

**Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held on
21 September 2021**

PRESENT -

Councillor Colin Keane (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors Kate Chinn, Bernice Froud, David Gulland, Eber Kington, Clive Smitheram and Clive Woodbridge

In Attendance: Councillor Alex Coley and Councillor Steven McCormick

Absent: Councillor Lucie McIntyre

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Chief Executive), Jackie King (Director of Corporate Services), Clare Lawrence (Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Gillian McTaggart (Head of Corporate Assurance), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Brendan Bradley (Chief Accountant), Emma Hill (Principal Programme Manager), Sue Emmons (Senior Accountant), Annette Snell (Housing Operations Manager), Prue Timms (Procurement Officer) and Sarah Keeble (Democratic Services Officer)

17 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked or had been received by members of the public.

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes and restricted Minutes of the previous meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 27 July were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

20 2020-21 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT FINDINGS

The Committee report presenting the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts and Grant Thornton's Audit Findings report following the external audit.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Chief Accountant. The Committee was also addressed by a representative of the Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton.

The following matter was raised by the Committee:

- a) **Government support:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer confirmed that it is expected for the Government to provide some income support from the loss suffered through car park usage.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved unanimously to:

- (1) **Approve the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021;**
- (2) **Agree the Annual Governance Statement included within the Statement of Accounts;**
- (3) **Receive the Audit Findings for 2020/21;**
- (4) **Agree the management action in response to the audit recommendations detailed at Appendix A of the Audit Findings report;**
- (5) **Agree that the Chair or Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee and the Chief Finance Officer sign the Letter of Representation on behalf of the Council;**
- (6) **Consider and approve the management responses to Grant Thornton's enquiries, as set out in Appendix 4.**
- (7) **Delegate any further amendments to the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee.**

21 ROUGH SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME (RSAP) 2021/22

The Committee received a report seeking approval for a contribution of £145,000 from the council's s106 affordable housing funds to support a bid to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) under their Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (RSAP), for the purchase of two properties within the borough, by Transform Housing & Support (Transform), to provide accommodation and support to those are either homeless, rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Head of Housing and Regeneration.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **Ownership arrangements:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained that the proposed arrangements surrounding ownership

of the properties are not unusual in terms of properties being owned by Transform Housing & Support.

- b) **Properties:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained that street properties are not typically considered, as it would result in bidding against the general population for attractive properties. The Officer also explained that the properties that are used for such schemes keep occupants' minded to continue their search for their own long-term occupation. This ensures the best social and financial return.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (1) **Agreed to commit £145,000 funding (£72,500 per property) from S106 affordable housing to work in partnership with Transform Housing & Support for them to purchase 2 x 1 bedroom flats in the borough to alleviate rough sleeping and homelessness for those with multiple and complex needs**

22 ANNUAL PLAN 2021/22

The Committee received a report setting out the Annual Plan 2021- 2022 outlining the key objectives and performance indicators to support the delivery of the Council's Four Year Plan 2020- 2024.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Head of Corporate Assurance, in which they informed the Committee of a change to the recommendation, to read:

Agreed to recommend to Council:

- a. **The draft key objectives and performance indicators identified within the Annual Plan for 2021-2022**
- b. **And that the Annual Plan supersedes previously agreed action plans for 2021-22**

From:

- (1) **Approve the draft key objectives and performance indicators identified within the Annual Plan for 2021 – 2022 and recommend approval by Council**
- (2) **Agree that the Annual Plan for 2021- 22 supersedes previously agreed action plans for 2021- 22**

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **Derby:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained that the opening event which was scheduled to take place in July was unable to go ahead due to Covid-19 restrictions. The Officer also noted that the

unveiling of the Rounders would take place at the same time as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

- b) **Completion of Key Objectives:** Members noted the list of Key Objectives laid out in the Annual Plan, and suggested it might be useful to be provided with documentation detailing which objectives had already been achieved.
- c) **Enforcement teams:** Members spoke about the proposed arrangements for enforcement teams covering the parks and other areas of the Borough. The Officer explained that the role of the parking enforcement officer would become more generalised, with a focus on upskilling. There would be no reduction in service, the only difference being the team offering its provision. The Officer also noted that an article within Members Update would be published providing detail on how this service would operate going forwards.
- d) **Graffiti:** Members raise concerns regarding graffiti in non-Council-owned areas of the Borough, and spoke about the possibility of its removal. The Officer confirmed that the Graffiti Policy would be considered at the upcoming meeting of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee to be held on 25 January 2022.
- e) **Youth Hub:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer confirmed that a site within the Ashley Centre had been identified to hold the Youth Hub. Remote services and some sessions hosted from Bourne Hall are up and running, and the full service aims to be live by the end of October.

The following amendment was made to the Annual Plan 2021/2022 Key Objective number 11, to read:

- Implement visible patrols in the Borough to tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental protection issues.

From:

- Establish new patrols in the Borough to tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental protection issues.

This amendment was proposed by Vice-Chair, Councillor Hannah Dalton, and seconded by Councillor David Gulland.

This amendment was agreed **UNANIMOUSLY**.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

(1) Agreed to recommend to Council:

- a. **The draft key objectives and performance indicators identified within the Annual Plan for 2021-2022**

b. And that the Annual Plan supersedes previously agreed action plans for 2021-22

23 PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AGENCY STAFF

The Committee received a report outlining the proposed approach for the procurement of agency staff.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Head of Corporate Assurance.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved unanimously to:

- (1) Approve the award of the agency staff contract to Matrix SCM through the agreed framework for a two year period.**
- (2) Agree the establishment of new governance arrangements and protocol for the management of “off contract” spend.**

24 LAND FOR HIGHWAYS ADOPTION AT ROSEBANK, EPSOM OUTSIDE ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL

The Committee received a report outlining a request to release Council land to be adopted by Surrey County Council Highways to improve pedestrian safety outside a busy Borough Primary School.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Head of Property and Regeneration.

The following matter was raised by the Committee:

- a) **Arrangements for Highways Adoption:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained that the request put before the Committee is to create a lay-by to allow vehicular access and not for car-parking spaces. Members noted the importance of an informative press-release to ensure road-users are aware of its intended use, should Members be minded to agree the recommendations.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved unanimously to:

- (1) Agree to a Deed of Dedication being entered into with Surrey County Council to enable the adoption of the land as statutory highway.**
- (2) Authorise the Head of Property & Regeneration in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy & Resources Committee to negotiate and progress the Deed of Dedication to completion.**

25 2022/23 BUDGET TARGETS AND FINANCE UPDATE

The Committee received a report recommending budget targets for 2022/23 and provides an update on financial planning as recommended by Financial Policy Panel.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Chief Accountant.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved unanimously to:

- (1) Note the recommendations of Financial Policy panel held on 7 September 2021.**
- (2) Agree the proposed strategy for setting the 2022/23 budget as set in Section 4 of this report.**
- (3) Agree that any additional new growth items supported by Policy Committees will need to be fully funded from existing budgets.**

26 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Committee passed a resolution to exclude the public from the meeting for Part Two of the Agenda on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

27 FUTURE OF THE BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE

The decision for this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

28 COMMERCIAL TENANTS UPDATE

The decision for this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 10.09 pm

COUNCILLOR COLIN KEANE (CHAIR)