

# EXECUTIVE

27 August 2019

- \* Councillor Caroline Reeves (Chairman)
- \* Councillor Fiona White (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Joss Bigmore	* Councillor Julia McShane
Councillor Angela Goodwin	* Councillor Pauline Searle
Councillor David Goodwin	* Councillor James Steel
* Councillor Jan Harwood	

\*Present

Councillors Diana Jones, Ted Mayne, and Ramsey Nagaty were also in attendance.

## **EX22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Joss Bigmore, Angela Goodwin, and David Goodwin.

## **EX23 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

Councillor Fiona White declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Minute EX26 – Watts Gallery – Physical Energy Sculpture, as she was a county councillor representative on the Limnerslease Management Committee.

## **EX24 MINUTES**

The Executive approved, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2019. The Chairman signed the minutes.

## **EX25 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader announced the resignation of Councillor Susan Parker from the Executive today in light of questions over conduct, in respect of which a confidential review was currently being undertaken.

## **EX26 WATTS GALLERY - PHYSICAL ENERGY SCULPTURE**

The Executive noted that in order to celebrate the bi-centennial year of G F Watts, the Watts Gallery Trust had launched a fundraising campaign to commission a new bronze cast of his famous sculpture, *Physical Energy*. The sculpture would be located next to the A3 in Compton and would be a major piece of public art enhancing Guildford's cultural and heritage offer to visitors and providing benefits to the local economy.

The Executive, having considered a report which sought approval to make a financial contribution towards the cost of completing the project

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a grant of £40,000 to the Watts Gallery Trust towards the cost of installing *Physical Energy* alongside the A3 in Compton be approved.

- (2) That a revenue supplementary estimate of £40,000 to fund the grant in 2019-20 be approved and financed through the New Homes Bonus Reserve.

Reason:

To facilitate the installation of an iconic and inspirational piece of public art that celebrates the cultural heritage of Guildford and its association with the nationally important artist, G F Watts.

## **EX27 FOOD POVERTY - REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Executive considered a report on Food Poverty which had been submitted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S), following an in-depth review by a task and finish group. In a wide-ranging analysis, the Food Poverty report had suggested that the scale of food poverty and insecurity within the Borough had not been recognised sufficiently. Furthermore, the report had cautioned against mistaking short-term action as a solution and had highlighted the need to act against the structural causes of food poverty and insecurity.

While emphasising that food aid was not a solution to food poverty and insecurity, O&S had recommended ways to improve the immediate, local response for those in food poverty while longer-term solutions were pursued.

Having noted that full Council had also considered O&S's Food Poverty report on 31 July 2019, the Executive acknowledged that, as the decision-maker, it was required to respond formally to the report's recommendations and indicate agreement or otherwise.

Having considered the report, the Executive

RESOLVED: That in responding formally to the findings within the Food Poverty report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Executive endorses the Committee's recommendations as follows:

- (1) The Leader of the Council write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions outlining the problems caused by Universal Credit and other welfare reforms and calling for immediate upstream action on food insecurity.
- (2) The Executive formally recognise food poverty and insecurity as issues meriting priority action in the Borough.
- (3) The Executive reiterate its support for the principle that pay should reflect living costs and that the Council becomes an accredited real Living Wage employer with the Living Wage Foundation then promote the Living Wage scheme to employers locally.
- (4) The Executive develop and implement a Food Poverty Strategy and Action Plan that includes, but is not limited to:
  - (a) Facilitation of a food insecurity forum for the Borough (invited stakeholders to include food aid providers, food bank referrers, the Citizens Advice, churches, schools, sheltered housing, supported accommodation providers, and other experts by experience).
  - (b) Development and training sessions on food poverty and insecurity for Councillors, led by the relevant Lead Councillor, that includes advice on dealing with residents in severe hardship, how to make food bank referrals, the roll out of Universal Credit, and the local social security safety net.
  - (c) Prioritisation of a community space, 'Lighthouse' style resource for the Borough.

- (d) Preparation and delivery of a formal food access plan to identify barriers to accessing affordable and nutritious food and actions to address them.
  - (e) Measures to encourage the creation of a community store or social supermarket (such as a *Your Local Pantry*).
  - (f) Development of local measurements of food poverty and insecurity, including engaging with external experts whenever possible, and working with partnership organisations such as Guildford's Health and Wellbeing Board.
  - (g) Extension of the remit of the Mayor's Local Distress Fund and reviewing the application procedure.
  - (h) Increased promotion of existing initiatives that target food poverty and insecurity and provide help to residents in hardship (including, Surrey's Local Assistance Scheme, the Discretionary Housing Payments fund, Guildford's Local Council Tax Support Hardship fund, the Mayor's Local Distress Fund, and emergency food aid providers).
  - (i) Maintaining and publicising, including on the Council's website and through partners, the current provision of food aid that is accessible to Guildford Borough residents.
  - (j) Review of the application process and criteria for the Council's Local Council Tax Support Hardship fund.
- (5) The Executive ensure the Overview and Scrutiny review of food poverty is publicised.
- (6) The Executive request local emergency food aid providers consider the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny review of food poverty and insecurity (for example, the consideration of self-referral gateways and removal of the three-visit cap; altering food voucher forms by adding a tick box to specify Universal Credit as the primary cause of the referral; a possible name change to exclude the term 'food bank'; a limited delivery service; further staggering of opening times; improved availability of food parcels in more places around the community; ensuring there are no faith-based obligations, questions, or interventions with food aid users at any stage of a visit; and endorsement of the Dignity Principles).
- (7) That the Executive submit to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee an update on the above recommendations no later than November 2019.

Reason:

To ensure the Executive respond formally to Overview and Scrutiny's recommendations for addressing food poverty and insecurity in the Borough.

**EX28 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Executive

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**EX29 ACQUISITION OF AN INDUSTRIAL HOLDING ON SLYFIELD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**

The Executive was reminded that a report on this matter had been considered by full Council as an item of urgent business on 31 July 2019 in order to secure a supplementary capital estimate of up to £5m for the purpose of enabling the Council to submit a bid for the acquisition of an industrial holding on Slyfield Industrial Estate.

Councillors noted that, given the tight time scales imposed by the vendor, the Managing Director had exercised his delegated power to act in relation to matters of urgency by making a key executive decision, in consultation with both the Leader of the Council and the Monitoring Officer. That decision involved transfer of monies from the provisional to the approved capital programme, the submission of a bid and authorising the Corporate Property Manager to take all necessary steps to complete the purchase.

Whenever the Managing Director took a delegated executive decision under the urgency provisions within the scheme of delegation to officers, details of the use of that power had to be reported to the next meeting of the Executive.

The Executive, having received a report on the matter, which also provided an update on the position regarding the bid

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the action taken on 1 August 2019 by the Managing Director under delegated powers, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be noted.
- (2) That the Corporate Property Manager be authorised to make a further bid at a later date on the same terms as agreed by the Managing Director on 1 August 2019, should the opportunity arise

Reason:

To satisfy the requirements of paragraph 2 of the list of delegated powers to the Managing Director/Head of Paid Service in Part 3 of the Constitution.

**Note:** By reason of the special circumstances described below, the chairman considered that this item should be dealt with at this meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Special Circumstances:** Where a delegated executive decision has been taken under the urgency provisions of paragraph 2 of the list of delegated powers to the Managing Director/Head of Paid Service in Part 3 of the Constitution, a report must be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive regarding use of this power.

The meeting finished at 7.21 pm

Signed .....

Chairman

Date .....