

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at the New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate on 5 December 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors M. A. Brunt (Leader), T. Schofield (Deputy Leader), T. Archer, R. H. Ashford, R. Biggs, N. J. Bramhall, A. C. J. Horwood, E. Humphreys, G. J. Knight and V. H. Lewanski.

Also present: Councillors R. Absalom, J. C. S. Essex, K. Foreman, N. D. Harrison, S. A. Kulka and R. Ritter.

ALDERMAN JOHN MEECH

Prior to the commencement of business, the Leader invited the Mayor, Councillor K. Foreman, to conduct a minute's silence to commemorate the passing of Alderman John Meech.

66. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 7 November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Executive Members: None.

Non-Executive Members: Councillor M. Blacker.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

69. STATEMENTS

There were none.

70. REIGATE & BANSTEAD 2025

Councillor G. Knight, Executive Member for Housing and Benefits, introduced the new corporate plan, titled 'Reigate & Banstead 2025'. The Executive had previously endorsed the draft plan for consultation at its meeting in July 2019 (Minute ref. 29), and the final plan incorporated the outcome of that consultation, for approval.

The consideration of data and evidence, coupled with the engagement of Members and stakeholders, had informed the development of the plan, and the feedback from the consultation demonstrated support for its vision, commitments and objectives. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee had also been consulted and had supported the way in which the plan had been developed along with its overall scope.

Councillor Knight explained that the feedback from the consultation had led to some clarifications, and the inclusion of additional wording, rather than any substantive change in direction. A new set of contextual indicators and success measures had been included, which would be reported annually.

In response to questions from Visiting Members, the Leader acknowledged the importance of the Council's role in addressing affordable housing and climate change and concurred with Councillor Knight that the plan set a clear and appropriate focus for the Council for the next 5 years.

RECOMMENDED that 'Reigate & Banstead 2025', the Council's corporate plan for the period 2020-2025 be adopted by Full Council.

RESOLVED that the consultation feedback on the proposals for 'Reigate & Banstead 2025' be noted.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council had an adopted corporate plan for the 2020-2025 period that sets out a clear vision and priorities to guide its service and financial plans.

Alternative options: Not to adopt 'Reigate & Banstead 2025' and to request that further work be undertaken in response to the consultation before a revised version be reported back to the Executive.

71. HOUSING DELIVERY STRATEGY (2020-2025)

Councillor G. Knight, Executive Member for Housing and Benefits, presented the Housing Delivery Strategy 2020-2025 for approval. The Strategy would be a significant contribution towards the delivery of 'Reigate & Banstead 2025', which included an objective to secure the delivery of homes that could be afforded by local people, and the provision of a wider choice of tenure, type and size of housing.

Developers recognised the geographical advantages of the Borough, and had delivered 4-5 bedroom homes to meet demand. However, the demand for affordable housing, whilst recognised, had not yet been met. Further challenges included: local planning constraints, land supply, delivery performance, the construction sector, and the need for significant financial resources to deliver the Strategy. Those challenges would be addressed by the Council continuing to work in partnership with others.

In response to observations made by Visiting Members, it was noted that:

- The Local Government Association would continue to lobby the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government regarding the impact of Permitted Development Rights for change of use from office buildings to residential,
- An implementation plan would be developed to deliver the Strategy; and
- The Strategy would enable the Council to manage housing need through home ownership options, private rented housing, and affordable housing.

The Leader explained that the Strategy demonstrated a welcome change in policy direction for the Council.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Housing Delivery Strategy 2020-2025 be approved for publication and implementation; and
- (ii) The Head of Housing be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Benefits, to make any additional minor amendments to the Housing Delivery Strategy to ensure factual accuracy and clarity prior to publication.

Reason for decision: The Strategy was a significant contribution towards the delivery of 'Reigate & Banstead 2025' and specifically the housing objective to secure the delivery of homes that could be afforded by local people and which provide a wider choice of tenure, type and size of housing.

Alternative options: To delay the publication of the Strategy and seek further amendments and / or changes to the objectives.

72. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2020-2024

The Leader of the Council, Councillor M. Brunt, introduced the report setting out the Equality Objectives for the Council for the period 2020-2024. The proposed Objectives aligned with the increased emphasis on fairness and inclusivity in the Council's new corporate plan 'Reigate & Banstead 2025'. The Objectives demonstrated how the Council would meet its duty to eliminate discrimination; and promote equality of opportunity and good community relations.

In response to a question from a Visiting Member, the Head of Corporate Policy explained that the Objectives reflected an opportunity for the Council to take a more positive approach to understanding and meeting the needs of those with protected characteristics, and to encourage social inclusion.

The Leader explained that progress in delivering the Objectives would be reported annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and that the delivery of the Objectives would be evident in all reports to the Executive, Council and Committees. The Executive concurred that it was the responsibility of all Members to lead, promote, and demonstrate their own commitment to the Objectives.

RESOLVED that the Executive agree the proposed Equality Objectives for the period 2020-2024:

- a) Using data and local intelligence better: Continue to improve our equality data, use of local intelligence and data insight to inform future service planning and formal decision making,
- b) Supporting good community relations: Develop a greater focus on promoting social inclusivity across all the Council's services and fostering good community relations,

- c) Accessible information and services: Ensure that Council services, information, consultation and engagement opportunities remain accessible to all residents, particularly those with protected characteristics, and
- d) Working for the Council: Continue to seek opportunities to build inclusivity into the Council's internal policies and procedures.

Reason for decision: The Equality Act 2010 required that the Council prepare and publishes one or more objectives that it should achieve to discharge its general equality duty to eliminate prohibited conduct, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

Alternative options: Not to agree the proposed new Equality Objectives.

73. **RESPONSE TO MOTIONS: DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND WILDLIFE FRIENDLY PUBLIC SPACES**

Councillor N. Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, introduced the report which set out the approach of the Executive in response to the Motions on *Wildlife Friendly Public Spaces* and *Declaring a Climate Emergency*, received by Council on 29 September 2019.

An environmental sustainability consultancy had been engaged to prepare an Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan, which would recommend short, medium, and longer-term activities and interventions to deliver the Strategy.

An Officer Working Group had been created to consider the outcome of an options assessment, and to review the draft Action Plan and Strategy. A Member Working Group had been formed to provide Member engagement, and to review the draft options assessment, once it had been received from the consultants.

In response to questions from Visiting Members, Councillor Bramhall explained that the financial implications of the Action Plan would be identified as part of the development of the Strategy and prioritised accordingly. The Leader emphasised that the Executive wanted to be ambitious and would continue to demonstrate its environmental commitments through its actions.

RESOLVED that the update in response to the Motions around declaring a Climate Emergency and creating Wildlife Friendly Public Spaces, be noted.

74. **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

Councillor R. Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy, introduced four draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which had been updated to align with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Development Management Plan. The report sought the approval of the Executive to commence a four-week consultation.

Councillor Biggs explained that local and national policy changes meant that the Council was no longer able to secure affordable housing contributions from smaller developments and that the NPPF had changed the type of housing that could be

classified as affordable. Consequently, the Affordable Housing SPD, which had been published in 2014, required updating and would now complement the Housing Delivery Strategy, in providing certainty as to when and where affordable housing would be delivered.

In response to a question by a Visiting Member, the Senior Policy Officer explained that all SPDs were part of a programme of review, and that the four presented to Members had been prioritised.

The Leader surmised that the SPDs allowed the Council to defend its planning policies and noted that the outcome of the consultation, and any proposed amendments, would be reported back to the Executive.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Executive approve the updated draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, Barn and Farm Conversions Supplementary Planning Document, Historic Parks and Gardens Supplementary Planning Document and Reigate Shop Front Design Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation; and
- (ii) The Head of Planning in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Policy, be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments to the draft updated Supplementary Planning Documents prior to consultation.

Reason for decision: Regulation 12(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require public consultation on draft supplementary planning documents for at least 4 weeks prior to adoption.

