions with businesses and homeowners across the Borough to help enable them to improve their properties as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy
- The reinvestment would apply to capital receipts from 2021/22 until the end of the contract and sums received to date have been earmarked elsewhere.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Executive supports the approach of assisting Raven Housing Trust to meeting their Net Zero Carbon emissions targets through reinvestment of the Development Clawback into retrofitting local homes.
2. The Head of Finance be authorised in consultation with the:
 - Executive Member for Finance & Governance
 - Executive Member for Housing & Support
 - Head of HousingTo agree and sign an Agreement with Raven Housing Trust so that the funds can be re-invested.

17. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPENDING UPDATE

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, Councillor Biggs, explained that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which had been required to be paid by certain landowners and promoters of new properties since 2016, had helped to ensure that the cumulative impacts of development were funded.

The report included an annual review of progress in delivering the 5 year Strategic Infrastructure Programme (SIP) which was agreed by the Executive in 2017. This made up 80% of CIL funds. The report also summarised the “neighbourhood” CIL funds, made up of 15% of total CIL funds, and which reflected local community priorities, as outlined in the results of a 2019 community survey.

It was noted that the CIL had provided an effective source of funding to assist in the delivery of infrastructure and other community benefits to address the impacts that had arisen from developments in the borough. The amount collected had exceeded that anticipated in 2017.

In response to a question from an Executive Member, Councillor Biggs explained that CIL funding was allocated to Surrey County Council in 2017 through the SIP as a contribution to highways work at Three Arch Road, Redhill. The Council had agreed to consider providing additional funding when a new 5-year SIP was prepared in summer 2022.

In response to a question from Visiting Member Councillor Essex, Councillor Biggs agreed to provide written details about the modelling options in relation to the Redhill Flood Alleviation Scheme and the review of the project delivery.

RESOLVED that the Executive notes:

1. The updates for the projects in the current 5-year Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Strategic Infrastructure Programme (SIP) 2017-22.
2. The timetable and arrangements for preparing and agreeing a new 5-year SIP for 2022-27.
3. The progress on spending Local CIL funding since Local Area Advisory Panels were introduced in 2019.

18. COMMUNITY CENTRES

The Executive Member for Community Partnerships, Councillor Ashford, introduced the report by explaining that the Council had an opportunity to develop the Council's three Community Centres into vibrant, multi-use centres, which offered something for all residents.

Councillor Ashford explained:

- Results from surveys showed there was huge interest in the centre and ambition for the future.
- There was the potential to widen the services the centres provide, as well as develop close working with a wide range of partners.
- The Council needed operational and developmental leadership to deliver and sustain the new approach, and to change the image of the centres to reach out to the wider community.

In response to questions from Visiting Members, it was confirmed that:

- The Executive Member would consider a request from the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny for the formation of Key Performance Indicators in relation to usage, which would be reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Consideration would be given to the pricing model and potential membership models or a loyalty and discount scheme
- Expansion beyond the three centres would be considered at a later date, once the proposed changes are established

RESOLVED that the Executive:

1. Approve Option 1 and agree that the community centres in Banstead, Woodhatch and Horley will be operated by the Council as multi-use community centres.
2. Agree that a programme of work commences to deliver multi-use community centres.
3. Agree to the allocation of £15k from Corporate Plan Delivery Fund Reserve in 2021/22 to deliver re-branding and marketing for the centres.
4. Note the development of a budget growth proposal of £71k for new staff resource through service & financial planning for 2022/23 onwards to deliver and sustain this change.
5. Agree that the oversight of this change and decisions on the operating model and service offer should be delegated to the Head of Community Partnerships in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Partnerships.

19. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022/23 TO 2026/27

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Governance, Councillor Schofield, introduced the Medium-Term Financial Plan which set out the initial assessment of the key information that would be used for budget setting for

2022/23. The Plan included a five-year forecast for the budget gap if no action was taken to reduce costs or increase income.

Councillor Schofield explained that work was underway to develop detailed budget proposals for consideration by Executive in November. The challenge to find new ways to make more efficient use of existing resources and finding new sustainable income streams remained. There was uncertainty about the timing for proposed funding changes, but it continued to be necessary to plan for implementation.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the Medium-Term Financial Plan at its meeting on 15 July 2021 and the Executive had received the draft minutes of the meeting. The Committee had considered the budget forecast to be appropriately pessimistic. As the forecast did not include the potential returns from various ongoing capital projects, the Committee asked if it could see the current forecast for revenues from those projects. In response, the Executive Member agreed to provide the Committee this information.

RESOLVED:

That the Medium-Term Financial Plan be adopted as the framework for the budget elements of service and financial planning for 2022/23 onwards.

20. CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2022/23

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Governance, Councillor Schofield, introduced the Council's Capital Investment Strategy 2022/23. The Strategy helped ensure that the Council's capital decisions took account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability.

Councillor Schofield explained that the Strategy provided information about the Council's assets, how they were used and how they performed. It also included information about assets that the Council planned to invest in. Following approval of the Strategy, future capital investment plans would be confirmed as part of the service and financial planning process.

Councillor Harrison, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, explained that the Committee considered the Strategy at its meeting on 15 July 2021. The Committee focused its questions Horley Business Park, Council assets, commercial developments and the Commercial Strategy Part 2. The Committee recognised that the Strategy was a living document and looked forward to receiving it alongside the budget proposals later in the year.

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Investment Strategy be adopted as the framework for the Capital Programme elements of service and financial planning for 2022/23 onwards.

21. STATEMENTS

There were none.

22. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

23. EXEMPT BUSINESS

There was none.

The Meeting closed at 8.09 pm