Alternative options: Not to approve the draft Affordable Housing SPD, Barn and Farm Conversions SPD, Historic Parks and Gardens SPD and Reigate Shop Front Design SPD for public consultation. Not to agree to necessary minor amendments being made prior to consultation.

75. MARKETFIELD WAY UPDATE, DECEMBER 2019

Councillor E. Humphreys, Executive Member for Place and Economic Prosperity, introduced the update on the Marketfield Way project. Marketfield Way was a significant opportunity for the Council to transform an existing underutilised brownfield site, and create a high-quality mixed-use development that would contribute to the Council's corporate priority to revitalise Redhill town centre. The development would include a multiscreen cinema, as well as restaurants, shops and new homes, which would improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of both Redhill and the wider Borough. Since the last update to Executive in 2018, the Council had:

- Made good progress with land assembly, a Compulsory Purchase Order had been implemented which would result in all land interests and rights being acquired, and vacant possession being obtained, by 24 December 2019,
- Selected Vinci Construction UK Ltd as the contractor, and were now at an advanced stage in agreeing a final building contract,

- Entered into a pre-sale agreement for all 150 flats,
- Entered detailed negotiations with potential commercial tenants, including cinema operators and retailers; and
- Instructed enabling works, including the demolition of properties fronting the High Street and the closure of Marketfield Way car park.

It was noted that the anticipated costs were within the budget allocated in the Council's Capital Programme, subject to the revised financial parameters set out in the report in Part 2 of the agenda. The Part 2 report also outlined the management actions necessary for the Council to progress the project.

In response to questions from Visiting Members, it was confirmed that the pathway alongside the development would be kept open, cycle racks would be re-provided, but not immediately; and that the environmental impact of the development was compliant with the Planning Consent. The Head of Place Delivery undertook to prepare a written response to:

- Identify the proposed mitigation, if any, of the loss of the area opposite the Belfrey, which was currently used by taxis, and for the pick-up and drop-off of those with limited mobility; and
- Outline the environmental sustainability of the development.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The progress that had been made to deliver stage three of the project, in relation to land assembly, detailed design, build contract negotiations and the securing of pre-lets, be noted.
- (ii) The Director of Place Services, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Place and Economic Prosperity, be authorised to:
 - conclude stage three of the project by agreeing the final terms and sealing and completing a building contract, subject to the revised financial parameters set out in the exempt report in Part 2 of the agenda.
 - progress stage four of the project, in accordance with the management actions and revised financial parameters set out in the exempt report in Part 2 of the agenda, including the implementation and construction of the scheme.

Reason for decision: To support the development of the project and the Corporate Plan objective to ensure that the borough remains a great place to live, work and do business.

Alternative options: i) To not enter into a building contract and proceed with an alternative scheme for the development of the site, which reduces the amount of retail and leisure floorspace and would increase the amount of residential within the scheme, in order to minimise the financial risk to the Council of the project. ii) To not enter into a building contract, to seek an independent funding source to purchase

the site and to implement the scheme. iii) To not enter into a building contract and to do nothing.

76. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2020/21

Councillor T. Schofield, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance, introduced the report and explained that the Council had a statutory requirement to adopt its Council Tax base by 31 January each year. The Council had followed a prescribed formula in preparing the Council Tax Base, which would consequently be provided to precepting authorities to enable them to determine their level of Council Tax.

RECOMMENDED that the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 be recommended to Council for approval.

RESOLVED that the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 for each of the Council's areas be adjusted as follows: Reigate & Banstead Council as a whole 61,128.8 Horley Town Council area 10,191.7 Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council area 1,416.5.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992.

Alternative options: When calculating and setting the Tax Base the Council had to follow specific regulations laid down under statutory instruments. There was therefore no opportunity for Members to make any changes to the methodology adopted or the recommended Council Tax Base.

77. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

78. EXEMPT BUSINESS

The Executive considered the *Marketfield Way Update* in open session, (minute 75 refers).

79. MARKETFIELD WAY UPDATE, DECEMBER 2019 (EXEMPT)

RESOLVED that the exempt information in relation to Marketfield Way be noted.

The Meeting closed at 8.31 pm